

ISSN : 0975 - 7805

**JOURNAL  
OF  
INDIAN HISTORY  
AND  
CULTURE**

**(listed under UGC - CARE)**

**June 2020  
Twenty Sixth 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**

Prof. Nanditha Krishna

Dr. K.V. Raman

Dr. V. Mohan

Dr. G. Balaji

Dr. V. Sandhiyalakshmi

**Published by**

**Prof. Nanditha Krishna**

C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar Institute of Indological Research

The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation

1 Eldams Road Chennai 600 018

Tel : 044-48529990 / 044-42081758

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

Website: www.cprfoundation.org

**Layout Design :** T. Pichulakshmi

**Subscription**

Rs. 500- (for 1 issue)

Rs. 990/- (for 2 issues)

## CONTENTS

1. **A Comparative Analysis on the Iconography of the Rock-Cut *Sapta-Mātrika* Assemblages in the Rock-Cut Cave Temples of Tamil Nadu** 9  
*T. Sumitha*
2. **Tiger Hunting in Colonial India** 29  
*Prashanth Krishna*
3. **The persecution of Saivas and their sojourn to South India during 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries from the Southeast Asian Region** 43  
*K. V. Ramakrishna Rao*
4. **Forgotten Queens of Kashmir** 64  
*Shan Eugene*
5. **Food and Cultural Identity in the Mughal India** 80  
*Rekha Pande & Rizwan Ahmad*
6. **Rise of the Intelligentsia in the Princely State of Cooch Behar (1859-1922): A Study of their Activities** 95  
*Prosenjit Ray*
7. **Nautch Girls of Pre-Colonial North India: A Historical Overview** 115  
*Tuhina Islam*
8. **Contribution by Christian Missionaries in the Field of Education in Madras (During the British rule in Madras)** 129  
*Lygi T Jacob*

9.	<b>A Historical Study on the Socio, Economic and Religious Condition of Pulicat Region</b> <i>M. Sandhiya</i>	136
10.	<b>Discourses on Nationalism, Caste and Religion in Twentieth Century Kerala</b> <i>M.P. Mujeebu Rehiman</i>	150
11.	<b>Women Intellectuals on the Sarda Act in Colonial Andhra, 1928–1942</b> <i>Shaik Mahaboob Basha</i>	164
12.	<b>Dairies and Kitchen - Gardens in Prisons of Tamilnadu</b> <i>K. Lingappan</i>	192
13.	<b>Quit India Movement and the Violent Mass Upsurge in Tamil Nadu</b> <i>S. Babu</i>	200
14.	<b>Quit India Movement in Madras Presidency: with special reference to Rayalaseema</b> <i>Vellore. Ramabrahmam, C. Sivakumar, J. Narayana</i>	214
15.	<b>‘Possession’ or ‘Commodity’- A Study on Child Trafficking in Jharkhand, India</b> <i>Ashwini Barla</i>	223
16.	<b>Water Projects in Chennai – A Study on the Contributions of The Dravidian Political Parties</b> <i>Archana Soman</i>	237
17.	<b>Inculturation of the Catholic Church – at the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore</b> <i>Cinthia Jude</i>	251

18.	<b>Personification of the Nations</b> <i>P. Sumabala</i>	261
19.	<b>Book Review-1</b> <i>M. Amirthalingam</i>	276
20.	<b>Book Review-2</b> <i>G.J. Sudhakar</i>	280
21.	<b>Book Review-3</b> <i>G. Balaji</i>	283



## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

You have a Journal in hand which is in the UGC Care list. At this juncture, we wish to express our gratitude to all our well-wishers, contributors, readers, referees, editorial staff, publishers, office staff and anyone who is associated with the Journal in one way or the other.

This rank makes us to be more responsible although we have always tried to maintain high quality.

We would like to thank all the contributors to this issue. Most of them have tried to maintain good standards. Their papers range from the “Iconography of the Rock-cut Sapta Matrika Assemblages in the Rock-cut Cave temples of Tamilnadu” to “Water projects in Chennai – A study on the contributions of the Dravidian Parties.”

We would like to place on record our appreciation to Dr. M. Amirthalingam and Dr. G. Balaji for reviewing books for us. We remind all our contributors to send abstracts and keywords in their papers.

In view of the current pandemic which has forced us to close CPR Institute of Indological Research, and cancel the planned lectures and seminars, we are bringing out two issues of the Journal this year. CPRIIR will be hosting the next Indian Art History Congress in Chennai on December 19 – 21, 2020, when the second issue of the journal will be published.

I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Nanditha Krishna, President, The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Mr. Narayan Onkar, Dr. G. Balaji, and Mrs. T. Pichulakshmi and all the members of the Foundation who have helped in bringing out this issue.

**Dr. G.J. Sudhakar**



**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE  
ICONOGRAPHY OF THE ROCK-CUT  
SAPTA-MĀTRIKA ASSEMBLAGES IN THE  
ROCK-CUT CAVE TEMPLES OF TAMILNADU**

**T. Sumitha**

Assistant Professor

Department of History, Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College  
Thiruchirappalli

***Abstract***

*Sapta-mātrikas or Saptamāthās is an assemblage of seven mother goddesses, the female counterparts of the Hindu male pantheon of higher order. Among the various pantheons of worship, Sapta-mātrikas appeared an important form of worship in the Tamil society and the earliest trace of Sapta-mātrikas or Sapta-mātrika worship is seen in the Tamil epic Śilappadigāram. As per iconographic tradition the seven mother goddesses are depicted seated in sukhāsana on a pedestal guarded by Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa in which the assemblage begins with the former and ends with the latter. Sapta-mātrika assemblages in the form of rock-cut bas-relief panel either inside the rock-cut cave temple or on the rocky hillock within the vicinity of the rock-cut cave temple are found in five places in Tamil Nadu viz., Malayadipatti and Thirugokarnam in Pudukkottai district, Thirukolakkudi in Śivaganga district, Kunnathur and Thiruparankundram in Madurai district. Totally, there are six assemblages, each one in the former four of the places, whereas at Thiruparankundram two mātrika assemblages are seen. These Mātrika assemblages can be taken as the earliest assemblages in Tamil Nadu as they are associated with rock-cut cave architecture. Rock-cut cave architecture forms the early phase of temple architecture in the stone medium and emerged during the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE and flourished till the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE in the Tamil country. This paper attempts to bring to the limelight, the placement, measure and iconographic*

*excellence of the earliest known Māṭṛika assemblages of Tamil Nadu. The above said analysis also helps us to understand the significance of the Māṭṛika cult in Tamil society.*

**Keywords:** *Sapta-māṭṛikas, Sapta-māthas, Iconography, Rock-cut Cave Temples, Sculptures, Temple Architecture.*

The *Sapta-māṭṛika* or *Saptamātā* is an assemblage of seven mother goddesses, the female counterparts of the Hindu male pantheons of higher order. Among the various pantheons of worship, *Sapta-māṭṛikas* appeared an important form of worship in Tamil society and the earliest trace of or *Sapta-māṭṛika* worship is seen in the Tamil epic *Śilappadigāram*. As per iconographic tradition, the seven mother goddesses are depicted seated in *sukhāsana* on a pedestal guarded by Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa in which the assemblage begins with the former and ends with the latter. *Sapta-māṭṛika* assemblages in the form of rock-cut bas-relief panel either inside the rock-cut cave temple or on the rocky hillock within the vicinity of the rock-cut cave temple are found in five places in Tamil Nadu: Malayadipatti and Thirugokarnam in Pudukkottai district, Thirukolakkudi in Śivaganga district, Kunnathur and Thiruparankundram in Madurai district. Totally, there are six assemblages, each one in the first four places, whereas two *māṭṛika* assemblages are seen at Thiruparankundram. The assemblage inside the rock-cut cave is shown as associate members to the theme of Lord Śiva's dancing panel and the seven goddesses are also in dancing posture. The other assemblage of Thiruparankundram is depicted as a separate panel near the rock-cut cave temple on the northern side of the hillock. Hence, the *Māṭṛikas* as separate assemblage in the iconographic tradition are seen only at five places. Other than in the Thiruparankundram dancing *Māṭṛikas* the only other assemblage inside the rock-cut cave is the Malayadipatti assemblage. These *Māṭṛika* assemblages can be taken as the earliest assemblages in Tamil Nadu as they are associated with rock-cut cave architecture, which forms the early phase of temple architecture in the stone medium and emerged during the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE and flourished till the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE in the Tamil country.

**Table 1 - General details of the *Sapta- Mātrikas* Assemblages**





Place	Placement Length & breadth	Order of the Assemblage	Shape of the panel, Pedestal
Aalatturthali of Malayadipatti, Pudukkottai District	Mandapa South Wall, Length -3.15mts Height -0.84mts Depth -0.10mts	Virabhadra, Brāhmī, Māheśwarī, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Chāmuṇḍā, Gaṇēśa	Straight panel, seated on <i>upapiṭha</i> Length -3.15mts Height -0.13mts
Thirugokarnam, Pudukkottai District	Slope of the hillock Length -3.44mts Height -0.70mts	Virabhadra, Brāhmī, Māheśwarī Vaiṣṇavī, Kaumarī, Indrāṇī Vārāhī, Chāmuṇḍā, Gaṇēśa	Straight panel Plain platform H-0.12mts Length - 3.44mts
Kunnathur, Madurai District	Slope of a hillock rock-cut chamber. Length - 3.22mts Height - 1.77mts Depth - 1.26 mts	Ṛishabadēva, Brāhmī, Māheśwarī, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Chāmuṇḍā	 Shaped panel Plain pedestal, footrest Length - 3 mts Depth - 30 cms Height -50cms
Thiruparankundram Madurai District Southern Cave	On the western wall of the mandapa	Associate dancers to Lord Śiva's dancing theme. Respective objects absent Brāhmī, and Vārāhī are identified.	Shown in two sections Upper - four mothers Lower- three mothers
Thiruparankundram Madurai District Near Northern cave	Slope of the hillock Rock-cut chamber Length - 2mts Height - 1.16mts Depth -1.02mts	Virabhadra, Brāhmī, Māheśwarī, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Chāmuṇḍā, Gaṇēśa	 Shaped panel Plain pedestal Length -1.96mts Depth -0.14mts Height -0.56mts
Thirukolakkudi, Śivaganga District	Slope of the hillock Rock-cut chamber Length -3.56mts Depth -0.70mt Height -1.47mts	Ṛishabadēva, Brāhmī, Māheśwarī, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Indrāṇī Vārāhī, Chāmuṇḍā	 Shaped panel Pedestal formed as <i>upapiṭha</i> Height -0.78mts

Table No.1 illustrates that the length of the assemblages (except at Thiruparankundram) ranges between 3 mts to 3.50 mts, whereas the latter is 2 mts in length. The assemblages are shown as either a straight line panel or as half cut square shape panel (). Malayadipatti and Thirugokarnam assemblages are straight line panels, whereas the Thiruparankundram, Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur assemblages are half cut square

shaped panels. The assemblage in Lord Śiva's dancing panel at Thiruparankundram are shown in two sections the upper section with four *Mātṛikas* and the lower section with three *Mātṛikas*. The deities are shown seated on a plain pedestal or on a *upapīṭha*, for the Malayadipatti and Thirukolakkudi assemblages, the pedestal is formed as *upapīṭha* whereas for the rest of the assemblages are plain pedestal. Except for Thirugokarnam, the rest of the assemblages are shown on the same plane and the Gods are depicted without any segregation, whereas at Thirugokarnam, the partition wall is shown between the Mothers assemblage and the male Gods.

One of the interesting aspects to note in the assemblages is that the order of placement of deities varies, while at Malayadipatti, Thiruparankundram and Kunnathur, the order of arrangement is Brāhmī, Māheśwarī, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Chāmuṇḍā; the Thirugokarnam arrangement is Brāhmi, Māheśwari, Vaiṣṇavi, Kaumarī, Indrāṇi, Vārāhī, Chāmuṇḍā and the Thirukolakkudi arrangement is Brāhmi, Māheśwari, Kaumarī, Vaiṣṇavi, Indrāṇi, Vārāhī and Cāmuṇḍā. From the study, it is clear that rigid norms or uniformity were not followed in the order of placement of the mothers. However, the order of the former three is quite commonly seen in the later period. In the dancing panel, only Brāhmī and Vārāhī are able to be identified, the rest of the *Mātṛikas* look alike and their specific objects are also absent.

As per the iconographic tradition, the *Mātṛika* assemblages are guarded by Śiva and Gaṇeśa and Lord Śiva is depicted in the form of Virabhadra or Ṛishabadēva. While Malayadipatti, Thirugokarnam, Thiruparankundram are flanked by Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa, Kunnathur and Thirukolakkudi assemblages are depicted with Śiva in the form of Ṛishabadēva, besides, Gaṇeśa is also absent. Both Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa are absent for the dancing *Mātṛikas*. Among the *Mātṛika* assemblages of Tamil Nadu, Virabhadra is more commonly seen than any other form of Śiva. Ṛishabadēva as guard of *Mātṛikas* is rare and unique, whereas *Mātṛika* assemblage guarded by Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa forms the general iconographic norms and is continued in the later period.

**Table 2 – Āsanas, Mudrās, Hastas of the Saptamātrika Assemblages**

Place	Seated posture	Hands	Insignia, objects
Aalatturthali	Virabhadra - <i>yōgāsana</i> Gaṇēśa - <i>mahārājalīlāsana</i> Mothers - <i>sukhāsana</i>	All deities - four hands Back hands - <i>kartari mudrā</i> , respective objects Front hands - <i>abhaya</i> , on thigh	Flag, insignia to their right Back hands – objects
Thirugokarnam	Virabhadra – folded legs Gaṇēśa – <i>lalitāsana</i> Mothers - <i>sukhāsana</i>	Virabhadra, Brāhmī, Gaṇēśa - four hands Others deities - two hands, <i>kaṭaka-mudrā</i> , holding <i>idaikattu</i>	Absent
Kunnathur	Ṛishabadēva, Chāmuṇḍā - facing, <i>mahārājalīlāsana</i> Others Goddesses – <i>sukhāsana</i> Gaṇēśa – absent	All deities - two hands Chāmuṇḍā - sword, on thigh Other Mothers - <i>abhaya</i> near chest, on thigh	Absent
Thiruparankundram	<i>pratyālida</i> posture , half <i>mandapa</i> posture	All deities – two hands, near chest, on hip	Absent
Thiruparankundram	Virabhadra, Gaṇēśa - facing Virabhadra – <i>mahārājalīlāsana</i> Gaṇēśa - <i>lalitāsana</i> Mothers – <i>sukhāsana</i>	Except Indrāṇī all in four hands	Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī - objects
Thirukolakkudi	Ṛishabadēva, Chāmuṇḍā - facing All the deities – <i>sukhāsana</i> Rock-cut foot rest for all Chāmuṇḍā - buffalo head footrest	All deities - two hands, <i>kaṭaka</i> near chest or resting on thigh	One of their object behind their right hand

Table 2 illustrates the *hastās*, *mudrās*, *āsanas* of the *mātrikas*. Virabhadra of Malayadipatti is in *yōgāsana* with *yōga-paṭṭa*, the Virabhadra of Thiruparankundram in *mahārājalīlāsana* with *yoga-paṭṭa* entwining the left leg, whereas at Thirugokarnam, the god is seated with folded legs. The Ṛishabadēva at Thirukolakkudi is in *sukhāsana*, whereas the same at Kunnathur is in *mahārājalīlāsana*. Regarding the hand posture, the deity at

Malayadipatti, Thirugokarnam, Thiruparankundram are with four hands, whereas both the Ṛishabadēvas are only with two hands. *Kaṭaka-mudrā* forms the common *mudrā* for both Virabhadra and Ṛishabadēva but the positioning differ, some with palm facing up, some facing side and some are facing down. Only the Malayadipatti Virabhadra carries objects, viz. *paraśu* and deer in the back hands. Regarding the hairstyle, attire and ornaments, the Lords of Malayadipatti, Thiruparankundram, Thirukolakkudi are in *jaṭābhāra* whereas the Lords at Kunnathur and Thirugokarnam are in *jaṭā-makuṭa*. Except the deity at Kunnathur, the rest of the deities are decked with short attire, whereas the former is draped in long attire up to ankle. *Vastra yajñōpavita* is worn by only the Thirugokarnam and Thiruparankundram deities, in that the former is worn in *niveta* fashion, whereas the latter in *upavita* fashion. *Pātra-kunḍalas*, *charapali*, *chavadi*, *kaṅkaṇas*, *kēyūra* are the commonly seen ornaments, but the *Ṛishabadēva* of Thirukolakkudi is without any ornaments. Like the ornament, the attire of the Malayadipatti deity is much worn out. A fly-whisk is shown for Thirugokarnam and also a snake is seen entwining his waist, whereas Ṛishabha is shown with the Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur deities.

All the *Mātrikas* in all the assemblages except Chāmuṇḍā of Kunnathur and the dancing *Mātrikas* are seated in *sukhāsana*, with one leg folded flat on the floor of the pedestal and the other leg is dangling down and resting on a pedestal, whereas the Chāmuṇḍā of Kunnathur is seated in *mahārājatilāsana* and the dancing *Mātrikas* are in half *maṇḍala* or *pratyālīḍha* posture. Except the *Mātrikas* of Malayadipatti and Kunnathur, the rest of the *Mātrikas* have placed their right leg folded flat and their left leg dangling, whereas the other two are placed vice-versa. In addition, at Kunnathur, while all the mothers have placed their left leg folded flat and right leg dangling, Brāhmi is vice-versa. Similarly, Chāmuṇḍā of Malayadipatti has placed her legs in the opposite way, in comparison to her counterparts. For the *Mātrikas* of Thirukolakkudi, individual foot rests are shown; interestingly, the footrest for Chāmuṇḍā is a buffalo head. From the analysis, it is obvious that *sukhāsana* forms the usual seated posture for the *Mātrikas* but positioning of legs varies.

Table 2 illustrates that all the *Māṭṛikas* at Malayadipatti and except Indrāṇī at Thiruparankundram are shown with four hands, whereas all the *Māṭṛikas* at Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur are shown with only two hands. At Thirugokarnam, Brāhmi alone is depicted with four hands whereas the rest of the goddesses are shown with only two hands. Regarding hand posture, *Kaṭaka* is the common *mudrā* of all the *Māṭṛikas* in all the assemblages, but the positioning of the hand and palm varies. The hands are either positioned near the chest or near the abdomen or resting on the thigh; the palm may be facing up or down or sideways. Malayadipatti is the only panel where the respective weapons of the goddesses are shown in the back hands. Besides, at Thirukolakkudi, for each goddess one object is shown; at Thiruparankundram for Vaiṣṇavi, Vārāhī and Chāmuṇḍā, their respective weapons are shown. The dancing *Māṭṛikas* have placed their one hand on the hip and their other hand near the chest.

**Table 3: Details of Attire, Ornaments, Hand and Seated Postures of the Assemblages**

Deity	Posture	<i>Mudrās</i> , weapons	Makuṭa	Attire	Ornaments	other details
<b>Virabhadra</b> Malayadipatti	<i>yōgāsana</i> , <i>yoga-paṭṭa</i>	BR- <i>paraśu</i> , BL-deer FR & FL – on thigh	<i>jaṭābhāra</i>	Worn out	Worn out Traces <i>charapali</i>	
Thirugokarnam	Folded legs	Four hands - <i>kaṭaka</i> Front hands -thigh,	<i>jaṭāmakūṭa</i> head <i>paṭṭa</i>	Short attire, Snake wound waist, <i>vastra</i> <i>yajñōpavita-niveta</i>	Makara & <i>pootu kuṇḍalas</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> , <i>kan-digai</i> .	Fly whisk Partition wall shown
Thiruparankundram	<i>Mahārāja</i> <i>līlāsana</i> , <i>yoga paṭṭa</i>	Back hands- <i>kaṭaka</i> FR- <i>kaṭaka</i> near chest FL-resting on left leg	<i>jaṭābhāra</i> with a knot in the apex	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> <i>vastra</i> <i>yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i> fashion	Elongated earlobes Left- <i>patrakundala</i> <i>charapali</i> , <i>chavadi</i>	Absent
<b>Rishabadeva</b> Thirukolakkudi	<i>sukhāsana</i>	L- <i>kaṭaka</i> near chest R- <i>kaṭaka</i> & on thigh	<i>jaṭābhāra</i>	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> No <i>yajñōpavita</i>	Elongated earlobes	Rishabha seated behind

# Journal of Indian History and Culture

Kunnathur	<i>mahārāja lilāsana</i>	Both hands <i>kaṭaka</i> R- on the right leg L- on left thigh	Jaṭāmakuta with head paṭṭa	Long attire upto ankle No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Patrakunḍalas <i>Charapali, kēyūra kaṅkaṇas</i>	Rishabha shown behind the god to his right
<b>Brahmi</b> Mala- yadipatti much worn out	<i>sukhāsana</i>	Back hands- worn out FR- <i>abhaya</i> , FL-thigh	Jaṭāmakuta	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band with strap <i>Yajñōpavita – upavita</i>	Makara- kunḍalas <i>Charapali, kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , an- klets	Annam flag
Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	All hands <i>Kaṭaka</i> Front hands on thigh left hand - <i>idaikattu</i>	Jaṭāmakuta head paṭṭa	Silk attire, <i>Idaikattu</i> vastra <i>Yajñōpavita-niveta</i> , no breast band	Pootu kunḍalas <i>Kandigai, kaṅkaṇas, kēyūra</i>	
Thir- uparankund- aram	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BHS- kartari <i>Mudrā</i> FR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest FL- thigh (mu- tilated)	Jaṭāmakuta with head paṭṭa	Short attire, <i>Idaikattu</i> Breast band, <i>Yajñōpavita</i> absent	<i>Kandigai</i>	-
Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i> separate foot- rest	R-folded up <i>Kaṭaka</i> L-placed on thigh	Jaṭāmakuta , head paṭṭa & beaded ma- ment	Silk attire with heavy pleats , Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootu kunḍala <i>Charapali, kēyūra, kaṅkaṇas.</i>	Kundigai behind right hand
Kunnathur	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Jaṭāmakuta, Head paṭṭa	Long attire, breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootukunḍalas, <i>Charapali, Kēyūra kaṅkaṇas</i>	
<b>Maheswari</b> Malayadipatti	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR-deer, BL-worn out, FR- <i>abhaya</i> FL- on thigh	Jaṭāmakuta	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band with strap <i>Yajñōpavita – upavita</i>	Makara- kunḍalas <i>Charapali, kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , an- klets	Nandi
Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	Both in <i>Kaṭaka</i> RH – on thigh LH – snake	Jaṭāmakuta Head paṭṭa	Short attire, Breast band, <i>Yajñōpavita – niveta</i>	Pootu kunḍalas <i>Kandigai , kaṅkaṇas</i> Armlets	
Thiruparankun- dram Face, left hand, leg mutilated	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	Back hands – <i>Kaṭaka</i> FR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh FL – resting on thigh	Jaṭāmakuta	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> <i>Yajñōpavita</i> & breast band absent	<i>Kandigai</i> Armlets	-



## Journal of Indian History and Culture

Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> folded up L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Jaṭāmakūṭa head paṭṭa	Silk attire with heavy pleats, Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Makara-kunḍalas <i>Kandigai</i> , <i>charapali</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	Mazhu behind the right hand
Kunnathur	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- kantaka near chest L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Jaṭāmakūṭa	Long attire, Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootu kunḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>Kēyūra</i> <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	
<b>Kaumari</b> Ma- layadipatti	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR-sakthi BL-akshamālā FR- <i>abhaya</i> , FL-thigh	Karaṇḍa-ma- kuṭa Chennai	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band with strap Chhannavira	Patrakunḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>kēyūra</i> , An- klets	Peacock flag
Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	RH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh LH-damaged holding <i>idaikattu</i>	Karaṇḍa-ma- kuṭa Chennai	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> , breast band, <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – niveta	Patrakunḍalas <i>Kandigai</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> , <i>kēyūra</i>	
Thiruparankun- dram	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	Back hands - <i>Kaṭaka</i> FR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh FL – thigh	Karaṇḍa-ma- kuṭa Chennai	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> No breast band	Patrakunḍalas <i>Kandigai</i> , <i>Charapali</i> <i>Kaṅkaṇas</i> , armlets Channavira	Stick above left back hand
Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- folded up <i>Kaṭaka</i> L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	karaṇḍa-ma- kuṭa with chennai	Silk attire with heavy pleats, breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootu & makara kunḍalas, <i>kandigai</i> <i>chara-</i> <i>pali</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	Sakti be- hind the right hand
Kunnathur	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Karaṇḍa-ma- kuṭa Chennai	Long at- tire, Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Patrakunḍalas, <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>kēyūra</i>	
<b>Vaishnavi</b> Ma- layadipatti	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR prayō- gachakra BL-śaṅkha FR- <i>abhaya</i> , FL-thigh	Kiriṭamakuṭa	Silk attire, <i>id-</i> <i>aikattu</i> , breast band with strap <i>Yajñōpavita</i> - <i>upavita</i>	Makara- kunḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , An- klets	Garuda seated in anjali hasta

Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	RH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh LH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh holding <i>idaikattu</i>	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> , breast band, vastra <i>Yajñōpavita-niveta</i>	Makara-kunḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	
Thiruparankundram Head and right thigh mutilated	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	Back hands – kartari R-prayōga-chakra L- <i>śaṅkha</i> , FR- <i>Kaṭaka</i>	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Long attire, <i>idaikattu</i> <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i> No breast band		
Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> folded up L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Silk attire with heavy pleats, breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootu & makara kunḍalas, <i>kandigai charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> .	Śaṅkha behind the right hand
Kundrathur	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Long attire, breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootukunḍalas, <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	
<b>Varahi</b> Malayadipatti	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR-prayōga chakra BL- <i>śaṅkha</i> , FR- <i>abhaya</i> , FL-thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa With head paṭṭa	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band with strap <i>Yajñōpavita-upavita</i>	<i>Kaṅkaṇas</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> <i>Charapali</i> , anklets	Plough flag
Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	RH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh LH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh holding <i>idaikattu</i>	Jaṭamakūṭa with head paṭṭa	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band, vastra <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>niveta</i>	<i>kaṅkaṇas</i> , <i>kēyūra</i>	
Thiruparankundram Face and upper body mutilated	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	Back hands – kartari R-prayōga-chakra L- <i>śaṅkha</i> , FL – thigh FH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest	Mutilated	Short attire <i>Idaikattu</i>	<i>Kaṅkaṇas</i>	
Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R-folded up & <i>Kaṭaka</i> L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	karaṇḍa-makūṭa	Silk attire with heavy pleats, Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	<i>Kandigai</i> , <i>charapali</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	plough behind the right hand

Kunnathur	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R-katka near chest L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Long attire upto ankle Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootukuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	
<b>Indrani</b> Malayadipatti	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR-angusa BL-akshamālā FR- <i>abhaya</i> , FL-thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa with head ornament	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band with strap <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i>	Makara-kuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , anklets	Elephant flag
Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	RH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh LH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> holding <i>idaikattu</i>	Jaṭāmakūṭa with head paṭṭa	Silk attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Breast band, <i>vastra</i> <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>niveta</i>	Pookuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kandigai</i> <i>Kaṅkaṇas</i> , <i>kēyūra</i>	
Thiruparankundram	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	FR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near hip FL – thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Short attire <i>Idaikattu</i>	Pootukuṇḍalas <i>Kandigai</i> , Chavadi	
Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> folded up L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Silk attire with heavy pleats , Breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootu & makara kuṇḍalas, <i>Kandigai charapali</i> , <i>Kēyūra</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	vajra behind the right hand
Kunnathur	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Kiriṭamakūṭa	Long attire, breast band No <i>Yajñōpavita</i>	Pootukuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>Kēyūra</i> <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	
<b>Chamunda</b> Malayadipatti	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> -sword BL- <i>vismaya</i> FR- <i>abhaya</i> , FL- thigh	Jaṭābhāra with head paṭṭa	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i> Breast band absent	Patrakuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> , <i>Kaṅkaṇas</i> , armlets	Owl flag
Thirugokarnam	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	RH- sword LH- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Jaṭābhāra with head paṭṭa	Short attire, Skull <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i>	<i>Kēyūra</i> , <i>patra</i> , corpse kuṇḍalas, <i>kandigai</i> , <i>chavadi</i> , <i>kanakanas</i> ,	Skinny & skeletal, rib case prominent, fangs
Thiruparankundram	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	BR-sword- BL- <i>vismaya</i> FR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> near chest FL- <i>Kaṭaka</i> , skullbowl	Jaṭābhāra with a tuft knotted in the apex	Short attire, <i>idaikattu</i> Skull <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i>	Patrakuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> , <i>kēyūra</i>	In slight grin, like Daunting look absent

Thirukolakkudi	<i>Sukhāsana</i>	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> , snake L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Jaṭābhāra with knot in the apex	Short attire, Skull <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i> No breast band	Corpse kuṇḍalas, bell pendant, <i>kēyūra</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	Fangs, spewed out eyes looks daunting
Kunnathur	Maharaja lilasana	R- <i>Kaṭaka</i> , sword L- <i>Kaṭaka</i> on thigh	Kiriṭamakuṭa	Long attire, breast band and <i>Yajñōpavita</i> absent, Elongated and dangling breasts	Corpse kuṇḍalas <i>Charapali</i> , <i>kēyūra</i> <i>kaṅkaṇas</i>	Skinny, skeletal, rib case prom- inent open mouth, fangs, big eyes
<b>Ganesa</b> Malayadipatti	Mahārāja Ilāsana	BR- <i>Kaṭaka</i> , tusk BL- <i>Kaṭaka</i> , sugarcane FR-motaka FL- thigh	Karaṇḍa- makuṭa with head paṭṭa	Silk attire, <i>Idaikattu</i> heavy beads <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i>	<i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>Kēyūra</i> , <i>Udarabandha</i>	Proboscis right turned and carry motaka
Thirugokarnam	Lalitasana	BR-tusk,BL- sugarcane FR-motaka FL-thigh	Karaṇḍa- makuṭa with head paṭṭa	Short attire <i>Yajñōpavita</i> - niveta	<i>Charapali</i> , <i>kaṅkaṇas</i> <i>kēyūra</i> , <i>Udara</i> - <i>bandha</i>	Proboscis left turned, motaka
Thiruparankun- dram	Lalitasana	BR-tusk- BL-sugarcane FR-broken, FL- on leg	Karaṇḍa- makuṭa	Short attire <i>Yajñōpavita</i> – <i>upavita</i>		Probos- cis right turned, motaka

**BRH**-back right hand, **BLH**-back left hand, **FRH**-back right hand, **FLH**-front left hand, **R**-right, **L**-left

Table 3 illustrates the attire, ornaments and objects held by the *Mātrikas*. At Malayadipatti, the back hands of the *Mātrikas* are in *kartari mudrā* and carry objects, whereas the front right hand is in *abhaya* and the left hand is resting on the thigh. The objects of Brāhmi are worn out, Māheśwari is carrying a deer in one hand, while the other hand is worn out, Kaumarī *śakti* and *akshamālā*, Vaiṣṇavi and Vārāhi *prayōgachakra* and *śaṅkha*, Indrāṇi *aṅkuśa* and *akshamālā*, Chāmuṇḍā sword in one hand and the other hand is in *vismaya*. Except Thirukolakkudi Chāmuṇḍā, all the other Chāmuṇḍās carry a sword in one of their hands. *Vismaya* is shown in the back left hand by the Chāmuṇḍās of Malayadipatti and Thiruparankundram. At Thirukolakkudi,

Brāhmi is shown with *kuṇḍikā*, Māheśwari *mazhu*, Kaumari *śakti*, Vaiṣṇavi *prayōgachakra*, Vārāhi *plough*, Indrāṇi *vajra* and Chāmuṇḍā snake. *Vismaya mudrā* is specifically shown by Chāmuṇḍā whereas *kaṭaka* forms the common *mudrā* of all the deities in the assemblages. The assemblage of Malayadipatti, Thirukolakkudi and Thiruparankundram help us to understand the respective objects, weapons of the *Mātrikas*.

Regarding the hair styles, Brāhmi and Māheśwari in all the assemblages have *jaṭā-makuṭa*, decked with a head-*paṭṭa*. Brāhmi of Kunnathur is also decked with heavy beaded wear around the matted locks. For Māheśwari, head-*paṭṭa* is shown only for Thirugokarnam and Thirukolakkudi *Mātrikas*. *Kaumarī* in all the assemblages decked with *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* and *chenni*. Vaiṣṇavi and Indrāṇi in all the assemblages are decked with *kiriṭa-makuta*, but for Indrāṇi at Thirugokarnam, the locks are gathered and styled as *jaṭā-makuṭa*. Vārāhi's hair is styled differently at Malayadipatti and Kunnathur, with *kiriṭa-makuṭa*, Thirugokarnam *jaṭā-makuṭa*, Thirukolakkudi *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, whereas the head is mutilated in Thiruparankundram. Of all the assemblages, the hair dressings of the *Mātrikas* of Thirugokarnam is excellent.

On attire and ornaments, except Chāmuṇḍā of Malayadipatti and Thirukolakkudi, the rest of the mothers in the two assemblages are draped in silk attire whereas both the Chāmuṇḍās are draped in short skirts. At Thirugokarnam, Brāhmi, Vaiṣṇavi and Indrāṇi are draped in silk attire, whereas the others are decked in short skirts. Pleats are well shown for both the Malayadipatti and Thirukolakkudi assemblages and heavily spreading on the floor of the *piṭha*. Besides, *idaikattu* is also slackly worn above the lower drapery. At Thiruparankundram, all the goddesses are draped in short attire and *idaikattu* is slackly worn over it. At Kunnathur, except Chāmuṇḍā all the goddesses are adorned long attire extending upto their ankles, but pleats are absent; it denotes that the drapery is cotton attire. Besides, the noose of the *idaikattu* is shown spreading on the floor of the *piṭha*. Chāmuṇḍās of all the assemblages are draped in short attire and *idaikattu*. Among the dancing *Mātrikas* some are draped in long attire and some in short attire.

The upper drapery, that is, breast band is shown for the *Mātrikas* of Malayadipatti, Thirugokarnam, Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur, whereas for the *Mātrikas* of Thiruparankundram breast band is absent. The breast band is absent for the Chāmuṇḍā in all the assemblages. It is interesting to see the breast band at Malayadipatti has a shoulder strap. However, the breast bands of Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur are broad. *Yajñōpavita* is worn in *upavita* fashion by the *Mātrikas* of Malayadipatti, whereas the same in Thirugokarnam is worn in *niveta* fashion. *Yajñōpavita* is absent at Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur, whereas at Thiruparankundram only Vaiṣṇavi and Chāmuṇḍā are decked with *yajñōpavita*. Except Chāmuṇḍā of Kunnathur the rest of the Chāmuṇḍās are decked with skull garland *yajñōpavita*, worn in *upavita* fashion. The skull garland worn by the Thirugokarnam Chāmuṇḍā is heavy comparing to the others. The *yajñōpavita* worn by the goddesses of Thirugokarnam are varied. Kaumari at Malayadipatti is adorned with *chhannavira*. *Yajñōpavita* is worn by Malayadipatti and Thirugokarnam *Mātrikas* whereas it is absent for Thirukolakkudi, Kunnathur and Thiruparankundram. *Yajñōpavita* worn in *niveta* fashion by the deities at Thirugokarnam denotes its antiquity.

Among the ornaments, *charapali*, *kandigai* and *kēyūra*, *kaṅkaṇas* are the ornaments worn by the *Mātrikas*. *Udarabandha* is absent in all the panels. Ears are elongated for all and decked with *makara-kunḍalas* or *patra-kunḍalas* or *pootu-kunḍalas*. Usually for Vārāhi, *kunḍalas* are not shown but Kunnathur Vārāhi is decked with *pootu-kunḍalas*. Chāmuṇḍā is either decked with *patra-kunḍalas* or *corpse kunḍalas*. The *patra-kunḍalas* worn by Thirugokarnam Chāmuṇḍā is heavy. The Chāmuṇḍā of Malayadipatti, Thirugokarnam and Thiruparankundram are decked with *patra-kunḍalas*, whereas the Chāmuṇḍā of Thirukolakkudi, Kunnathur are decked with *corpse kunḍalas*. It is interesting to see that a huge corpse is shown hanging on the left ear of Kunnathur Chāmuṇḍā. The mothers of Malayadipatti are also decked with anklets. The dancing *Mātrikas* are adorned with *patra-kunḍalas*.

Of all the *Mātrikas*, Chāmuṇḍā is remarkable, each and every feature of the deity viz., attire, ornaments, appearance

and posture, highlights the daunting character of the deity. The Chāmuṇḍā of Malayadipatti and Thiruparankundram looks similar but lacks intimidating features; instead they look divine like the other *Māṭrikas*. Whereas the Chāmuṇḍās of Thirugokarnam, Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur are shown with all the traits of intimidation like fearful, scary, frightening, terrifying both in physical appearance and also in ornaments, the Chāmuṇḍā of Thirugokarnam and Kunnathur are depicted as skinny, skeletal physically, with rib bones conspicuous. In addition, their spewed out eyes, wide open mouths with fangs all add to the scary appearance.

Of all the assemblages, Malayadipatti stands out for comprehensive iconographic details. Malayadipatti *Māṭrikas* are represented by their respective flags, insignia and weapons. To the right side of the *Māṭrikas* the flag is fastened on a post and, at the crest, the respective insignia is placed. Swan is shown for Brāhmi, Nandi for Māheśwari, peacock for Kaumari, Garuda for Vaiṣṇavi, plough for Vārāhi, elephant for Indrāṇi, and owl for Chāmuṇḍā. Besides, they also carry their respective weapons in their back hands. Hence, the Malayadipatti assemblage is the only assemblage with elaborate details of *Māṭrikas*.

Gaṇeśa is seen in three of the assemblages viz., Malayadipatti, Thirugokarnam and Thiruparankundram. While the Gaṇeśa of Malayadipatti is seated in *mahārājalīlāsana*, the Gaṇeśa of Thirugokarnam and Thiruparankundram is seated in *lalitāsana*. All the three Gaṇeśa images are in short attire with *idaikattu* slackly worn above it. Thick *yajñōpavita* is worn in *upavita* fashion by Gaṇeśa of Malayadipatti and Thiruparankundram, whereas the same is worn in *niveta* fashion by the Gaṇeśa of Thirugokarnam. Decked with *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, *charapali*, *kaṅkaṇas* and *kēyūra* the deity carries sugarcane and tusk in the back hands, and in the front hands carries *mōdaka* or resting on the thigh. The possession of sugarcane in one of the hand denotes its antiquity. The proboscis turns left at Thirugokarnam, whereas for the others it is turned to the right. All carry *mōdaka* in their tusk.

## Highlights

- ◆ Except Thiruparankundram, the rest of the assemblages range between 3mts to 3.50mts of length where the former is 2mts of length.
- ◆ The assemblages are shown either a straight line panel or as half cut square shape panel (□).
- ◆ Aalattthurthali of Malayadipatti in Pudukkottai district is the only rock-cut cave temple of Tamil Nadu which accommodates the *Sapta-māṭṛika* cult inside the rock-cut cave. It denotes the significance given to the *Māṭṛika* worship in the region.
- ◆ The other assemblages within the vicinity of the rock-cut cave temples are excavated inside a rock-cut chamber.
- ◆ Among the *Māṭṛika* assemblages, the Malayadipatti assemblage is a unique and remarkable one, both in elegance and in iconographic attributes. It is noted for its comprehensive details, *Māṭṛikas* are represented with respective insignia and weapons. It helps us to understand the iconographic traits of the *Māṭṛikas*. Besides, features, attire and ornaments add elegance to the deities.
- ◆ Besides Malayadipatti, Thirukolakkudi and Thiruparankundram assemblages also possess their respective objectives but not as elaborate as the former.
- ◆ Upon features, poise and grace, the Thirugokarnam assemblage is an excellent one, its features denote its early character. It is quite interesting to see that the Gods and Goddesses are segregated with a partition wall. Besides, Goddess Indrāṇi is given significance by highlighting her features. Chāmuṇḍā is a masterpiece. Of all the assemblages the hair dressings of the *Māṭṛikas* of Thirugokarnam is excellent.
- ◆ Among the *Māṭṛikas*, the Thirukolakkudi *Māṭṛikas* look young, especially Kaumarī who looks younger than all. The



*Māṭṛikas* with a slight smile, with their heads tilted to on one side, have added grace.

- ◆ Śiva in the form of Ṛishabadēva as guard of *Māṭṛikas* is a rare and unique one. *Māṭṛika* assemblage is guarded by Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa forms the general iconographic norms in Tamil Nadu which is conspicuous in the later period assemblages.
- ◆ The variation in the order of placement of the *Māṭṛikas* in the assemblages brought forth the point that there is no rigid rule followed in the order of placement.
- ◆ It seems that seated form of *Māṭṛika* assemblage is the iconographic norm. *Sukhāsana* forms the usual seated posture but, at the same time, positioning of the legs can vary.
- ◆ *Kaṭaka* is the common *mudrā* of all the deities in the assemblages, however *vismaya* is the *mudrā* for Chāmuṇḍā.
- ◆ The *Māṭṛikas* are draped in short or long attire made of silk or cotton materials; *idaikattu* is worn slackly over it. The attire of Kunnathur *Māṭṛikas* seems like diaphanous wear.
- ◆ The upper drapery, breast band is shown for all except Thiruparankundram *Māṭṛikas*.
- ◆ It is quite interesting to see that the *yajñōpavita* is absent for the Thirukolakkudi, Kunnathur and Thiruparankundram assemblages, i.e. Pandya region. At the same time, both the Pudukkottai assemblages are decked with *yajñōpavita*. *Yajñōpavita* is worn in *niveta* fashion by the deities of Thirugokarnam and shows its early character.
- ◆ Of all the *Māṭṛikas*, Chāmuṇḍā is worth special mention, especially Thirugokarnam, Thirukolakkudi and Kunnathur. They are shown with all the traits of intimidation with a terrifying appearance, skinny, skeletal, spewed out eyes, wide open mouth with fangs, their ornaments etc. Thirugokarnam Chāmuṇḍā is a masterpiece. The buffalo head footrest for Thiurkolakkudi Chāmuṇḍā is unique.

- ◆ It is quite interesting to see in two of the panels that Gaṇeśa is absent. In the dancing panel both the male deities are absent.

## Conclusion

On the periodization of the Mātṛika assemblages, Malayadipatti rock-cut cave has a foundation inscription, and it helps us to understand its period as the early quarter of the 9th century CE and the excavator as the Muttaraiya chieftain Kuvavan Sattan. For the other Mātṛika assemblages, the period of the rock-cut cave can be taken as its period; on the basis of the earliest available inscriptions and architecture, the rock cut cave temples of Thirugokarnam, Thirukolakkudi, Kunnathur, Thiruparankundram belongs to the 8th century CE. There are about a hundred and eight rock-cut cave temples in Tamil Nadu; however, only at five rock-cut cave temples, the Mātṛika assemblages are associated. The above said five rock-cut cave temples are in the three adjacent districts viz., Pudukkottai, Śivaganga and Madurai, located in the southern parts of Tamil Nadu. During the period mentioned above, these regions were under the domination of the Muttaraiyas and Pandyas. Śivaganga and Madurai form the Pandya region, the latter being their headquarters, the region in and around Pudukkottai was under the sway of the Muttaraiyas. The incorporation of Saptamātṛikas in rock-cut architecture denotes the significance of the cult in these regions. Mātṛika worship existed in the contemporary Pallava region also i.e., the northern part of Tamil Nadu, where the Mātṛikas can be seen in the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram. However, it is quite interesting to note that out of forty-two rock cut caves of Pallavas, not even in a single rock-cut possesses the Mātṛika assemblage.

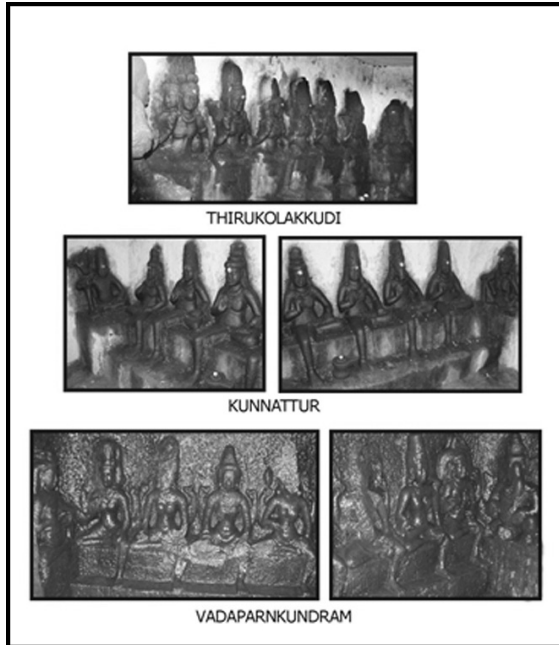
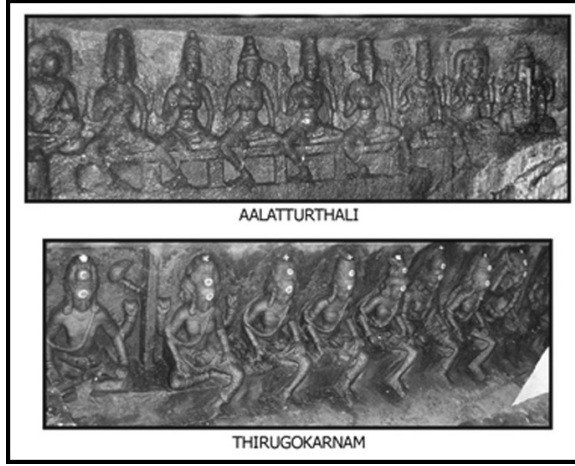
## Endnotes

1. Field visits 04-07-2007, 10-02-2008, 21-05-2010, 13-12-2011, 17-12-2017, 12-11-2018

## Bibliography

1. Gopinatha Rao T.A., *Elements of Hindu Iconography, Volume I Part I*, Motilal Banarasidass Private Limited, Delhi. 1997.
2. Gopinatha Rao T.A., *Elements of Hindu Iconography, Volume I Part II*, Motilal Banarasidass Private Limited, Delhi. 1997.
3. Ganapathi Sthapathi, *Sirpachchennul, Thozhilnutpa kalvi Iyak-kagam*, Chennai, 1978.
4. Nalini, Mu., Kalaikkovan R., *Madurai Mavattak Kudaivarai-gal*, Sekar Pathipagam, Thiruchirappalli. 2010
5. Nalini, Mu., Kalaikkovan R., *Pendeiva Vazhipadu*, Sekar Pathipagam, Thiruchirappalli. 2010
6. Nalini, Mu., Kalaikkovan R., *Pallavar, Pandiyar, Adhiyar Kudaivaraigal*, Sekar Pathipagam, Thiruchirappalli. 2012
7. Srinivasan K. R., *Cave Temples of the Pallavas*, Archaeological Survey of India. New Delhi, 1964.
8. Srinivasan K. R., *Temples of South India*, National Book Trust, India. 1972.
9. Sumitha T., *Cave Temples of Pudukkottai District – A Comparative Analysis*, (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Bharathidasan University, 2013).

***Sapta-mātrikas* of Pudukkottai, Sivaganga & Madurai Districts**



## TIGER HUNTING IN COLONIAL INDIA

**Prashanth Krishna**

Research Scholar

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

### ***Abstract***

*Tigers have lived long on the Indian sub-continent; from the seals of the Indus Valley Civilization to the rock paintings of Bhimbetka to the various deities who used the animal as their vehicle in tradition and art, the tiger has been respected and feared. Till the medieval period the forests were well-managed and wildlife protected. In the Mughal era tigers were killed in vast numbers. But it was in the British period that the large-scale decimation of the tigers began. The tiger was declared to be vermin and a price was put on his head. Hunting was recreation for the British officials while the Viceroy and senior officials shot from a howdah on the back of an elephant. It was intended to show off the paternalistic white ruler and to civilise a wild landscape, making available more land to be cultivated and taxed, thereby increasing revenue. The methods used to kill tigers were varied and cruel. Killing them was described as a 'sport' and there are several hunting tales left by the British officers and travellers. Between 1875 and 1925, over 80,000 tigers were killed by the British and the Maharajas. Post-independence, the slaughter continued by Maharajas and tourists till only 1827 were left in the first-ever tiger census in 1972, when the Wildlife Protection Act and Project Tiger were both launched. Since the 1990s the tiger has been struggling to survive despite habitat loss and poaching for its skin and body parts used in Chinese medicine.*

**Keywords:** *Tiger, Mughals, British, Hunting, Vermin, Paternalism.*

The seals of the Indus Valley Civilization contain wild animals such as the elephant, water buffalo, rhinoceros, deer, gazelle, antelope, wild sheep, goat, ibex, and carnivores such as tiger, leopard, rhinoceros and elephant,<sup>1</sup> which means that the area was once covered with thick forests. Tigers live in swamps, grasslands and rainforests, where there are trees, bushes and tall grass which protect the animals from the sun and help them to camouflage with their surroundings and surprise their prey. They love the water and are very sensitive to heat.

On the seals of the Indus Valley Civilization, the tigers are not only depicted as lone beasts but often standing below a khejarli tree on which is seated a woman in a yogic pose. The khejarli is the tree of Katyayini, a form of Durga, so this could be a proto-Durga<sup>2</sup>. The tiger is associated with Shakti or Goddess Durga; Ayyappa of Sabarimala and the planet Rahu rides the tiger; Vaghdeo / Vaghoba of Maharashtra and Huliraya of Karnataka are tiger deities<sup>3</sup>. Bon Bibi of Bengal is a guardian spirit of the forests venerated by both Hindus and Muslims; she is venerated by the honey-hunters and woodcutters before entering the forest for protection against attacks by tigers. It is believed that the demon king, Dakkhin Rai, her arch-enemy appears disguised as a tiger and attacks human beings. Her vehicle is the tiger<sup>4</sup>. Tigers appear in the wall paintings of Bhimbhetka (in Central India). The tiger was venerated in ancient India, in the Vedic and folk traditions. While the Rig Veda does not mention the tiger, several hymns of the Yajur Veda (5.5.7) and Atharva Veda (12.1.49) do. When Rama, prince of Ayodhya, leaves on his exile to the forest, his mother Kausalya says, “May the huge elephants not harm you my dear son, nor the lions, tigers, bears, boars or ferocious horned buffalo<sup>5</sup>.” The *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya, in its classification of forests, specifically mentions the *vyāla vana* reserved for tigers (*vyāla* means tiger) and other wild animals<sup>6</sup>. Conservation was taken a couple of notches higher during the Mauryan period. Following Emperor Ashoka’s acceptance of Buddhism, the forests and the creatures within were proffered protection. Relinquishing

the royal hunt was only a small part of his orders, which are preserved for posterity in the 'Fifth Edict' on the pillar at Delhi-Topara, by which he granted protection to a number of birds and animals "that were neither useful nor edible" and while he did not ban the practice of eating meat, he forbade hunting and poaching<sup>7</sup>.

Hunting acquired primacy and pageantry during the Mughal era. Although no records were maintained, there are paintings of Babur on a horse killing a tigers. Mughal Emperor Akbar's reign gave rise to the tradition of trophy hunting or *shikar* in India, where tigers were massacred in large numbers (Fig. 1). The hunters would often keep a part of the hunted animals as a souvenir. In the first twelve years of his reign, Jahangir killed over 17000 animals, including 86 tigers and lions. Wild meats were highly priced, perhaps explaining the large number of birds and herbivores hunted down. The Mughal palate was used to 35 to 40 meat dishes at a proper meal. In the Mughal imagination, it was the tiger and the lion that played a key role. Tigers were encountered even in the ravines along the river Yamuna close to Delhi and Agra<sup>8</sup>.

After the historic Battle of Plassey in 1757, the British decreed special rewards for any tiger killed. The British animosity to the forest and its wild inhabitants stemmed from the fact that much of Eastern India had suffered a severe famine around 1770. As a result, large areas of farmland remained uncultivated and reverted to jungle, an ideal habitat for deer, wild boar and tiger. Saving draught cattle extended the area under agriculture. Fewer tigers meant more crop cultivation and more revenue, their elimination a blessing. Greater rewards were given for killing tigresses, and special prizes for killing or capturing cubs<sup>9</sup>. The British decimation of Indian wildlife had begun.

Hunting was a standard recreation for the British officials – civil, military and forest. Every army men participated in the hunt, creating an image of a 'manly' killer of wildlife. The officers even took leave to pursue the hunt. The British had a patriarchal approach towards hunting. Col. Richard Burton played saviour to

villagers threatened by a tiger at Mudkhol in the Deccan. He states: 'An official of the railway staff saw the tiger and sent news to me, adding that the villagers were loud in their complaints against the beast.' He sat on a tree, the tiger was brought out of its hiding place by the beaters, and Burton killed it with his .005 Express rifle. Here was the patriarch ready to protect the 'helpless' natives from the clutches of an evil beast<sup>10</sup>.

The '*howdah*' *shikar* borrowed from the Mughals involved the least risks, but it was expensive and meant only for the glitterati and high-ranking officials. Reginald Gilbert alludes to the advantage of *howdah shikar*: 'I know nothing grander than following up a wounded tiger on a good staunch elephant. From a position of perfect safety, you are able to hold all the grandeur of the charge of an infuriated tiger, and to have all the fun of the sport without the danger of it<sup>11</sup>.'

There were two primary forms of the hunt or *shikar*. The *howdah shikar*, i.e., from atop an elephant was ideal to project the difference between the macho English ruler and the poor helpless native. It was a mechanism created to overawe the onlookers and thereby establish supremacy. Another form of *shikar* was hunting from a *machan*, i.e., a platform on a treetop or a perch on a tree. But this form of sport was risky and meant only for the seasoned *shikari* (native hunter). Recounts Col. Burton: 'An hour passed, then I heard a shot fired by the head *shikari* as a signal for the beat to begin. A renewal of shouts and rattling of sticks set everything in the forest on the move; first to appear were the peafowl and the jungle fowl... several jackals came slinking by ... small birds fluttered from trees.... Soon the form of the tiger is viewed through the vista of bamboos and tree trunks.... He looks huge; his ruff stands out white on either side of his neck. The placing of the first shot is everything. With a grunt the great brute bounced forward, but then comes the welcome call from Abdul, '*giryaya, margaya*'—He is fallen, he is dead<sup>12</sup>.

Wild animals were hunted, to 'civilize' a wild landscape, a negative attitude based on the Biblical concept of an unproductive 'wilderness' that has haunted western thought and action<sup>13</sup>, and



thus remove all impediments to settled agriculture. The animals which were perceived as 'pests' were those that challenged a peaceful, settled life: tigers, snakes, elephants, wild boar and even birds like sparrows and parrots which threatened crops. The wild landscape needed to be conquered, and killing wild animals that roamed was imperative. In fact, it was 'reward hunting' more than sports hunting which destroyed the country's wild animals. Henry Shakespear, writing in *The Wild Sports of India*, wrote that 'a tiger strangles his victim to drink its blood' and, being a devout Christian, proposed to convert the natives to Christianity by saving them from the fangs of ferocious beasts. He advises the British hunter who could also "save the bodies of these ignorant heathen (Indians) from the fell destroyer that lives in the forest and preys upon them. Who shall say that the poor idolater saved by the latter from destruction shall not become converted to Christianity by the former?"<sup>14</sup>

The tiger was a magnificent animal that inspired both awe and fear. Travellers' accounts and memoirs abound in tales of European deaths when tigers seized people on journeys, on picnics or out hunting. William Blake's, *Tiger! Tiger! Burning Bright in the Forests of the Night*, with its repeated use of the word 'dread', was known to most 19th century school children, so the primary objective of a *shikar* expedition was to 'get a tiger'. E. Gouldsbury of the Indian Police Force states: 'This may seem incredible, for it must be borne in mind that a tiger, seen for the first time at large in its own jungles, is a sight few sportsmen ... can look on without experiencing a feeling of intense excitement, coupled with an almost uncontrollable desire to possess its head and skin ... it is (an) insatiable longing<sup>15</sup>.'

News of the appearance of a man-eater had a powerful impact on any district. Stories developed into myths and legends. Superstitions were rife among Indians and Europeans alike, and the man-eating tiger was the brute that attracted the greatest attention. 'All the tigers of this Jeypore country are potential man-

eaters and readily take a man if they meet him after dark,' opined Col. Richard Burton<sup>16</sup>.

Unfortunately, hunting tigers was a sign of ruler's privilege in the sub-continent. The tiger was seen in a negative light as a 'cunning silent, savage enemy', a pleasure to outwit and shoot, to end 'the fearful ravages' it committed against the people. District level administrations went out of their way to facilitate hunts, local maharajas and zamindars lent their elephants, and peasants were employed as beaters. Officers and soldiers were encouraged to spend their vacations acquiring trophies. The relative shyness of the tiger was read as a sign of an essentially depraved nature, and eliminating tigers made the jungle safe for the wood cutter and cattle-grazer. The image was created of the brave white men defending hapless mothers whose children fell prey to wild beasts.

The tiger was declared to be vermin and a bounty of Rs. 25 was paid for every animal killed. While bounty-killing may not have played a major role in exterminating large mammals, it undoubtedly tipped populations over the edges in places where habitat was under increased pressure. In fact, the numbers of animals killed for rewards were often a good index of the land deforested for agricultural expansion. Over 80,000 tigers were slaughtered between 1875 to 1925. It is possible that this was only a fraction of the numbers actually slain for rewards. Officials recorded only the cases where they paid out a sum of money. A delay in claiming bounty meant that the killing went unrewarded and unrecorded. The large impact on tigers was limited to central India, United Provinces and Bengal, with their extensive forests and abundant wild prey. Even here, its range was limited to hill forests, marshes and less accessible regions<sup>17</sup>.

Indian lives were of little value. William Rice opens his book with an account from the summer of 1851: "We commenced our third expedition in March, 1851, having obtained leave of absence from the 14th day of that month to the 14th June, 1851,

for the express purpose of shooting large game.” They were helped by beaters (on foot), who were sometimes mauled or killed by escaping tigers. Near Rajghur, Rice and his men chased three tigers but could not find the wounded tigers. So they set fire to the grass. They tried to save the skins but unfortunately, “we came upon the dead tiger, over which the fire had just passed, singeing off its hair, and so spoiling completely the skin. The smoke from the burning grass had prevented our seeing the body in time to save the skin. We cut off the beast’s head and claws, besides taking out the ‘collar bones’.” He adds: “The natives superstitiously regard them as ‘charms’ against evils, and have the same notion of the tiger’s claws, a pair of which is worn by their children round the neck for protection against all harm. The Bheels call these bones ‘gojbul’ and say their use is to give more force to the tiger’s blow, when with his paw he strikes down his prey<sup>18</sup>.”

Often, man-eaters were created if not found. This helped in legitimizing their annihilation as well as to magnify the achievements of the sahibs as killing a dreaded beast needed great courage and grit. It also helped the colonial endeavour to project itself as the ‘protector’. The hunting books are full of stories of tigers with over a hundred human victims to their credit, some of which were never destroyed, while others inspired startling deeds of avenging heroism on the part of the bereaved relatives<sup>19</sup>. Whereas in the past, threatened villagers would have turned to the professional *shikari* with his muzzle-loaded gun, traps or poisoned arrows, now they increasingly looked to the British officials for protection. The latter were ever ready to help as that suited their objective of emerging as the great protector. Every ICS man, army officer or policeman was credited to be a tiger-slayer (although many spent their entire career in India without ever encountering a tiger) and developed a patriarchal approach to hunting. This protective function was even more significant in the case of the tigers that took to killing domestic stock. Percy Wyndham, Collector of Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh (1905–1915), a first-rate *shikar* district, was called the ‘Bagmaroo (tiger-killer) sahib’ as he killed quite a few tigers in the district<sup>20</sup>. This protection service

was normally performed from a *machan* with a tethered live bait (goat or young buffalo) or the tiger's recent kill, even if it were human remains (despite the protests of the relatives). The more intrepid tiger hunters shot on foot, having the tigers beaten to them by amassed forces of local villagers. Some British hunters would divide the reward among his followers, although the rewards doled out were often very measly. Here was the superior giving *bakshis* (tips) to the subservient.

Tiger *shikar* for sport rather than protection was normally conducted from elephant-back, again with the aid of a large army of beaters, but this was pursued by senior officials, and women could participate either as spectators or even as shots. The 'state' version saw the hunters seated in *howdahs* on the backs of elephants, and the tigers were always driven towards them. There were rules about the order in which the guns on a line of elephants were permitted to fire, about the positioning of the elephants according to the status of the occupants and the right of the 'first shot' to acquire the skin. Each viceroy had to indulge in the obligatory tiger shoot and often secured 'record' tigers because the method of measuring them was more favourable in the case of the Viceroy<sup>21</sup>. With several hunters mounted on elephants attacking a single tiger, the poor animal did not have a chance (Fig. 2).

After ascending the throne in 1911, King George V and his retinue travelled north to Nepal, slaying 39 tigers in 10 days. Colonel Geoffrey Nightingale shot more than 300 tigers. In the 1920s, Umed Singh II, the Maharaja of Kotah, modified a flaming red Rolls Royce Phantom for tiger safaris in the Rajastani hills, outfitting it with spotlights for night hunting, a mounted machine gun and a Lantaka cannon. Newly-crowned Rewa Kings in Central India thought it auspicious to slay 109 tigers after their coronation. Shooting a tiger was a coming-of-age ritual for young Indian princes. "Over 80,000 tigers...were slaughtered in 50 years from 1875 to 1925. It is possible that this was only a fraction of the numbers actually slain." Not all were trophy-hunted: In some regions, the cats were considered vermin, systematically exterminated with incentive from government bounties <sup>22</sup>.

The sahibs took great care to click photographs with their kill, posing with the dead animal - gun in hand and one leg on the carcass - testifying to the fact that they wanted to prove to the onlookers their masculine prowess and invincibility, although most often the job of finding and even killing the animal was accomplished by the native *shikari*. The animal was measured after it was killed was to revel in having killed a huge beast, to show how courageous and powerful they were.

Carnivores like the tiger found no place in the scheme of fair play. Poisoning carnivores, tying baits to lure big cats or shooting tigers from elephants - practices which break every ethical canon - were necessary aberrations in the larger project of ridding the countryside of dangerous animals<sup>23</sup>.

In addition to the categorization of wildlife as game or vermin, colonial hunters also identified them according to the 'quality' of sport they provided. Carnivores were said to provide the best sport. For instance, it was generally accepted that the best sport was provided by a half grown young cub "who has never experienced a reverse, and who will come down at the charge, roaring like a fiend, whenever his royal privacy is intruded upon." The young cub, though not as dangerous or formidable as a full grown tiger, roared, charged and attacked sportsmen, making the encounter infinitely more dramatic. Adult tigers often escaped or attacked more silently. The danger posed by retaliatory carnivores justified the otherwise unsporting practices of game hunting<sup>24</sup>.

The District Manual of Coimbatore mentions that 93 were poisoned in 1874 as part of East India Company's tiger eradication program. G.P. Sanderson mentions plentiful tigers in Mysore in 1882 (*Thirteen Years Among the Wild Beast of India*), and in 1900 CEM. Russell (*Bullets and Stork in Hidden Forests, Plains and Hills*) considered that their extinction would happen after a very long time. In 1911, F.W.F. Fletcher (*Sport on the Nilgiris and in Wynnad*) described Wynnad as a happy hunting ground where tigers were extremely numerous and a dozen used to be killed every year. Tigers were found on the island of Bombay as late as 1929. The Royal Bengal tiger of the Sundarbans, who lived an

almost amphibious life in the saline swamps of the Brahmaputra delta, had become a legend<sup>25</sup>. Madras, which was originally known as Puliur (Tiger country) had lost every wild cat.

There were an estimated 40,000 tigers in 1947 and the range was widely spread out from western Burma to western India and from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari. The Western Ghats were one of the strongholds of wildlife in India. The late Maharaja of Mysore and his guests shot over a hundred tigers between 1945 to 1967. The Maharaja was disappointed that he could not make a personal score of 100, having killed 95 tigers<sup>26</sup>. In their zeal to collect trophies, the Indian princes outstripped their British masters. The Maharaja of Udaipur and Raja of Gauripur shot 500 tigers each, while the Nawab of Tonk bagged 600. Ramanuj Saran Singh Deo of Sarguja had the record of killing 1100 tigers. Colonel Kesri Singh of Jaipur boasted that he had participated in 1000 tiger shoots<sup>27</sup>. This does not include the leopards, wild boars and other large cats they all killed.

In 1872, Captain J. Forsyth, Settlement Officer and Deputy Commissioner of Nimar in what was then the Central Provinces, was one of the first to express concern at the losses in the tiger population in the Narmada Valley of Madhya Pradesh. In 1882, Captain J.H. Baldwin spoke of the good old days when one could bag a dozen tigers in a fortnight, whereas in his time only two or three could be obtained in the same period. In 1900, Russell recorded his objection to the reward being offered for every tiger killed in Mysore, as he feared it would lead to the destruction of tigers there. It did. In 1930, A.I.R Glasford drew attention to the commercialisation of tiger trophies: the prize of skin was Rs. 200/- , and a rug with a mounted head cost Rs. 300/-. The trophies were collected by local dealers and resold to co-operative societies in Bombay and Calcutta, where Europeans returning home bought them as souvenirs<sup>28</sup>. Records show that at least 20,000 were killed by the British and the Indian Maharajas between 1860 and 1960<sup>29</sup>.

The first-ever all-India tiger census was conducted in 1972 which revealed the existence of only 1,827 tigers. There were

only 191 tigers, which were left in the Western Ghats. Project Tiger was launched on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1973, in Corbett National Park, as a wildlife conservation project initiated in India in 1972 to protect the Bengal tiger by conserving it in specially constituted tiger reserves, representative of various bio-geographical regions throughout India. Initially, nine tiger reserves were created in the country based on a 'core-buffer' strategy. Today, there are twenty-nine tiger reserves in India. The main achievement of this project was an increase in the tiger population in the reserve areas, from a mere 268 in nine reserves in 1972 to above 1,000 in twenty-eight reserves in 2006. Project Tiger helped increase the population of these tigers from 1,200 in the 1970s to 3,500 in the 1990s. Since the early 1990s, the tiger population suffered a setback due to habitat destruction and large-scale poaching of the animals for their skins and bones. It was discovered that tigers had been wiped out of Sariska, a Project Tiger sanctuary in Rajasthan. Habitat loss and poaching – for pelts, and components for traditional Chinese medicine - are important threats to species survival. Farmers blame tigers for killing cattle and shoot or poison them. The beautiful skin of the tiger has sounded its death knell<sup>30</sup>. The current population of wild Bengal tigers in the Indian subcontinent is estimated to be around 2,967, with more than half of them in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, according to the latest tiger estimation report for 2018<sup>31</sup>.

If the tiger did survive it was because much of its home was in the hill forests. Prime tiger habitat like the tarai grasslands of North India or the mangrove of the delta of the river Ganga were inhospitable for humans. The lion and the cheetah lived in the open plains and scrub jungle of North India, and were wiped out. The animals were no longer safe where humans lived. A new page had been turned in the story of wildlife-human encounters in South Asia. The British left their deep mark on the natural world. It was a combination of bounty hunting, killing for trophies and designating the beautiful predator as vermin that had reached such unprecedented levels as to nearly wipe them off the sub-continent.

## References

1. J. M. Kenoyer, 'Master of Animals and Animal Masters in the Iconography of the Indus Tradition', in *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, eds. Derek B. Counts and Bettina Arnold Archaeolingua Alapítvány, Budapest, 2010, p. 39.
2. N. Krishna, *Sacred Plants of India*, Penguin Books, Gurgaon, 2014, pp. 8-9.
3. N. Krishna, '*Sacred Animals of India*', Penguin Books, Delhi, 2010, pp.233-238.
4. Sufia Uddin, "Beyond National Borders and Religious Boundaries: Muslim and Hindu Veneration of Bonbibi", in Mathew N. Schmalz, Peter Gottschalk (eds.) *Engaging South Asian Religions: Boundaries, Appropriations and Resistances*, State University of New York Press, New York, 2011, pp. 61–82.
5. M. Rangarajan, *India's Wildlife History*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2005, p.1.
6. N. Krishna, *Hinduism and Nature*, Penguin Books, Gurgaon, 2017, p. 37.
7. E. Hultzsch, *Inscriptions of Ashoka* (translation), 1925, (Public domain).
8. Rangarajan, *op.cit.*, pp.14-15.
9. *Ibid*, p. 23.
10. Jacqueline Toovey, ed., *The Tigers of the Raj—The Shikar Diaries 1894–49 of Col. Burton, Sportsman and Conservationist*, Sutton Publishing Ltd, London, 1987, p. 10.
11. Reginald Gilbert, 'Wounded Tigers—How Should They Be Killed?' *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society (JBNHS)* 9 (1894): 61.
12. Toovey, *op. cit.*, pp. 14–15.
13. R.B. Leal, *Wilderness in the Bible: Toward a Theology of Wilderness*, Peter Lang Publishing Inc., New York, 2004, p. 65.
14. Henry Shakespear, *The Wild Sports of India*, Smith, Elder & Co., 1860, pp. 1-2.



15. CE Gouldsbury, *Tigerland: Reminiscences of Forty Years of Sport and Adventure in Bengal*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1913, p. 261.
16. Toovey, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
17. Rangarajan, *op. cit.*, pp.31-32.
18. William Rice, *Tigers on Foot' from Tiger Shooting in India; Being an Account of Hunting Experiences on Foot in Rajpootana, During the Hot Seasons, from 1850 to 1854*, Smith, Elder, London, 1857, in *The Oxford Anthology of Indian Wildlife*, Vol. II, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2004, pp.25-32.
19. Charles Allen, *Plain Tales from the Raj: Images of British India in the Twentieth Century*, BBC Books, London, 1975, p. 135.
20. Y. D. Gundevia, *In the Districts of the Raj*, Disha Books, Bombay, 1992, p. 166.
21. Nigel Woodyatt, *My Sporting Memories: Forty Years with Note-Book and Gun* (London, 1923), p.12.
22. <https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2014/03/10/a-concise-history-of-tiger-hunting-in-india/>. Accessed on 24-05-2020.
23. J.G Elliot, *Field Sports In India 1800-1947*, Gentry Books, London, 1973, p. 95.
24. James Inglis, *Tent Life in Tigerland: Being sporting reminiscences of a pioneer planter in an Indian frontier district*, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, London, 1888, p. 110.
25. K. Sankhala, *The Story of the Indian Tiger*, Lustre Press Pvt. Ltd., 1997, p. 53.
26. Ibid.
27. M. Rangarajan, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-40.
28. Ibid, p. 79.
29. V. Thapar, "The Cult of the Tiger", *Sanctuary*, Vol. XV, No. 1, 1995.
30. N. Krishna, *Sacred Animals of India*, p. 240.
31. <https://bigcatsindia.com/tiger-census-2018/>. Accessed on 24-05-2020.



Fig. 1

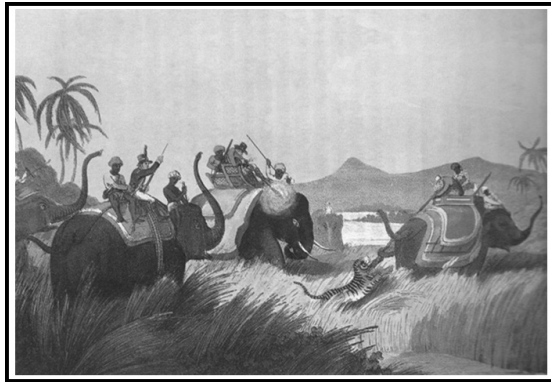


Fig. 2

## THE PERSECUTION OF ŚAIVAS AND THEIR SOJOURN TO SOUTH INDIA FROM SOUTH-EAST ASIA DURING 12<sup>TH</sup>-13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES

**K. V. Ramakrishna Rao**

25 (Old.9), Venkatachala Iyer Street  
West Mambalam, Chennai

### ***Abstract***

*Burmese historians assert that history starts with Anawrahta, who was the first king to unite different kingdoms and make Burma into a strong kingdom involving in maritime trade, education, religious reformation etc. He replaced the existing belief system with Theravada Buddhism, and thus the other faith believers were persecuted. Before 11th century CE, definitely, history was there, believers lived and they were Hindus, both Śaivites and Vaishnavites. During the persecution, most of them were converted to Theravada Buddhism and the rest escaped to India. After 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, as the Chinese and Arabs / Mohammedans started dominating, the Buddhist sects divided further and they could not tolerate with the Indian faiths. The conversion that had gone unchecked subverted the various believers. Not only did the converted Buddhists fight each other, but also with Vaishnavites and Śaivites. The converted Vaishnavites and Śaivites, because of the political compulsions fought with each other under new Buddhist banners, leading to downfall of Hindus. With the political patronage, the extreme Theravada sects engaged in the destruction of places of worship. The archaeological evidence and the remnants of the sculptures prove the fact. Therefore, with the available evidences and old books, correlating with the data, the history has to be written and preserved for the progeny.*

**Keywords:** Śaiva, South India, Asia, Anawrahta, Buddhism, Theravada.

### **Anawratha (1044-1077 CE) persecuting Pre-Theravada believers**

The appearance of Anawrahta [Maha Yaza Thiri Aniruddha Dewa 1014-1077 CE] and his dynasty in the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE have been inexplicable with the available historical evidence<sup>1</sup>. Burmese historians assert that he was the first king to unite different kingdoms and make Burma into a strong kingdom involved in maritime trade, education, religious reformation etc. Interestingly, Anawrahta, like Rajendra Chola, classified cities and towns for taxation purposes, probably after conducting a proper survey. He improved irrigation and made lands fertile with grain production. He replaced the existing belief system with Theravada Buddhism<sup>2</sup>, thus the other believers were persecuted. Although he could control, contain and decimate the earlier believers, the “Nat worship” posed a great challenge to him. The Ari monks had been influential and they did not want people to be converted to Buddhism. Therefore, he took severe action and enslaved them to become soldiers of his army. The Ari monks were not ordinary religious, spiritual or devout monks, but warrior monks. He attacked Thaton (the Ramannadesa or Sriksetra) in 1057 CE and virtually carried away everything from there<sup>3</sup>. All the temples were targeted and the idols, were destroyed, seized and left out and sent to “Nat-Hlaung Kyaung,” known as “the prison of the gods.” Maung Htn Aung, an expert of the Burmese chronicles described the events as follows<sup>4</sup>:

*“When Anawrahta made Theravada Buddhism the national religion of the country there was opposition from the Aris, as could be expected, and because they exercised great influence over the people, the king had no choice but to resort to religious persecution. The Ari monks were unfrocked and made to serve in the royal armies. All the images of the gods of the planets and the Hindu gods were seized and placed in a Vishnu temple, which was renamed ‘the prison of the Gods’”.*

Why one form of Buddhism – Mahayanam - should be

hated by another form of Buddhism - Hinayanam or Theravada - is inexplicable. Therefore, a reasonable doubt arises that the Ari group could be Vaishnavite, existing in those areas. Moreover, Buddhism was atheistic, without idol worship, rites, rituals etc., involving other paraphernalia. Yet, Anawratha targeted Ari believers and their head monk.

### **Who were Ari monks and the origin of Shin Arahan**

The Ari monks were nothing but monks of “Ari Buddhism,” practicing tantric worship; Ari Gaing was the name given to the religious practice common in Burma, existing since the 7<sup>th</sup> cent CE, introduced by Indian or Tibetan traders. Their frescoes of a Nepalese or north Bengali type are still to be seen at shrines near Pagan and their influence spread to northern Burma<sup>5</sup>. These Tantric groups entered Burma through Assam, Manipur and Bengal. The Venerable Shin Arahan, formally known as Dhammadassi Mahathera, (c. 1034 – 1115 CE) was the monk who converted the Pagan Kingdom to Theravada Buddhism (c. 1056 to 1115 CE). The monk, though considered to be a native of the Thaton Kingdom, was born to a Brahmana. Evidence strongly suggests that the Theravada Buddhism of Shin Arahan and early Pagan was strongly influenced by Hinduism as compared to later and more orthodox standards. Within 75 years of Shin Arahan’s death, the Buddhism of Pagan realigned with the Mahavihara school of Ceylon, although the Kanchipuram-Thaton school lasted 200 more years before finally dying out. Buddhism was flourishing in Kanchipuram during the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> cent CE period with the teachers Aryadeva (successor of Nagarjuna), Dinnaga, Dhammapada and others. The Buddhist institutions were instrumental in spreading Theravada Buddhism to the Mon Kingdom of Burma and Thailand. Thus, the South Indian influence has been significant in the south of the Mon Kingdom of Thaton, which adopted its Buddhism from Conjeevaram. Incidentally, the statue of Sri Arahan appears as a Vaishnavite. His establishment of four temples at four places for worship four divisions of time is a proof<sup>6</sup>. The Burmese chronicles report that Shin Arahan was born of a Brahmana’s virgin wife and this is evidently to suppress the facts or erase the historical fact of

the Kanchipuram connection. Therefore, Vaishnavites of Thaton region might have been converted to Theraada Buddhism by the guru Shin Araham.

### **Why have the historians been silent about the pre-Theravada religion of Burma?**

As there has not been any evidence available, and only the Burmese chronicles are available, historians start history from the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE, dubbing earlier history as myth, as it has been based on Purana like narratives. However, D. G. E. Hall accepts the narrative of the Alexandrian scholar, Ptolemy's note that the inhabitants of the Irawaddy Delta were cannibals<sup>7</sup> i.e. human-flesh eaters. Ironically, Ptolemy's writings are doubted now and the manuscripts attributed to him are available only from 1300 CE without any authenticity<sup>8</sup>. In this context, the Vajrayana, Vamachara, Kapalika and other Tantric cults would have indulged in such practices that were shunned by others. Moreover, as the Burmese chronicles begin with the supposed foundations of Taguaung in 850 BCE, obviously copying from the Indian legends in Sanskrit and Pali, they are not acceptable as history. G. H. Luce<sup>9</sup> pointed out Burma's debtness to Pagan. About the religion that existed, he observed that, *"It was mixed up with Hindu Brahmanaanic cults, Vaisnavism in particular. It was tinged with Mahayanism, and towards the end of the dynasty at least with Tantrism. It rested doubtless on a deep primitive bed of Naga and Nat worship. The Buddhism itself was extraordinarily anthropomorphic."* Already, Nihar Ranjan Ray elaborated as to how both Vaishnavism and Saivism existed with sculptural evidence<sup>10</sup>. He also pointed out the impact of Sanskrit on the philosophy, ethics, literature and other aspects of the people<sup>11</sup>. About the Ari sect, he has dealt with it in one chapter along with another group, "Samanakuttakas," all were following tantric Buddhism<sup>12</sup>.

### **Whether the Samanakuttas were Tantric Buddhists, Jains or heretics of other faith**

The Samanakuttakas were known as pseudo recluses, posing as Buddhists; they used to mislead the laity with false

religious doctrines and debased the Buddhist religion by corrupt practices. The Sasanavamsa<sup>13</sup> notes that the Samanakuttakas were from Tambadipa (comprising districts of Pagan Ava, Pinya and Myemzaim) in the Maramma circle or Burma proper and the town Arimaddana (Pagan) was their stronghold. All their religious manoeuvres, were basically connected with the recital of Paritta [protecting mantras<sup>14</sup>]. Even the murderers, parricides and perpetrators of heinous crimes were expiated from the sins committed by way of reciting particular portions of Paritta. Considering the rituals followed, some scholars<sup>15</sup> hold that they were the Mahayanists practicing Tantricism, as their behaviour resembled the Vamacharis and Kapalikas. Therefore, it could not have happened immediately in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century. In Tamil, Samana denotes Jains. Here, though, the Samanakuttas were defrocked and dress removed, as has been described, they were considered as “heretical” only. As the Tantric groups were trying to interfere with the armies of the fighting dynasties, they might have also acted as mercenaries switching loyalties to different groups. In any case, the religious activities exhibited among the groups prove that they were engaged in violent activities affecting the common people.

### **The Thirty-seven Nat devatas and their accommodation by Anawratha in Theravada Buddhism**

As mentioned above, Anawratha wanted to contain the influence of the Aris or Arans and elevate Theravada Buddhism as the state religion. Thus, the “Thirty-six Nats” were made to “Thirty-seven Nats” and slowly accepted and accommodated in Theravada Buddhism<sup>16</sup>. The origin of the word “Nat” is unclear. It may be derived from the Hindu term “Natha.” which means lord, saviour or protector. As the Nathas or Devas or spirits of different categories had been the protecting gods, guards of the temples and security personnel, they were treated accordingly. As westerners interpret, it is not spirit worship, but worship of their earlier gods, evidently Hindu, as they were defeated and sent to Nath laung kyaung temple. In the analysis of these 36-Nats, Maung Htn Aung pointed out that the 36 suffered tragic and violent death affecting the psyche of the common people. Thus, in spite of oppression and

suppression, the 36-deities still reign supreme in the minds and hearts of the people<sup>17</sup>. Festivals are held and the Nat images taken in procession with lakhs of believers. When the *devas* were placed under the six categories, Catumaharajika, Tavatimsa, Yama, Tusita, Nimmamanarati and Parinimmitavasavati, the number of celestial and human years enumerated clearly show that they were imitated from the *yuga* calculation of the Hindus. Incidentally, the whole period coming to 216,000,000 is nothing but half of 432,000,000 i.e, Hindu Mahayuga. Therefore, it is evident that the new religion imposed by Anawratha was nothing but old wine in a new bottle. Thus, if the names, symbols, myths, stories, sculptural depictions and paintings of the “Thirty-seven Nats” are critically analyzed, they appear to be different Hindu gods and goddesses. Perhaps, because of the Śaiva influence, the 63 Nayanmars stories would have been distorted and the number reduced to 37. The defeated or fallen or destroyed gods were incorporated and exploited as guards, door-keepers, boundary protecting deities, etc. The transfer of such myths from one / defeated / suppressed religion to another could be noted.

### **A war between Peikthano and Duttabaung – was it between Śaivites and Vaishnavites or otherwise?**

J.G. Scott<sup>18</sup> gives the following details, “*At Thare Kettara, the excavations and the pagodas at Yathe-myo, as the old site, near Hmawza, is now called. Buddhism and Brahmanism were mixed, just as they were at Thaton, but at Yathe-myo there are proofs, whereas in the old Savarnabhumi there are none. The two most interesting pagodas in the Hermit City are the Bebe and the Bawbaw-gyi. The Bebe enshrines a stone, inscribed in an unknown character, which is conjectured to be Pyu. It may date from the seventh century, though the Pyu sept survived till the eleventh. The Bawbaw-gyi is still more interesting, for, in addition to a presentation of the Buddha taking food just before attaining Nirvana, a number of terracotta plaques have been found displaying the Linga, indicating the presence of Śivaism. Further, there is a fairy tale of a war between Peikthano in the Magwe district, and Duttabaung, of Hsare Kettara. The princess*



*of Peikthano had a magic drum, and the Prome king had three eyes. Peikthano is the Burmese transliteration of Vishnu, and Śiva had three eyes. The conclusion is that the hostilities symbolize the struggle between Śivaism and Vaishnavism. The princess lost her magic drum, but the fight cost Duttabaung one of his eyes*". This symbolically proves the destruction of idols and sculptures of Śiva and Vishnu and conversion of it into Buddhist. Thus, the Buddha idols, sculptures and images appear to be Vishnu and Śiva with explicit features. The dominant Buddhist groups subdued these groups and finally Theravada Buddhists dominated all, because of the royal patronage. Here, though, "*a war between Peikthano in the Magwe district, and Duttabaung, of Hsare Kettara,*" is mentioned in a fairy tale, the archaeological evidences prove that there was a religious strife between the groups. The fight between Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism had been explicit. Evidently, Anawratha took not only wealth and experts from Thaton, but also the priests and teachers including Shin Arahan forcefully. As he appears to be a Vaishnavite, the Buddhist intrusion, conversion and manipulation must have divided the believers of other kingdoms. Thus, whenever, smaller groups had sided with the dominant groups, their identities merged and disappear, and the skirmishes and riots appear between different groups.

### **Decoding the myth and folklore of the three-eyed King Duttabaung<sup>19</sup>**

The advent of the three-eyed king was prophesied by Buddha himself according to the Burmese chronicles. According to the story, a piece of cow-dung which was floating in the sea, came to Buddha. At the same time, a male mole also came to him. On seeing these two omens, he explained to Ananda that the mole would be incarnated as Duttabaung. When Buddha came to the house of the mole, he made offerings, but his wife could not, as she was sleeping. On waking up, she came to know that Buddha came and went away, so she got angry and decided to take a revenge against her husband in the next birth. Thus, Duttabaung was reborn as a prince in 422 BCE and was married to Pekoano. Sakra, a celestial king offered him a drum and a spear with extraordinary

power that could control his entire kingdom. However, slowly, his power started diminishing as he stopped Buddhism and resorted to Nat religion. And his wife found that it was the right time to take revenge. Thus, when he travelled by a boat on the sea, the sea waters split and he was engulfed and taken to Nagaland. Thus, her revenge was fulfilled. Here, the duo Pekaoano and Duttbuang were wife and husband, but, in another myth, they were Vishnu and Śiva. This is similar to Parvati / Dhakshayini, who took revenge against Śiva. Here, the three-eyes, drum and spear point to Śiva with Damaru and Trishul. Thus, this story proves the subjugation of Saivism in Brahmadesa, at a particular time, before Anawaratha i.e, 12<sup>th</sup> Cent CE. Duttabaung submerging and going to Nagaland might imply that he was excommunicated to the North East of India.

### **Śiva sculptures found at different places of Burma**

The Śiva sculptures with Parvati, Trimurthy etc., were found at various places in Burma dated to first century to 12<sup>th</sup> century CE. Some of them are listed as follows:

1. The sculpture at Mrauk-U,
2. Bull from the Vesali excavations
3. Dwarapala Nandisa sculpture found near Wethali village<sup>20</sup>.
4. Linga base found near Nibuzashrik
5. Śiva and Parvati from Thotan, kept in the Rangoon University library.
6. Shiba from Nat-hlaung-byang, Pagan city.
7. Śiva found among Trimurty, arising from the navel of Vishnu at Thotan, Srikshetra
8. Nandi on a ring.
9. The next important Śiva image in Burma is at present housed at the entrance of the Ananda Museum, Pagan, where it was removed from the Nat-hlaung kyaung. One more Śiva image is also there.
10. Typical sculptures and broken heads found at different places and kept in the museums.

The broken sculptures, disappeared during the wars clearly prove that the Śiva temples were purposely demolished. Noel P. Singer has evidence show how a *Linga* was converted to a *caitya-stupa*, Daksinamurti / Pichandavar to Buddha, by chiseling out outer portions. The broken sculpture typical to South India, particularly, Tamil Nadu also proves the Śaivite connection with these areas.

### **Śiva temples existed at Thaton, Arakkan regions**

According to the story, Vishnu presided at the foundation, and he was helped by six other divinities, viz., Gavampati, Indra, Naga, Garuda, Candi and Paramevara. Thus, the Śaiva Gods Candi and Parameswara are noted, but, they were considered subordinate to Vishnu. Coins recovered from the Arakkan region, prove the existence of Śiva worship. Coins bearing Śaivite symbols, viz., the trident of Śiva on the reverse and a recumbent humped bull on the obverse have been found. The coins referred to above, may, likewise, on paleographic grounds be said to range over a period of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE. From this, N.R. Ray<sup>21</sup> opined that “...it is thus reasonable to conjecture that the Candraya dynasty of kings of Arakan who ruled from c. 400 CE to c. 1000 CE belonged to the Brahmanical fold and were evidently followers of the cult of Śiva...some coins bear the symbols of both conch-shell and trident....” Four Trimurti figures containing Śiva have been found that were originally formed part of the Shwezayan pagoda / temple, but only three are available now in the Rangoon museum. The present Buddhist pagoda at Shwezayan was built in the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century CE. In view of the above information Saivism was flourishing from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and thereafter, with the rise of Buddhism, the Śiva temples were destroyed and the images are found in the museums.

### **The movement of stone workers, sculptors and sthapatis from South India to Burma**

J.G. Scott noted that, “*The presence of a considerable number of South Indian Tamils through the centuries is attested by the well-known Grantha-Tamil inscription of Pagam attesting*

*the existence of a Vishnu temple built there by Vanadesi Merchants and a gift to the temple made in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by a merchant from one of the port towns on the Malabar coast,”* in other words, stone workers, sculptors and *sthapatis* continued to come here because of the demand in reconstruction. Scott<sup>22</sup> recorded in another place that, *“The connection with India was still maintained, and the form of many of the Pagan temples suggests architects from the Dekkhan, along with others, which certainly point to Cinghalese models. Many of the images and their attitudes are quite South Indian, and the square structures with mandapas, or porches, instead of the round tumulus, to say nothing of the vaulted chambers and corridor passages, all suggest Indian influence rather than the present conical style of pagoda”*. Thus, even after the conversion of the Vaishnavites and Śaivites to Buddhism, the Hindus or Indians were encouraged to come there and engage in the construction of *caityas* and *viharas*.

### **Resemblance between Buddhism, Saivism and Vaishnavism**

It is logical and historical that the Hindu faith entered the South-east Asian region or existed side by side, as in India. There was confusion among the westerners, Europeans and other explorers till the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries about “India,” as amply exhibited in their cartography. In fact, explorers and sailors had recorded in their writings about the resemblance between Buddhism and Saivism and Vaishnavism. In 1786, Flouest, the traveler sent his accounts, but was not published<sup>23</sup>. John Craford [1783-1868] in his account<sup>24</sup> noted that, the *“affinity between the religion of Siam, China, Japan, and Thibet, and that of Hindustan... with the religion of Arracan and Pegu we are not much acquainted; but, as far as I had been able to learn, it is almost the same with that of Siam.”* Brian Hodgson<sup>25</sup> also noted in detail, *“It is the purpose of the following paper to furnish to those, who have means and inclination to follow them out, a few hints relative to the extreme resemblance that prevails between many of the symbols of Buddhism and Saivism.... When, in this country in which I reside, I observed images that were most apparently Śaiva placed in the precincts of Saugata [Buddhist] temples, I was at first inclined to consider the circumstance as an*

*incongruity, arising out of ignorant confusion of the two creeds by the people of this country..... I showed these monuments to a well informed old Bauddha, and asked him what he thought of them, particularly the famous Trimurti image of the Cave Temple of the west. He recognized it as a genuine Bauddha image! As did many others, declared by our writers to be Śaiva....".* As pointed out above, some idols and sculptures were modified, i.e., Vishnu reclining sculptures converted to Buddhist, as "Maya's dream" and Bodhisatvas. The Śiva images typically appearing as Pitchandavar or Dakshinamurthy were converted into Buddhist sculptures. Of course, many Brahma sculptures were straight away converted into Buddhist.

### **Like merchant-warriors, priest-warriors were also there in sea and long distance sojourns and missions**

That Anawratha converted Ari monks and inducted them into his army proves that they were warrior monks. However, some Śaivites could have escaped from the persecution and started moving towards their places of origin. When they escaped, they tried to join their own or like-minded groups. When the Cholas' armies came there, they joined them. In other words, the so-called Brahmanas could not have been simply or simple "Brahmanas" but of the warrior class, as they had to face many enemies while travelling a long distance. Thus, not only, the merchants, but also, religious functionaries, priests and such people were expected to protect themselves.

### **Sri Ksetra, Pya, Piao, Prome region**

Harivikrama name found in the funerary urn inscription dated to 695 CE points to the fact of dominance of "Hari," that could be pronounced and written as "Ari." The warriors, Dwarapalakas or temple guards of Sri Ksetra, Pyu were carrying Garuda-dwaja and Chakra-dwaja, but that no Vishnu is found in the temple proves that either the Vishnu idol was removed or replaced with the Buddha idol or destroyed, keeping the other temple architectural paraphernalia. As Angkor wat is the biggest Vishnu temple in the world, the domination of Vaishnavism is implied. With the

intrusion of influential Buddhist sects, the Vaishnavite believers would have been reduced to smaller groups. Thus, the Tantric and other Buddhist members could have infiltrated Vaishnavite groups, so that the Ari sect appeared or described as unorthodox, heretic and so on. However, the Shin Arahan of Ari sect only could promote the state religion of Theravada. The sculptures of Vishnu with four hands sitting, Vishnu in reclining position with three gods above, etc., found prove the fact.

### **The Brahmana element in Buddhism**

The folklore or traditional account of every Southeast Asian country invariably and faithfully incorporated an event of a Kaundinya Brahmana coming there from South India, marrying a local girl or Naga girl and begetting progeny and cultural colonization thereafter. Just like the Abbasid period, the Buddhist rulers of China, Japan and SEA countries invited Brahmanas for the translation of Sanskrit works into Pali, Chinese and other local languages. Amoghavajra (704-774 CE) was one of the celebrated Buddhist monks in the Chinese records, who belonged to a Brahmana family of North India<sup>26</sup>. Vajrabodhi (671-741 CE) was a prominent Buddhist (Brahmana) monk associated with the transmission of Tantricism to China. His father was an *acharya* in Kanchipuram, belonging to Malaya in South India near the Potalaka Mountain<sup>27</sup>. The consecration rites for the palace were conducted by various types of Hindu Brahmana rituals, Brahmana astrologers and Buddhist clerics, a combination that has marked most Southeast Asian courts from the very beginning<sup>28</sup>. They were also specifically invited for the consecration ceremonies, installation of Buddhist idols and coronation of the kings<sup>29</sup>. For the eye-opening ceremony [kaigen rites] of the Daibutsu [the Big Buddha], Bodhisena, a South Indian Brahmana was invited to perform in 744 CE<sup>30</sup>. He was highly honoured by the Japanese court and was popular as Baramon Sojo or the Brahman Buddhist Bishop<sup>31</sup>. He lived in Daian-ji temple and taught Sanskrit, but Fabio Rambelli<sup>32</sup>, points out that “*Despite his fame and exalted role during the final years of the Nara period (710-84 CE) or perhaps precisely because of that, Bodhisena was marginalized in the subsequent developments of Japanese Buddhism and very little*

*is known about him today*". Whether Brahmanas were exploited and forgotten or something happened to them is not known. During the Khmer period, many Brahmanas came to Cambodia for different religious purposes. In Burma, Ari Arant was forced to help Anawratha to promote Theravada and persecute his own religious believers.

### **Prohibition of Brahmanas crossing seas and oceans**

The Sramanas and Brahmanas have always worked together, as far as religious activities were concerned, in spite of theological differences. The moment Jain and Buddhist religions started worshipping their leaders as gods with the extended lineages before them, deification also continued in all other activities. The Jain and Buddhist groups were engaged in maritime trade and mission activities. Though they opposed the faith of the Brahmanas, they accepted their conduct of rites, rituals and ceremonies, as they agreed with other philosophy, ethics, and justice. *Manusmriti* was so popular among the South East-Asian countries, as could be noted from the palm-leaf books and inscriptions. However, at one stage, as the Buddhists felt that the Brahmanas were given undue importance in their religious activities, they started developing hatred towards them. Hindus, of heretical, unorthodox and extreme faiths, tried to harass the Brahmanas. At one stage, they promulgated the dictum through rulers that Brahmanas should not cross the seas and oceans. In other words, Brahmanas travelling by road were perhaps not banned or prohibited<sup>33</sup>. During the medieval period, the Kaliyuga *varjyas* made injunctions specifically to the effect that Brahmanas should not cross sea / ocean<sup>34</sup>. From the Jataka tales, it is known that the Bodhisatvas, Buddhaghoshas and others were Brahmanas and they use to travel by boats and ships very often<sup>35</sup>. Thus, how the Brahmanas were treated by the converted Buddhist Brahmanas could be noted in this context.

### **How had neo-Buddhism driven away the Hindus and their religion during the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries?**

How the Indians were treated by the Chinese has been discussed in the maritime trade context. With the rise of the

neo-Confucius doctrine mixed with Buddhism, the Chinese rulers tried to suppress the non-Chinese believers. They were virtually expelled from port cities like Quanzhou etc. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, two Chola ambassadors were found dead mysteriously in the port city of Quanzhou<sup>36</sup>. The Vice-Minister of Rajaraja, known as Soli San-wan proceeded to Guangzhou, China in 1015 CE in a diplomatic embassy, heading a 52-member mission<sup>37</sup>. Travelling for 1150 days (more than three years), they reached Guangzhou to meet the Song emperor. The presentation ceremony was held in Kaifeng<sup>38</sup>, the then capital of Guangzhou on October 15, 1015. They left Tanjore in 1012 and reached Kaifeng in 1015. After the mission, when they were returning in 1016, San-wan died mysteriously in Xiangyi, in Sui county of Henan province on the Grand Canal. In 1020, Rajendra sent Pa-lan-de-malie-di to offer tribute, but he died of an illness on his arrival at Guangzhou<sup>39</sup>. The Śiva-Vishnu temple at Quanzhou was also demolished and their parts were used up in building Buddhist temples and parts consigned to a maritime museum. By 1175, the Jodo sect, Jodo-shin and Zen Buddhism changed the religious conditions. Pre-Buddhist deities were added in their rituals, increasing the esoteric aspects. Esoteric Buddhism slowly got the patronage of the rulers. Mandala texts were produced to protect the State and the kings and much interest was shown in the Mahavairocana Sutra and the Commentary. All these show that the Buddhism followed by the Japanese was heading towards an aggressive category involving conflicts and battles. In the same way, Theravada Buddhism dominated Burma / Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka. Thus, with the rise of Theravada Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism had been subdued during the course of time in Southeast Asia. Mahayana Buddhism survives in Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia with a dwindling strength of believers. In Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia, it remains a strong minority. Consequently, the Śaivas were also reduced to a minority.

### **Going to Kailaya, attaining Kailash prapti and Śivaloka-mukti:**

As noted, not only Kaundinya Brahmanas, other Brahmanas were also going to the Southeast Asian region, as they were



Vishnu-*kshetra*, Brahma-*kshetra* and Śiva-*kshetra*. Building high temples for their God was considered to be the most sacred duty by the rulers and believers. Thus, big temples were constructed for the Trimurti – Brahma, Vishnu and Śiva. However, only Vishnu temples are available today. The Brahma temples were almost totally destroyed and only a few survived in Brahmadeśa. A story was floated as to how Śiva cursed Brahma so that he would not have any temple at all anywhere on the earth. However, ironically, in the area above, the Brahamadeśa and Vishnudevas, where, a huge Vishnu temple stands, no Śiva temple survives today. Coming to the devotees, priests and others, they used to reach these places by walk, by riding horses and by boat and ship, so they took many months to reach their destinations. Moreover, many of the people where he lived there had not returned and their whereabouts were not known. So, after waiting for the mandatory period, as per the *sastra*, the relatives used to conduct last rites declaring that they had attained Kailasa *prapti* and *mukti*, and thus liberated them from his ethereal world. Of course, there were few stories to the effect that some of them returned to see that their wives were married and living happily and so on. By and large, when it was declared that somebody attained “Śivalokaprapti / Kailasa *mukti*,” it was implied that he was no more. Even in the case of Nayanmars, who had attained the status of Kailasa *prapti*, some had returned<sup>40</sup>. Perhaps their non-return has been described differently – Tirunavukkarasar was transported back to Tiruvaivaru, the Dakshina Kailasa; Karaikkal Ammaiyar, in spite of suffering herself by walking, crawling etc., returned to Tiruvangadu; Sundaramurthy Nayanar reached on a white elephant (implying Burma); Pusalar merged with Linga attained Kailasa *prapti* and so on.

### **The concept of India increasing to “Greater India” and reversing back:**

Till the medieval period, the European cartographers believed and depicted two Indias on their maps – India proper and the India beyond. Of course, the whole ocean was known as “Hindu Maha Sagar,” now, known as the Indian Ocean. Thus, the Indians or Hindus living there, in South-east Asian countries, suddenly disappeared by the 13<sup>th</sup> century with the rise of China as

a maritime power and the disappearance of the Imperial Cholas. And the magnificent temples built for Brahma, Vishnu, Śiva and other Hindu divinities had also either reduced to mounds with trees growing around or in demolished condition. The memories, writings and recordings of the European explorers, sailors and rulers prove that the same conditions prevailed till the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. With the rise of Communism and Islam, the cultural, religious and social processes of South-east Asia was affected considerably. The Chinese and Japanese have been trying to control them through Buddhism. In spite of the formation of a “Greater India Society” by historians like R. C. Majumdar (1888–1980), the philologists Suniti Kumar Chatterji (1890–1977) and P. C. Bagchi (1898–1956), and historians Phanindranath Bose and Kalidas Nag (1891–1966), Indians could not compete with others.

**Sectorial strifes, intra-religious struggle and inter-religious violence made Indians disappear:**

So, what had happened after 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, has to be analyzed critically. Buddhism played a key-role in uniting the people of China, Japan and the South-east Asian countries with India. Indians contributed extensively to Buddhism, Buddhist monuments, scriptures, rites, ceremonies and other liturgical and social processes. As the Chinese and Arabs / Mohammedans started dominating, the Buddhist sects got divided further and they could not tolerate other Indian faiths. Not only did the converted Buddhists fight with each other, but they also fought the Vaishnavas and Śaivas. The converted Vaishnavites and Śaivites fought each other under new Buddhist banners, leading to their downfall. With political patronage, the Theravada sects engaged themselves in the destruction of places of worship, etc. The Mohammedans too, later contributed their mite, without any remorse. When the Buddhists converted to Islam, the converted worked faithfully for their new faith. Thus, the Indians and their places of worship became soft targets.

## References

1. Anawratha was the 42<sup>nd</sup> King of the Bagan dynasty that traced its origin to c.850 BCE.
2. Theravada Buddhism ["Doctrine of the Elders,"] has been the more conservative of the two major traditions of Buddhism (the other being Mahayana), which developed from Hinayana Buddhism and the texts are in Pali. It is practiced mainly in Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.  
Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism share the same core beliefs and devotion to the life and teaching of Buddha, but they do have some differences. Theravada Buddhism is associated with South East Asia and is perhaps closer to the original Indian form of Buddhism.
3. Thaton was absolutely annihilated. King Manuha, the Books of the Law, the monks, and the whole body of the people were carried off in a mass. There were "five elephant loads of Buddhist scriptures and five hundred Buddhist monks," and in particular there were all the temple and pagoda builders, who, in the succeeding years, raised the temples which make the deserted capital on the Irraawaddy so remarkable a place. J. G. Scott, *Burma from the earliest times to the present day*, 1924, p33.
4. Maung Htn Aung, *Folk Elements in Burmese Buddhism*, Greenwood Press, Connecticut, USA, 1962, p.3. and U. Nandacara, *The Concept of Nat-worship Among Theravada Buddhists in Myanmar*, University of Thailand, 2014, p.3
5. D. G. E. Harvey, *History of Burma from the earliest times to 10 March 1894*, Longman, Green and Co., Calcutta, 1925, p.15.
6. Nyunt, Thet Thet. *The Study of the Four Historic Simās that Shin Arahan consecrated in Mandalay*, The Third Myanmar-Japan International Symposium Research Papers (Patheingyi University), 2016.  
There are four *Simās* in Mandalay that were consecrated by

Shin Arahāṃ. They are:-

(1) Sunrise *Simā*, (2) Noon *Simā*, (3) Sunset *Simā* and (4) Midnight *Simā*. This is coinciding with the time-reckoning of Aryabhata astronomical school.

7. D. G. E. Hall, *Burma*, Hutchinson's University Library, Vol. II, No.46, London, 1950, p.7.
8. Newton, Robert R. *The origins of Ptolemy's astronomical tables*, *Optika Atmosfery*, Issue No. 5 (1985).
9. G. H. Luce, *Burma's Debt to Pagan*, in Journal of the Burma Research Society, Vol. XXII, 192, pp.121.
10. Nihar Ranjan Ray, *Brahmanaical Gods in Burma – Chapter of Indian art and Iconography*, University of Calcutta, 1932. See Śiva or Saivism, pp.50-63.
11. Nihar Ranjan Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, University of Calcutta, 1936.
12. Nihar Ranjan Ray, op.cit., chapter IV, The Ari sect and the Samanakutta: Tantric Buddhism in Burma, pp.63-71.
13. Mabel Bode, *Sasanavamsa*, The Pali Text Society, London, 1897, see Dissertation and conclusion, pp.1-58.
14. Paritta, generally translated as “protection” or “safeguard,” refers to the Buddhist practice of reciting certain verses and scriptures in order to ward off misfortune or danger.
15. The establishment of this heretical sect probably dates as far back as when the Tantric cult of North-Eastern zone of India and Bengal, deeply influenced a section of Buddhists, who partially adopted the cult and passed it over to their counterparts in Burma in a debased form., Some scholars, however, hold the view that these Samanakuttakas were none other than the off-shoots of the Mahayanists, who developed strong leanings towards Tantrism. The behaviour and practices of the Samanakuttakas resembled much to those of the Vamacaris (addicted to women) and Kapalikas (Tantric votaries of goddess Kali) in, Bengal.
16. The list had closed at thirty-six before Anawrahta, and it needed Anawrahta's prestige and power to change the number from thirty-six to thirty-seven. After Anawrahta,

no one dared to assume authority to change the number. However, with the passing of time the list varied, for some old Nats were displaced by new Nats, and the personalities of later characters became merged with those of earlier ones. This has misled some European scholars into scoffing at the number thirty-seven and to proceed to point out the existence of the 'thirty-eighth', 'thirty-ninth' and 'fortieth' Nats.

Greenwood Press, Connecticut, USA, 1962 pp.104-105.

17. Maung Htn Aung, *Folk Elements in Burmese Buddhism*.
18. J. G. Scott, *Burma from the earliest times to the present day*, 1924, p.30.  
Moore, Elizabeth. *Interpreting Pyu material culture: Royal chronologies and finger-marked bricks*, *Myanmar Historical Research Journal* No. 13, 2004, pp.1-57
19. Taw Sein-Ko, *Folklore in Butrma*, No.3 – *Three-eyed King*, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXXV, 1893, pp.159-161.
20. Noel F. Singer, *Vaishali and the Indianization of Arakkan*, APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2008.
21. Nihar Ranjan Ray, *The Brahmanical Gods in Burma*, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1935, pp.50-63.
22. J. G. Scott, *Burma from the earliest times to the present day*, P.37
23. Flouest, *Religions des Peguans et des Bramas*, reportedly published later in 1891.
24. Q. Crawford, *Sketches of the Hindus*, 1792, Vol.II, p.117ff; fn at p.117.
25. Brian Hodgson, *On the extreme resemblance that prevails between many of the symbols of Buddhism and Saivism*, *Oriental Quarterly Magazine*, vii. 218ff. viii. 252ff. ; Languages, etc., of Nepal, 133ff.
26. Umakanth Mishra, *Circulation of Buddhist mandalas in Maritime Asia: A study of the Art of the Buddhist Diamond Triangle of Odhisha (India) and Borobodur – Candi Mendut in Java*, in *Act East: Asean-Indian shared Cultural Heritage*,

- Research Information System for Developing countries, New Delhi, 2019, p.123.
27. *Ibid*, p.122.
  28. Stadtner, Donald M. *The Mon of Lower Burma, The Journal of the Siam Society*, No. 96, 2008, pp. 193-215.
  29. Blagden, O. C., 1920. *The Mon Inscriptions No. I to No VIII B, Epigraphia Burmanica*, I, pt I. Rangoon, Government Printing Office reprinted Rangoon, 1960.
  30. Dwijendra Nath Bakshi, *The Early phase of Buddhism and Buddhist art in Japan*, in *Buddhism – Early and Late phases*, edited by Kalyan Kumar Dasgupta, Centre for Advanced study in Ancient History & Culture, Calcutta University, Calcutta, p. 161.
  31. Sampa Biswas, *Indian Influence on the Art of Japan*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 2010, p.42.
  32. Fabio Rambelli, *The Idea of India (Tenjiku) in Pre-Modern Japan: Issues of signification and representation in the Buddhist translation of culture*, in Tansen Sen (ed.), *Buddhism Across Asia: Networks of Material, Intellectual and Cultural Exchange*, vol.I, Institute of Southeast Asian studies, Singapore, 2014, p.260.
  33. Manusmriti, equated the sea going people to incendiaries, prisoners, those who are fed by the son of an adulteress, sellers of illicit liquor, bards, oilmen, or suborners to perjury. They were all offenders. The Bhauhayana Dharma Sutra forbade orthodox Brahmanas to engage in sea travel and traffic, and prescribed penances and Penalties for transgressions. Still some Brahmanas transgressed the scriptures. It was not forbidden for other groups in the varna order. The prevailing Buddhist order placed restrictions on sea travel and traffic.
  34. Batuknath Bhattacharya, *The Kalivarjyas or Prohibitions in the Kali Age*, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1943, pp.100-102.
  35. Shaw, Sarah. *Crossing to the Farthest Shore: How Pāli*

*Jātakas Launch the Buddhist Image of the Boat onto the Open Seas*, in *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 3 (2012).

36. K. V. Ramakrishna Rao, *The Mysterious Deaths of Chola Ambassadors*, The Proceedings of Tamil Nadu History Congress, Caddalore, 2014, pp.79-86.
37. It was also known as Canton or Kwangchow. It was the capital and the largest city of the Guangdong province. Guangzhou was an important port during the ancient times as far back as the Qin Dynasty. It served as a trading port on the “Silk Road on the Sea”. The port became one of China’s busiest ports during the Ming dynasty and Qing dynasty.
38. Kaifeng is one of the Seven Ancient Capitals of China.
39. Noboru Karashima and Tansen Sen, *Chinese texts describing or referring to the Chola kingdom as Zhu-nian*, in ‘Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa: Reflections on the Chola Naval Expeditions to Southeast Asia’, edited by Helmann Kulke, K. Kesavapany and Vijay Sakhuja, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 2009, p.299.
40. Based on the Tamil work, “*Periya Puranam*” [The Great Purana] about the 63 Nayanmars, the Śaiva devout poets and dedicated believers of Śiva.

## THE FORGOTTEN QUEENS OF KASHMIR

**Shan Eugene Palakkal**

Assistant Professor

Department of History, Stella Maris College (Autonomous)  
Chennai

### ***Abstract***

*Kashmir has a historical tradition unique in South Asia and with few equals in the world. The study of the history of ancient Kashmir has been engaging the attention of researchers since long. Some of the them like M.A. Stein, R.S. Pandit, M.A. Troyer, G.K. Shashtri have given a critical insight of Kalhana's Rajatarangini, while others like K.S. Saxena and S.C. Ray have produced well documented histories based on all available sources. This article has attempted to give a glimpse of a few eminent queens who occupied the throne of Kashmir, between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, and who find their mention in the first seven of the eight Tarangas of Kalhana's Rajatarangini. The article also gives a brief peep into the naming of Kashmir and how legends corresponds with the results of geological observations that the Kashmir valley was a vast lake, Satisar, in pre-historic times. This article gives insight to the fact that women emerged from the domestic arena into the political state, owned land and other immovable property, managed their own estates and even fought on battlefields as Commanders of troops.*

**Keywords:** Kashmir, Rajatarangini, Kalhana, Kota Rani, Queen Didda, Lal Ded, Vihasar, Regent, Kings, Minor Regent.

### **Prologue**

The study of the history of ancient Kashmir has been engaging the attention of researchers since long. Some of the them



like M.A. Stein, R.S. Pandit, M.A. Troyer, G.K. Shashtri have given a critical insight of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, while others like K.S. Saxena and S.C. Ray have produced well documented histories based on all available sources.

This paper has attempted to research a few eminent queens who occupied the throne of Kashmir, between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, and who find mention in the first seven of the eight *Tarangas* of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*<sup>1</sup>. Legends correspond with the results of geological observations that the Kashmir valley was a vast lake, Satisar<sup>2</sup>, in pre-historic times. The lake was drained by the deepening of the Baramulla gorge - the result of the slow process of erosion spread over geological years. Tradition has it that the drainer of the lake was Kashyap, after whom Kashmir was called.

According to an interpretation, Kashmir is a Prakrit compound with its components *kas* meaning a channel and *mir* a mountain – the compound word adding to 'a rock trough'<sup>3</sup>. In the Puranas, Kashmir is called *Gerek* (hill) because of its overwhelming hilly features. Srinagar (the city of Saraswati – the goddess of learning) is an ancient city. Founded by Ashoka (272-232 BC), it was then called 'Pravarapura', after King Pravarasena.

### Sources of Kashmir History

The name Kashmir does not occur in Vedic literature. Varahamitra (500A.D) included the 'Kasmiras' in the north-eastern division in the *Brihatsamhita*. Sri Harsha in his *Ratnavali* mentions the saffron of the 'kasmira' country. The earliest note on Kashmir by foreigners occurs in the writings of the Greek geographer, Hecataeus (500B.C), who refers to 'Kaspapyros', a 'city of the Gandarins'.

Hiuen Tsang who visited the valley in 631 CE, records the conversion of the people to Buddhism by Majjahantika. The Chinese pilgrim Ou-kong visited Kashmir in the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE.

*Nilamata Purana* is the earliest known text of Kashmir. It contains the sacred legends regarding the origin of the Valley, the rites and worships prescribed by Nila – the Lord of Kashmir Nagas – and descriptions of various *tirthas* (places of pilgrimage), which have greatly helped in reconstructing the ancient geography of Kashmir. Among the texts dealing specially with the sacred sites is the *Harshacharita chintamani* of Jayadratha<sup>4</sup>.

Kalhana refers to his other work *Nrapavali*, which portrayed the socio-political life of the Kashmiris of his time. The *Rajatarangini* or the ‘River of Kings’ by Kalhana is an extant history of Kashmir. A unique historical poem, written between 1148 to 1150 AD. A *Kavya* (a charita or heroic poem) in form and conception, the *Rajatarangini* consists of about 8000 verses classified under 8 *Tarangas* (cantos or waves)<sup>5</sup>. It is however different from other *Charitas* because Kalhana has offered a connected narrative of the ruling dynasties of Kashmir from the earliest times down to his own. He did not hesitate to point out the errors or weaknesses of the Kings under whom he wrote. He emphasizes striking examples of Kashmir history by reference to similar instances narrated in the Mahabharata or the Ramayana. He follows the calendar used in the Lankika era, which had been used in Kashmir for many centuries. Historical events are shown to illustrate political maxims and precepts of diplomacy. His work can be divided into 3 parts – The first part includes Books 1-IV, commencing with the legendary events of the Mahabharata war. It derives largely from the legends that form the early history of Kashmir, including the *Nilamata Purana*, the *Mahamatyas* and other Puranic *Samhitas*. The second part is Books V-VI, which covers more ‘historical’ records of reigns taken from earlier written accounts arranged in a definite chronological sequence. The last section of his book –VII-VIII, is devoted to events that he has personally experienced or from narratives of living witnesses to various events. The first two sections are based on both oral as well as written legends and narrations from Kalhana’s time.

The uniqueness of *Rajatarangini* is the fact that it is among the very few Sanskrit works which have preserved for us, the

history of a region, people or Kings through such a vast expanse of time.

### **Status of the Women in Kashmir**

The transition from the earlier nomadic culture to a settled agrarian way of life had an immediate effect on the way of life of the Brahmanas, particularly their women folk who were reduced to being mere slaves to their men.

In the earliest period of Hindu rule, the position and status of women belonging to the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas, were far superior to those of the women of the lower castes and classes. It was natural, therefore that the women of such powerful Brahmana families were in privileged position. Brahmana women of that time had the benefit of classical Sanskrit education. They were known to participate in theological and philosophical debates and discussions. Perhaps the ladies of the royal family were given a bit of administrative training and that might be the reason for the success with which the Kashmir queens governed their domains. Even women of a lesser status took leading part in the political activities of the state<sup>6</sup>.

Queens and consorts of Hindu rulers too, in keeping with the status of their husbands, enjoyed privileged positions of equality with them. During the coronation and *abhishek* of the ruler, the queen was an equal participant as she was in the affairs of the court where she sat by the ruler's side. Her participation in and knowledge of the governance of the country prepared her for any dire consequence of the king's early death, when she might be required to act as a regent for a minor heir<sup>7</sup>. She had her own treasury and funds at her disposal, as evidenced by the number of early Kashmiri queens, who made rich endowments to schools, temples and monasteries, not merely in ancient times, but down to the medieval period before the Muslim dynasties took over after the fall of the Hindu rulers.

These queens came from families with a martial tradition, and quite often they were trained in the martial arts and did not hesitate to join their troops in battle<sup>8</sup>. The one class of women who did have the privilege of a liberal education in the letters and fine arts were the temple dancers and courtesans, since their role in life was to pander to the desires of their rich and powerful patrons from the highest levels of the society. The lot of the women of the lowest classes was the least envied. They were the ones who worked not only within the household, but in case of the peasant class, they assisted their men in all the agricultural operations.

There is no mention of the custom of Sati in the Nilamata, but we have many instances in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* about it amongst the royalty. Queens Surendravati and other two minor queens cremated themselves along with the Kings. Some queens like Trailokyadevi, Bhiba, Suryamati committed Sati<sup>9</sup>. Some queens who did not commit sati, led a very simple and austere life.

At every level of the caste hierarchy, there were deep divisions and raging conflicts. Even before a ruler came to throne, there were struggles for succession amongst his closest relatives culminating in conspiracies usually ending with murder or assassinations. Among the nobles and aristocracy in the royal courts, there were struggles for power between the ministers and commanders of the armed forces leading to more chaos and uncertainty, which resulted in the ultimate demoralizing of the common man, who emerged as the chief victim of these circumstances. Women were in turn must have borne the main brunt of these situations<sup>10</sup>.

The history of Kashmir after Jayapida is a sad story of misrule. His immediate successor Lalitapida squandered away money in worthless pursuits. Jayapida's third successor was Sippatajayapida, who was a minor at the time of his accession and his uncles exploited this opportunity and killed him. This was followed by a civil war which led to the deposition of three Kings. Then Avantivarman occupied the throne in 855 CE and founded the new dynasty of the Utpalas. Of all the Kings, Anantivarman was the noblest. His reign is considered as the glorious chapter in the history of ancient Kashmir.

In writing early Indian history, there is always an attempt to 'invisibilise' women so that their role is met by silence or trivialized. They are always treated indifferent and irrelevant to historical narrative. But when we come across certain sources, an entirely different picture emerges – where women are rulers, builders of art and architecture, and many prominent roles. The few queens discussed below are stellar examples of such extraordinary women, who have been ignored or relegated to just footnotes in the writings on early history.

There were a few among the other courageous women from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Women, who distinguished themselves in the 12<sup>th</sup> c were Silla and Chudda, both belonging to the warrior-statesmen families and who in their respective times took over command of the army to fight invaders.

### **Queen Yashovati – the Neglected Queen**

The untimely death of Damodara, left Kashmir throneless. His wife was Yashovati, who succeeded to the throne. The exact date of the year of her succession and regency to the throne is not known. She proved to be a successful and popular ruler. She was well known for her nobility and purity of her views<sup>11</sup>. By the time she ascended the throne, the Kingdom of Kashmir was on the verge of collapse. Due to her determined efforts and administrative capabilities, the kingdom was restored to stability and normalcy. She later became the *de-facto* ruler till her son came on the throne. It was during her period that the Epic War of Mahabharata was fought.

### **Queen Sugandha (904 - 990AD)**

According to Kalhana, Sugandha was the daughter of Svamiraja, the ruler of the northern region. She was the wife of Samkaravarman (883-902AD). In the whole of Sankaravarman's career, her name has been mentioned by Kalhana only twice – the day she got married and on the King's death bed<sup>12</sup>. King Sankaravarman died as a result of an expedition to the Indus, and his

minor son Gopalavarman became the next ruler under the regency of Sugandha. Longing for power and wealth, Prabhakaradeva, the then minister incharge of the treasury through sorcery, killed Gopalavarman. Another minor son Samkata also was killed and there was no male successor and survivor of the family. Thus, Sugandhi had to take over as the next heir to the throne.

She was ‘loved by the people, trusted by the courtiers and admired by the army’<sup>13</sup>. But she was not keen for power. The loss of her sons was eating her heart out. She tried to console herself by laying some foundations – towns of Gopalapura (modern Gurpur), the Gopala Matha and the Gopalakesava Temple (a Vishnu temple)<sup>14</sup>. She founded another town Sugandhapura.

Queen Sugandha’s troubles soon arose out of mutual rivalries between two groups – the Tantrins and the Ekanagas. She refused to act like an autocrat and convened a meeting of ministers, feudal chiefs, Tantrins, and Ekanagas to select a suitable heir to the throne<sup>15</sup>. Once the decision was taken, she decided to leave the palace, the centre of intrigues, and to live in peace. In the meantime, there was complete anarchy on account of the doings of the Tantrins and their enmity towards the Ekanagas. In 914 CE, the Ekanagas approached Sugandha and persuaded her to assume their leadership. But they were badly defeated by the Tantrins and Sugandha was captured and later executed<sup>16</sup>.

She was a simple, sincere and a pious lady. She had no hunger for power. She gave her consent to lead the Ekanagas towards the closing years of her life and was inspired more by a desire to free the kingdom from the misrule of the Tantrins, and not to satisfy her lust for power. The only abuse that was heaped upon her was on account of her intimacy with Prabhakaradeva – which caused her downfall too. It was during her period that the Sahi revolt took place and she controlled the situation amicably and crushed the revolt. She possessed the traits of a good diplomat too. She had coins imprinted by the name *sri sugandha deva* that refers to a masculine epithet.

### **Queen Didda (990 – 1003AD) – the Warrior Queen**

The dominant feature of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Kashmir history was the struggle for power between the Tantrins and the Ekanagas. They acted as Kingmakers and practically sold and resold the 'Crown' to those who paid them the highest price. Thus, we see that within a short period of 33 years (906-939 AD), as many as 7 kings occupied the throne. The Kingdom was a scene of misery and calamities.

In 950 AD, Ksemagupta was crowned as the King of Kashmir. He was licentious and profligate in his habits. The only important event of his reign was his marriage with Didda. She was the daughter of King Simharaja (the Lord of Lohara)<sup>17</sup>. This marriage greatly influenced the future history of Kashmir – the rule of the Lohara dynasty.

Didda acted as the virtual ruler of the country for a long period. She was not only a lady of captivating personality but was much knowledgeable than her husband. She had complete control over his mind, so much so that he came to be known by the name of 'Diddaksema'<sup>18</sup>. The copper coins that were discovered also bear the legend 'Di-Ksemaguptade (va)'<sup>19</sup>, a slight contraction of the above name.

After some time, Kshemagupta married another lady, Chandralekha, the daughter of Phalgun (the Lord of the Gate). Not all was well between the two queens. But she acted like a shrewd politician. She acted as a great judge between the supporters of Mahiman and Patala, the sons of King Parvagupta (949-950 AD). She knew that even for men of integrity 'favours were superior even to gold given in bribes', so she bestowed high offices upon them.

She was a lady who had little regard for morality. She, 'the Messalina of Kashmir, was noted for her extraordinary profligacy, rivaling anything that is recorded of Catherine of Russia'<sup>20</sup>.

After the death of her son Abhimanyu (972 CE), and placing her grandson Nandigupta on the throne, she became a reformed person and she began to perform ‘astonishing deeds of piety’. She was a pious fraud and soon she returned to her usual ways of life.

Her attention however, was devoted to the laying of a number of foundations, especially temples, *mathas*, *viharas* and towns<sup>21</sup>. She also laid the foundation of the Didda *matha* (Diddamar), which is now a residential area in Srinagar. It is said that ‘she made 64 foundations in different localities’ and ‘enclosed with stone walls almost all the temples that have been burnt down’<sup>22</sup>.

The building of *viharas* by Didda shows that Buddhism survived at least until the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D and also continued to receive royal patronage. Having made a clean sweep of all the possible male candidates for the throne, in 980 A.D, she herself assumed the royal powers. The final years of Didda’s rule was disturbed by the rise of the Damaras (the landed aristocracy). Didda’s masterful personality dominated the political scene of Kashmir, first as the chief queen of Ksemagupta, next as the regent of her son and grandsons and finally as an independent queen.

Didda ruled for the next 22 years with absolute power, quashing periodic rebellions by using her standard combination of bribes, placation and ferocious reprisal, until she died in 1003CE at the age of 79<sup>23</sup>. Didda is a controversial ruler, who is difficult to slot into easy categories. All sources on her life and reign agree about her tremendous survival skills, her ruthless application of the maxims of the *Arthasashtra*, her ability to rule and to select able lieutenants and her success in achieving stability for the fractious kingdom she had inherited. However, her visible lust for power and snidely attributed obsession with the opposite sex, both considered admirable in men, were seen as failings and as an evil streak in a woman of her time.

She was a beautiful woman with charming features, but she had one defect – she was lame<sup>24</sup>. But this did not deter her. She was quite courageous, self willed and full of determination. Most of her time was spent as a cruel, ruthless and unscrupulous ruler and as a



voluptuous, profligate and dissolute lady. She did not believe in the custom of *sati*, and consequently did not perform *sati* on the death of her husband; instead, she gave preference to the task of looking after the subjects of her state. Her lust for power was limitless and was also intensely suspicious. In spite of all her shortcomings, she was able to ward off repeated troubles that arose and maintained her autocratic hold over the country unimpaired for an unusually long period. This shows that she was gifted with high political and diplomatic talents also. She also had a wonderful capacity for organization which turned many a near defeats and failures into victories and successes<sup>25</sup>. Kashmiris still use the term 'didda' for a mother or a lady who is highly regarded.

### **Kota Rani – the last Hindu Queen of Kashmir**

She was the daughter of Ramachandra, a Tartar chief. She married Rinchin, a fugitive prince from Tibet, who was a Buddhist but embraced Islam. He became the first muslim king of Kashmir. With her counsel, he conducted the affairs of the state. Using a clever strategum, she defeated the other rulers and controlled uprisings. She resorted to force to curb warlords and rebellious ministers. In 1338 A.D, she ascended the throne.

The hunger for ascension incited Rinchen to attack Ramachandra, first by subterfuge and then directly, by sending an advance party of his followers as traders to the fort at Ganagajir. In the clash which ensued, Ramachandra was killed and his family captured, including Kota Rani. Jonaraja, the historian, does not give a clear picture about this. What is known is that she was young and apparently a realist, who saw in Rinchen a means of restoring peace in Kashmir, and she made peace with him after her capture, and accepted his offer of marriage. He himself must have seen his alliance with her as a means to consolidate his position on the throne that he had usurped. The Buddhist Rinchen realized that he would better his position by converting himself to the Śaivite Hindu faith and approached the Brahmana priests for that purpose, but the priests turned down his request. This piloted him towards the Sufis, who had already impressed him deeply with

their humane form of Islam. He was welcomed into that faith and assumed the Muslim name of Sadr-ud-din, thus becoming the first foreign non-Hindu ruler of Kashmir. Kota Rani as his queen probably never embraced Islam. In the three years that he ruled Kashmir (13320-1323) until his death at the hands of conspirators, Kota Rani assisted him ably in ruling the country. She did not even object to his religious observances or patronage of his new religion when he built the first mosque (*khanqah*) in Srinagar for his preceptor (Bulbul Shah). On the death of Sad-ud-din, Kota Rani, instead of putting the minor Haidar on the throne, saw her husband's death as an opportunity to restore the earlier lost Hindu dynasty.

Kota Rani had a son, Bhola Rattan, by King Udayanadeva and his upbringing had been entrusted to another courtier, Bhikshana Bhatta. When King Udayanadeva died in 1339AD, Kota Rani, setting aside the claims of both Haidar and Bhola Rattan to the throne, assumed the throne herself. Jonaraja in his chronicle of those times bestows high praise on Kota Rani when he states that, "as the canal nourishes cultivated fields with water, so did the Queen nourish the people by bestowing much wealth on them. She was to the kingdom what the moon is to the blue lotus; and to the enemy she was what the luminary is to the white lotus"<sup>26</sup>. She also saved the state from frequent floods by constructing a canal called the 'Kutte Kol'.

She stands out as an outstanding figure in the history of medieval Kashmir, courageous in the face of overwhelming odds, with a deep commitment to her people, her country and her Hindu dynastic roots, putting aside her personal interests to preserve all those. For almost a decade, she held the reins of government and brought Kashmir to comparative peace and prosperity after generations of misrule by her predecessors. With her death ended the millennia old rule of Hindu and Buddhist dynasties of Kashmir and the advent of Muslim rule under the foreign-born sultans, and those who followed them. After the advent of Islam, women were not crowned as queens, diplomats and leaders of troops normally. But an energetic and wise queen exerted her powerful

personality from behind the veil. She was Queen Lachhma (1354-1373 CE). She was the wife of Sultan Shaab-u-din. Her advice and consultations proved beneficial to the ing to run the administration.

Then there was Bibi Haura (1389-1399 AD). After her husband's death, she acted as a regent for her children for 10 years. This period has been reported as a period of comparative peace and progress. She was well-known for her piety, benevolence and kindheartedness and pardoned those who committed small mistakes and corrected them. The next queen was Gul Khatoon (1470-1472 AD). The virtue that made her illustrious was her deep affection for her subjects and admiration for the indigenous culture. She saw to that ancient traditions and customs of Kashmir were to be protected and cherished. She was the supporter of the Religious Humanist Movement.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a woman writing in any language was a rarity. This path-breaking mystic woman-queen was Lal Ded (Queen Lalleshwari). The date of birth and death is not known. The sufferings she underwent from her in-laws resulted in her deeper spiritual realization. She made use of beautiful idioms and imagery taken from day-to-day lives. The very language owes most of its richness in phrase (*vaaks*) and metaphor due to her contribution to it. Her *vaaks* enlightened people with a spiritual vision and morality and it enabled them to face huge challenges in life during turbulent times. Her *vaaks* were discovered four centuries after her death<sup>27</sup>. She effortlessly transcended gender disparities and struck a blow at the prevalent patriarchy as early in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. She was opposed to the meaningless religious rituals and orthodox practices which had corroded the society and made people hard-hearted. Through her poetry, she had been successfully promoting universal brotherhood, harmony and peace. She is known by many epithets like Lalla, Arifa, Lallayogesgwari. She was synonymous with Kashmir's composite culture.

### **Habba Khatoon (1554-1609) – the Nightingale of Kashmir**

Habba Khatoon, was born in a poor peasant family. She was encouraged by her parents to be literate. She received Persian and

Quranic education and was exceptionally gifted in the Kashmiri language. She took interest in reciting poems of famous poets of Kashmir, which later generated in her a zeal for writing, composing and singing her own poetry. Her melodious voice left a great impact on the Prince Yusuf Shah Chak and she was brought from a peasant family to royal abode and became the beloved wife and Queen of Prince Yusuf. Her songs and poetry are still popular today. She introduced *lol* to Kashmiri poetry, which is more of less similar to the English *lyric*. Many of her songs were about the sorrow of separation and had the lyric *lol*. She is remembered as one of the great woman poets of her period and had a great influence on Kashmiri culture. There is an amazing beautiful place in Gurez valley – Habba Kahtoon peak - which is a huge assembly of rocks standing tall. She was the last queen of independent Kashmir.

These were women who, despite the stifling circumstances of a strongly paternalistic society and the adversities that beset them, were able to rise to the need of the hour and make enough impact on their times to deserve a place in history. They were not always women of high birth but by virtue of their personalities, intelligence and courage, they were able to overcome them all and assert themselves<sup>28</sup>.

## References

1. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, trns. M. A. Stein, 1961, Vol. V, p.259.
2. Satisar, the lake of Sati, named after Parvati, the divine consort of Lord Śiva. Satisar was the favourite resort of Parvati. It is said that lake demons infested Satisar and killed and devoured human beings. The sage Kashyapa heard the cries of the people and did a long penance to relieve the sufferings of the people. Goddess Sharika appeared in the form of a myna and dropped a pebble on the chief demon Jalodbhava, which grew big like a hillock (the Hari parbat), killing him. Thus, the lake was drained off due to depression.

3. Dhar, Somnath. *Jammu and Kashmir*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1977, p.3.
4. *Ibid.* p.32.
5. Pandit, R.S., *The River of Kings*, (Trs. of Kalhana's Rajatarangini), Indian Press Ltd., Allahabad, 1934, p.18.
6. Raina, Mohini Qasha. *Kashur: The Kashmiri Speaking People – Analytical Perspective*, Haryana: 2014, p.149.
7. Bakhshi, Suneethi. *Kashmir –The History and Pandit Women's Struggle for Identity*, Vitastat Publishing Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2009, p.37.
8. Bazaz, P.N. *Daughters of the Vitasta*, Pamposh Publications, New Delhi, 1959, p.48.
9. Raina, Mohini Qasha. *Kashur: The Kashmiri Speaking People – Analytical Perspective*, Haryana: 2014, p.151.
10. Op. cit., Bazaz, P.N. *Daughters of the Vitasta*, p.49.
11. Dhar, Somnath. *Travels in Kashmir: A Popular History of its People and Crafts*, Brigid Keenan, 1989, p.71.
12. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, trns. M. A. Stein, 1961, Vol. V, p.155 v and n.
13. Bazaz, P.N. *Daughters of the Vitasta*, 1959, p.27.
14. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, trns. M. A. Stein, 1961, Vol. V, p.244-245n.
15. Kapur, M.L. *Eminent Rulers of Ancient Kashmir*, Oriental Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 1975, p.67.
16. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, trns. M. A. Stein, 1961, Vol. V, p.259.
17. *Ibid.* Vol. VI, p.151.
18. *Ibid.* Vol. VI, p.177.
19. Ray, S.C. *Early History and Culture of Kashmir*, 1970, p.65.
20. Troyer, M.A., *Kashmir in Olden Times*, Calcutta Review, Vol XIV, 1850, p.214.
21. The Vishnu temple of Diddasvamin, another temple made of white stones, the towns of Diddapura (location unknown) and Kankanapura (modern Kangan village) cited in

- M.L. Kapur, *Eminent Rulers of Ancient Kashmir*, Oriental Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 1975, p.76.
22. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, trns. M. A. Stein, 1961, Vol. VI, p.289.
23. Gupta, Archana Garodia. *The Women who Ruled India – Leaders, Warriors, Icons*, Hachette Book Publishing Pvt. Ltd., Gurugram, 2019, p. 24.
24. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, trns. M. A. Stein, 1961, Vol. VI, p.226.
25. Bamzai, P.N.K. *Jammu and Kasmir*, Publications Division, New Delhi, 1973, p.45.
26. Pandit, Ranjit Sitaram. *Rajatarangini: The Saga of the Kings of Kashmir*, (first published 1935), Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1935, 1968, 1977, p. 20.
27. It was compiled in the Sharda script by Bhaskar Razdan. Cited in Kaul, Jayalal (Ed.), *Lal Ded*, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1973, p.110.
28. Bakhshi, Suneethi. *Kashmir – The History and Pandit Women's Struggle for Identity*, Vitastat Publishing Pvt., Ltd., New Delhi, 2009, p.249.



Coin of Queen Sugandha

Obverse (L): Goddess Lakshmi seated facing with Nagar legend  
Sugandha

Reverse (R): King standing sacrificing at the altar with Nagari  
legend Devya

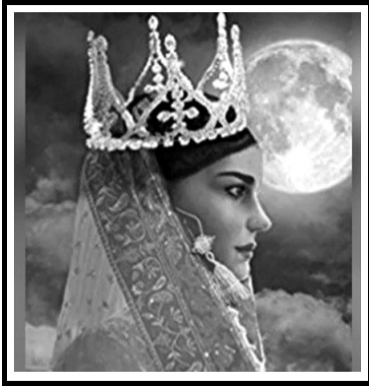


Fig. – Kota Rani

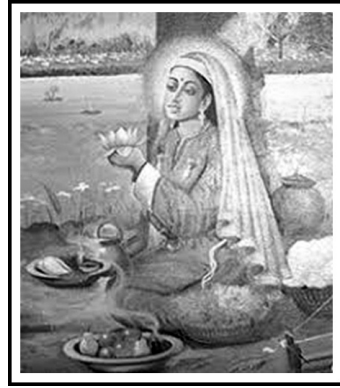


Fig. – Lal Ded



Fig. – Habba Khatoon



Fig. – Queen Didda

## FOOD AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN MUGHAL INDIA

**Rekha Pande**

Professor

Department of History, School of Social Sciences  
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

**Rizwan Ahmad**

Research Scholar

Department of History, School of Social Sciences  
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

### ***Abstract***

*This paper aims to bridge the gap which exists in current researches with regards to food in the Mughal Empire. Most of the attention in the Mughal period has been paid to its administration, socio-economic developments, military and architecture and all this speaks of the grandeur of this period but there is hardly any focus on food. Hence, the present paper focuses on food in the Mughal period and looks at how food created an identity in the society on the basis of food consumption. Food as a basic necessity for the survival and growth of human kind plays an important role in culture and for the formation of one's identity as it always reflects choice, beliefs, status, habits, and personality and this has been untouched till now in Indian history writing. Therefore, much attention needs to be given on gastronomy, an important aspect of society as it always reflects identity. Food as an identity largely depends on the availability of resources and over the ages, it has been shaped by the culture, religion, tradition and economy. In fact what we see during the Mughal period is the wide gap between the upper and lower sections of the society as far as their food culture is concerned. For the upper classes, food was dynamic and changed from ruler to ruler but for the lower classes it was monotonous and static. Hence the present paper, endeavours to understand Mughal society in a better way and tries to examine the importance of food in the creation of identity.*



**Keywords.** *Mughals Empire, Food Identity, Humankind, Culture, Gastronomy, Religion, Tradition, Economy.*

One of the most powerful empires that occupies a very pre-eminent place in Indian history writing is the Mughal Empire. The Mughals had come to India with a rich socio-cultural background and they got mingled with the land so well that now it is difficult to see whose culture we are studying. Thus, in the medieval history of India, the Mughal empire made an impact, which has sparkling colours that added to the beauty of Indian culture. The young prince, Babur, descended from Taimur on his father's side and Genghis Khan on his mother's, finished his conquest of northern India in 1526, defeating the Delhi Sultan, Ibrahim Shah Lodi in the first battle of Panipat and founded the Mughal dynasty. This dynasty came to an end in 1857 when Bahadur Shah, was forced into exile in Burma by the British during the First Indian War of Independence.

The Mughal dynasty has left a large and visible mark on India and among the Mughal heritage are the many beautiful buildings that were constructed in the Mughal style; the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort in Delhi, the Fort at Agra, Humayun's Tomb and a number of other beautiful monuments. During their period, the melding of Persian and Indian styles created some of the world's best-known monuments. This combination of influences can also be seen in the arts, cuisine, gardens and even in the Urdu language. Through the Mughals, Indo-Persian culture reached an apogee of refinement and beauty. The Mughals were self-sufficient, self-explanatory and even they had never faced the problem of being foreigners ruling over an alien land<sup>1</sup>. Most of the attention on the Mughal period has been on its administration, socio-economic developments, military and architectural success and there is hardly any focus on the gastronomy of the Mughals. Historical writings have never given any importance to food and the focus is more on wars, diplomacy, administration and art and architecture. Gastronomy also plays a very important role in the Mughal period. Through an attempt on food studies, one can examine how food was connected to a human being's life and to analyze how food

consumption established an identity in society. The present paper attempts to look at Mughal food as a marker of cultural identity.

### **Food and Cuisine**

Food plays an important role in people's lives and influences and impacts their culture. Many cultures have different varieties of food and ingredients. People also connect to their cultural or ethnic group through food patterns. Immigrants often use food as a means of retaining their cultural identity. People from different cultural backgrounds eat different foods. The ingredients, methods of preparation, preservation techniques, and types of food eaten at different meals vary among cultures. The areas in which families live and where their ancestors originated influence their food likes and dislikes. These food preferences result in patterns of food choices within a cultural or regional group.

Food consumption is generally understood as a basic requirement for the survival and growth of humankind. Food is not simply for the purpose of diet and nutrients for sustaining of life but it also plays an important role in culture and the formation of the one's identity. Indeed, often food consumption has been considered as a measuring rod of human's status and dignity. The expression of hierarchy, social position, economic status, and prestige were attached to the kinds of food eaten and the availability of various dishes in bygone times. Food reflects choices, beliefs, passion, habits, status, and personality and this has not been focused in medieval Indian history. Indeed, food also conveys the idea of communication for one's individuality and one's place in society<sup>2</sup>. Food communicates class, ethnic group, lifestyle and other social positions. Hence it can be said to be a medium of communication in the social system. However, the notion of identity is not a passive experience but it develops through an active individual or social practice<sup>3</sup>. An enormous appetite was generally attached with the prestige in almost every society, firstly, as a sign of power and a sign of wealth but, on the other hand it also indicates poverty. Cuisine is ever evolving and dynamic. According to Ferguson, cuisine is 'the code that structures the practice of food and allows us to discuss and to represent taste'<sup>4</sup>. He goes on to draw out

certain conditions that a set of culinary practices must fulfil in order to qualify as a cuisine: A more or less coherent repertory of culinary preparations, usually structured by the products at hand, becomes a true cuisine only when its status as a repertory becomes apparent. That is, culinary preparations become a cuisine when, and only when, the preparations are articulated and formalized, and enter the public domain<sup>5</sup>. Cuisine is also fixed by a boundary or region with limited amount of ingredients depending upon the geography, climate and history of the territory<sup>6</sup>. Though the *haute cuisine* or high cuisine can be kept in a separate category as it is not having any boundary or restriction with regards to ingredients.

### **Mughal Food as cultural identity**

Babur, the founder of the empire, was not satisfied with the available food in India. Despite being a critic of Indian food culture, he spent the rest of the life in India but remained alien to its cuisine. For instance, Babur states that,

*‘Hindustan is a country of no charms. Its people have no good looks; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits there is none; of genius and capacity none; of manners, none; in handicraft and work, there is no form or symmetry, method or quality; there are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, muskmelons or first-rate fruits, no ice or cold water, no good bread or cooked food in the bazars’.*<sup>8</sup>

Thus, from the beginning itself, the founder of the empire was not satisfied with the kind of food that was available to him. Through the *Memoirs of Babur*, we get the feeling that during his reign in Hindustan, there were no established gastronomical traditions. During his period not much emphasis was given on eating etiquette and dining practices. Initially, during his itinerant phase, he shared a strong bond with his nobles and social inferiors, and we get to see that less emphasis was given on distinction among people according to their rank and position. Although the differences in status and position between the ruler and his *begs* were well-defined, Babur did not let these differences influence dining etiquette. They were all invited to participate in Babur’s

wine parties, where music and dance, and poetry recitals were common. The climate is described in the extant sources as one of camaraderie, conviviality and faith. Many references shared by him in the *Baburnama* show that on his excursions, Babur and his men cooked food, shared food and made merry together. Since he had a very troubled reign, both he and his successor Humayun could not contribute much to food culture and hence changes occurred in food from the period of his descendants. Ruby Lal states that the period from Humayun witnessed a slight shift in etiquette<sup>9</sup>. Royalty during this period was having different kinds of foods with gastronomical items which marked their superiority and power in the society<sup>10</sup>. For instance, the Emperor and other nobles consumed various types of exquisite of food and every table had royal delicacies from birds to fish and drinks were available along with pan dishes, water vessels with jeweled drinking vessels and utensils made of pure gold and silver<sup>11</sup>. The presentation of food itself marked the richness of the Mughal nobility. Interestingly, the role of women in Humayun's period was not confined to the harem only but they were an active members of the royal feasts along with the Emperor. Gulbadan Begum mentions that a lavish feast occurred in 1534 on a riverside in which lots of royal women participated and she describes the sitting arrangements of that banquet<sup>12</sup>. Apart from this, the royal feast was not all about varieties of food only, as there was a musical ceremony as well. That can be considered as part of their lavish lifestyle of having food with music or, in other words, music can be seen as part of happiness and joy of royal people. As Gulbadan Begum notes "Young men and pretty girls and elegant women and musicians and sweet-voiced reciters were ordered to sit in the tank"<sup>13</sup>. In this regard, one contemporary writer Jouher also writes that Shah Tahmasp invited Humayun for a special occasion in which three hundred tents were installed and, interestingly, twelve bands of military music stationed at different places and the ground was fully covered with imperial carpets along with all kind of eatables available<sup>14</sup>. Such presentation with all items and abundant food was an exhibition of a worldly paradise<sup>15</sup>. However, Humayun was also fond of the flesh of hunted animals. For instance, Jouher writes that Humayun found a deer about which he says '*what a delicious prize this deer would be*' as part of the feast<sup>16</sup>.

Even one of the verses referring to food in the period of Humayun represents the rich taste of the Mughals.

Though Babur was the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, it was Akbar, who was the real architect of the Empire. One of the contemporary writers of Akbar's time, Abu Fazl, was of the opinion that the Emperor took a keen interest in the kitchen department for food and he also had a lot of wise regulations for the food department. As far as his personal food is concerned, he ate very less in a day, often only once a day. He was not greedy or having lust for food because he always left his meal before getting fully satisfied<sup>17</sup> and hence one cannot attach gluttony to the Emperor Akbar. Even there was no fixed time for him when he would like to take food but servants were always ready, and within an hour, more than a hundred dishes were prepared<sup>18</sup>. He appointed many cooks from across the countries who could prepare several kinds of dishes. He always drank water from the Ganga as for him the source of life was the water of immortality<sup>19</sup>. Thus, food was meant not just for eating, but it gave the idea of satisfaction in physical and moral life along with power in the society. Abul Fazl goes on to say that the Emperor's table cloth would be spread on the ground and all the dishes served mostly in gold, silver and earthenware victuals with many dishes along with various kind of breads, curds and several small plates of pickles<sup>20</sup>. Though all these makes eating pleasurable, it also indicates a path from leanness to obesity. The lavishness of the Emperor is attested to by Abu Fazl and a traveler's account of that time. Father Monserrate says that the Emperor's table was very splendid and it was filled with more than forty courses of dishes. The food was always taken care of to avoid any unforeseen tragedy. Every food item was covered with linen cloths and tied up having been sealed by the cook.

One more aspect of royalty can also be traced when food was carried by a youth to the dining hall along with the master of kitchen and from there it was further passed on to the serving girls, who were part of the royal table<sup>21</sup>. Generally the Emperor preferred to take his meals in private, except on certain occasions when he had to dine in public banquet<sup>22</sup>. All this reveals that the

Emperor had a lavish lifestyle along with lots of attendees, but it also shows that he segregated himself from the royal women for feasts despite having female attendants to serve the food. But the lavishness and splendour simply indicate that the elaborate system of food created a legitimacy and power in the society as well. For cooling of water, salt peter was used mostly by the elite and Akbar was the first Emperor who introduced it in India<sup>23</sup>. Apart from this, a kind of ice cream (*kulfi*) was also prepared which was prepared in the royal kitchen by freezing a mixture of *khoa*, pishtachio nuts and *kesar* in conical shape of metal device<sup>24</sup>. This introduction added to the royal feast and enhanced their lavish banquet.

The feast became more elaborate and lavish during the time of Akbar's successor with a gift giving ritual added to it. In this regard, one of the travelers John Jourdain, states that no one could come without a present to the court<sup>25</sup>. So the feast was not solely confined for eating but for showing respect towards the Emperor also. Another traveler, Francisco Pelsaert has also confirmed that rich people were having all kinds of lavish food, some of which were not known in his own country. The lavish feast consisted of many dishes like *Brinj* (dressed rice), *Aeshelia* (spiced meat), *Pollaeb* (pulao), *Zueyla* (spiced wheaten cakes), *Dupiyaza* (meat with onions), roast meat and other items. Before having food, they washed their hands and table cloths would be put before them on the floor. The head servant served everyone but spoon, napkins and knives were absent<sup>26</sup>. He describes the table manners as well and said that it was considered bad behavior to lick the fingers and food should not go beyond the knuckles<sup>27</sup>. The description that he provides clearly indicates that the food consumption was not only confined to splendour but etiquette regarding food and the manner of its consumption also became important and this distinguished the nobility from the other sections of the society. A drink called *falooda*, a favourite drink of Jahangir, was also a rich drink only consumed by the higher sections of the society as it was a mixture of fruit juices, creams and jelly<sup>28</sup>. Another item of food was *paan* or betel leaf for which one of the English travelers Peter Mundy says that it had become a custom to provide betel leaf in every banquet. It was consumed by many great people in the Empire<sup>29</sup>.

The importance of *pan* or betel leaf was also noticed by one of the Italian travelers Manucci, during the Aurangzeb period as well and he had noticed that it was a common practice among the chief nobles of the Empire to have betel leaf, and also it was considered as goodwill to have betel leaf for several guests who visited them. No person refuses to have it as it was considered to be bad manners<sup>30</sup>. Even for Aurangzeb, he says that although he was a person of simple taste, more than thousands of rupees were spent for the maintenance of the royal kitchen in his time<sup>31</sup>. Thus, in the period of Aurangzeb also we can notice the lavishness and rich lifestyle of the higher class.

For the Mughals, richness was not solely bound by the varieties of food and drinks, but also through wine or liquor which enriched their superiority. Bernier states that intoxication was common<sup>32</sup>. He adds that wine sometimes found in the Mughal Empire was either from Chiraz (Shiraz) or Canary<sup>33</sup>. Interestingly, drinking was not confined only to males but it was open to women also. Palsaert states that women learned quickly from their husbands and drinking became fashionable in the last few years of Jahangir's period<sup>34</sup>. Their life style was really enviable and magnificent. The glasses or chalice used for drinking were rich set with jewels, some of them were made up of ballace, ruby, turkish stone and other sorts of stone<sup>35</sup>.

Although the true face of the Mughal Empire was hidden behind the shimmering royal lifestyle, the reality for the majority of the people was only poverty and pathetic conditions of survival. The common people's story is always the backdrop of mainstream history. Recent trends in historical writings are centered around the life of the common people, focusing on various dimensions such as socio-cultural and economic aspects. However, here too, there is hardly anything written about the food and food habits of commoners in historical writings. As far as the history of the food culture of the Mughals is concerned, one gets the impression that the Emperors and royalty enjoyed delicious royal culinary items. So it would be interesting to examine the food culture of the commoners or ordinary subjects of the Mughal Empire.

In his memoirs, Babur states that “peasants and people of low standing go about naked. They tie on a thing called *lunguta*, a decency-clout which hangs two spans below the navel. From the tie of this pendant decency clout, another clout is passed between the thighs and made fast behind. Women also tie on a cloth (*lung*), one-half of which goes round the waist, the other is thrown over the head”<sup>36</sup>. The official gazetteer in Akbar’s period, *Ain-i-Akbari* by Abu Fazl also speaks about the importance of food in a human’s life by saying that a human being’s survival and continuation of life depends on five important pillars. The first one is father, second is a mother, third is children, fourth is servant and finally food<sup>37</sup>. The last one is the most important among all or, in other words, it is the back bone for rest of the four pillars in human life. The staple diet of the general masses in the morning was confined to *jawar* or *bajra* flour kneaded with brown sugar and water<sup>38</sup>. Here one can notice that unlike the royal people, the common masses did not have varieties of food available to them. Even the condition of the common people was miserable and pathetic as one of the contemporary travelers, John Linschoten notes that they consumed so little as it seems they survive on air. Even the houses of the common people were very small in size without even a window<sup>39</sup>. In this regard, Moreland also mentions that the condition of the ordinary man was extremely hopeless and pathetic in seventeenth century India<sup>40</sup>. Although Abul Fazl states that poor and abstemious people eat sufficient quantity of food and raiment so as to keep up their strength required for survival and to protect themselves from the vagaries of the weather<sup>41</sup>.

The miserable condition of the common masses made Akbar ensure that their livelihood must be ensured. Subsequently, he started free eating houses to feed the poor sections of the society. He opened three places for three different communities i.e. Muslims, Hindus and Jogis, known as *khairapurah*, *dharmpurah* and *jogipura* respectively<sup>42</sup>. Later, Jahangir ordered that in his Crown lands and *Jagirs*, free eating houses (*bulghur khana*) were opened and he provided food for the poor according to their condition<sup>43</sup>. In this regard, one of the prominent historians Irfan Habib, argues that the common people during the Mughal period ate inferior grains and hardly any meat<sup>44</sup>. Items like maize,



potatoes, pineapples, chilies and several other items were absent in their daily food<sup>45</sup>. Their social condition remained miserable as they had no option but to eat the same and insufficient food every day. Most of the foreign travelers of the contemporary period also confirm that the status of the common masses was very pathetic. For instance, Sir Thomas Roe states that the common people in India live like fishes found in the ocean. He presented the picture of the Mughals in hierarchical order, where the King resides on the top and peasants at the bottom. These were interlinked to each other in a cyclic chain which started with the farmer, who robs the peasants, the farmer gets robbed by a gentleman, and simply the greater robbed the lesser one and finally the King who robbed all the people<sup>46</sup>. It is a fact that although in Mughal times, some of the richest persons of the world dwelt in India so did the poor as well<sup>47</sup>. However, many foreign travelers regarded the country to be poor as common people here were very poor.

Interestingly, there was no gender segregation as such in the gastronomy of the common people as was seen in royal life. As one of the travellers De Leat confirms, the whole family ate together but their dishes would be confined to a single dish, which was popularly known as *khichery*<sup>48</sup>. He further talks about the ingredients in preparing *khichery* like peas, little rice, along with water which they ate hot, generally in the evening with butter. Thus, it reveals that unlike *haute cuisine*, their cuisine was very simple and limited. Apart from these, they ate the same peas or another kind of grains in the day time<sup>49</sup>, which they thought was enough for their lean stomach<sup>50</sup>. Even one more traveler, Palsaert, notes that these people had a belief of not possessing more things than they deserved. They took great refuge in religion and felt it was their *karma* that they were experiencing this kind of a life. The government or the people who, possessing power never took any initiative to upgrade the life of the common people and they hardly knew the taste of meat as well<sup>51</sup>.

Thus, the lives of the common people can also be seen as the epitome of poverty in the Mughal era. For which Palsaert says that the condition was so bad that in order to write about the common people of Mughal India he had to change fully the tune

or style of his writing. He says that the royal people who dwelt in rich palaces, where all wealth stored were acutely accumulated from the sweat of the poor people<sup>52</sup>. Even cardamoms and pepper were not accessible to the common people as they were expensive but they used cumin seed, coriander seed, and ginger<sup>53</sup>.

Bernier, asserts the fact that, *kichery* remained as the chief food for the common people in the Aurangzeb's period as well<sup>54</sup>. He was of the opinion that the proportion of poor people in India were more, out of ten, seven or eight people were poor, ragged and miserable beings<sup>55</sup>. The condition of the common people was so pathetic that it seems wheat was also not part of the common people's diet despite having lots of produce in the region of Agra and Delhi. Indeed, Edward Terry confirms it to be that the food of people was not made up of flour of wheat but some kind of coarser grain<sup>56</sup>. The poor ate rice boiled with green ginger to which they added a little pepper and butter. It was their principle dish but was seldom eaten. Water was probably the common drink of the common masses, but sometimes it was converted into *sherbet* (sweet drink) with sugar and lemon<sup>57</sup>. Apart from all these, if we talk about their liquor or beverage it was ambiguous. Edward Terry talks about toddy or taddy as a drink for the masses, that is pleasant in taste to any white wine, but only if someone drunk it in the morning but later it became heady, and harmful. He also states that it is a medicinal drink if taken early<sup>58</sup>. In addition to the taddy, Ralph Fitch states that this tree is the most profitable tree in the world. Apart from taddy, he writes, its leaves were used to make houses, sails for ships and mats for the sitting<sup>59</sup>.

Aurangzeb issued imperial *firman*s to add more *langarkhanas* in the city of Agra. He also tried to remove the pain of the needy and poor people in other parts of his territory as well by ordering those nobles who were having up to thousand *zat* to open *langars* in their dominion<sup>60</sup>. Apart from these, one of the contemporary travelers, Thevenot, says that the common man in the society was living so miserably that in the name of medicine for flux, they were having only rice along with milk. This was their medicine to cure themselves of a severe fever<sup>61</sup>. He goes on to say

that the Mughal army, especially the cavalry and musketeers were very much weak and coward that only a hundred Europeans might be well enough to beat them. Their meal was kneaded with water and brown sugar. Whereas in the evening, they would consume *khichery*, which was a mixture of rice, water, salt, and grains along with some butter. This food was the chief food for the soldiers and poor communities<sup>62</sup>. This reveals that the commoners food remained static from the beginning till end with no other varieties available before them. Hence we can see the conditions of the common people remained constant with no changes in their food consumption during Mughal times. This gives a separate identity to the lower section of the society in the Mughal Empire.

## Conclusion

Hence, to conclude, food is linked to a large number of variables and dynamics such as biological, social, cultural, political and economic. There are many factors – from individual tastes and idiosyncrasies to cultural taboos – which influence and shape food practices across time and space. Social and political relationships and expressions of power and cordiality in the Mughal context were also expressed through the medium of food. Certain articles such as fruits, betel leaf, hunted meats and wine enjoyed particular significance as gifts. Each category of gifts had its own particular set of symbolic meanings. For instance, fruit was associated with sugar and sweetness, and often accompanied messages of friendship or truce. Hunted meats probably conveyed symbolic meanings of intimate favour in a manner similar to the ceremonial robe of honour or *khil* at.

Food has its own importance in the society and in Mughal society it not only sections of the society but also gave status and power. For the nobility and royalty, food was dynamic and luxuries with *haute cuisine* but on the other hand, lower sections of the same society lived a miserable life with static and monotonous food. There was a clear social hierarchy on the basis of food consumption. As we have seen, two faces of the same society on the one hand, it was glamour of royal life and, on the other

hand, it was the painful face of the common people. Thus, food consumption was not simply for sustenance of the life but it was also the marker of identity in society.

## References

1. Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*, Blackwell publishing, Oxford, 2004. pp. 1-4.
2. E.N. Anderson, *Everyone Eats, Understanding Food and Culture*, University Press, New York, 2005, pp.124-125.
3. D. Jordon Rosenblum, *Food and Identity In Early Rabbinic Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2010, pp.6-7.
4. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2004, p.18.
5. *Ibid.*, p.19.
6. Sidney Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursion Into Eating, Culture, and the Past*. Beacon Press Book, Boston, 1996, p. 99.
7. *Ibid.*, p.100-101.
8. Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, *Babur Nama, Vol. II, tr. A. S. Beveridge, London: Luzac and co., 1922, p. 518*.
9. Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World*, Cambridge University Press. 2005. pp. 92-99.
10. Irfan Habib, *Medieval India, The Study of a Civilization*, National book trust, New Delhi, 2008, pp. 144-145.
11. Gulbadan Begum, *Humāyūn nāma*”, ed. and tr. Wheeler M Thackston, Mazda Publishers, California, 2009. pp.118-120.
12. *Ibid.* pp.121-123.
13. *Ibid.* pp.122.
14. Jouher, *The Tezkereh Al Vakiat*, tr. Major Charles Stewart. Idarah-I- Adabiyat, Delhi, 2009. pp.72-73.
15. Fernandez F. Armesto, *Near A Thousand Tables- A History of Food*, Free Press, New York, 2004. pp. 101-102.
16. Jouher, Op. cit., pp. 35-36.
17. Abul Fazl., *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, tr. H. Blochmann, G.H. Rouse, Calcutta, 1873. pp. 51-82.

18. Shireen Moosvi, *Episodes in the life of Akbar, Contemporary Records and Reminiscences*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1994. pp. 99-100.
19. Abul Fazl, *Op.cit.*, pp. 56-58.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 52-54.
21. Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate, S.J., on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, tr. J. S. Hoyland, annotated S. N. Banerjee, Asian Educational Service, New Delhi, 1992. p. 19.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
23. Abu Fazl, *Op. cit.*, p.161.
24. K.T. Achaya, *Indian Food, A Histortical Companion*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2004. pp. 116-117.
25. Mohammad A. Ansari, *European travelers under the Mughals, Idarah-I Adabiyat*, Delhi, 2009. pp. 48-49.
26. Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert*, tr. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, W. Heffer and Sons Ltd, Cambridge, 1925. pp. 60-64.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-63.
28. K.T. Achaya, *Op.cit.*, pp. 65-66.
29. Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia*, Vol. II. ed. Richard Temple. London: Haklyut Society, 1914. pp. 96-97.
30. Niccolao Manucci, *Storia do Mogor or Mogol India 1653-1708*. Vol.I, tr. William Irvine, London. John Murray Albemarle Street, 1908. p. 63.
31. P. N. Ojha, *North Indian Social life during Mughal India*, , Delhi: Oriental Publishers and Distributers, 1975. pp. 4-6.
32. Francois Bernier, *Travels of the Mogul Empire 1656-1668*, ed. Constable, Archibald, Oxford University press, London, 1891. pp. 188-189.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 253-254.
34. Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert*, tr. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Ltd. 1925. pp. 64-65.
35. Sir John Hawkins, *The Hawkin's Voyages*, ed. Clements R. Markham, Hakluyt Society, London, 1878. pp. 422-424.
36. Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, *Op.cit.*, pp. 519-521.
37. Abu Fazl, *Op.cit.*, pp. 17-18.

38. P.N. Ojha, Op.cit, pp. 35-36.
39. Abraham Eraly, *The Mughal World; Life in India's Last golden Age*, Penguin Groups, New Delhi, 2006. pp. 166-168.
40. Abraham Eraly, *Emperors of the Peacock Throne; The Saga of the Great Mughals*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2000. pp. 519-520.
41. Abu Fazl, Op.Cit, pp. 13-14.
42. *Ibid*, pp. 200-201.
43. Jahan Gir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, tr. Alexander Rogers and H. Beveridge, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1908. pp. 74-76.
44. Irfan Habib, Op.cit, pp. 144-145.
45. Abraham Eraly, 2000, Op.cit, pp. 115-117.
46. K.T. Achaya, Op.cit, pp. 171-173.
47. Abraham Eraly, 2006, Op.cit, pp. 166-168.
48. *Ibid*, pp. 89-90.
49. *Ibid*, p. 90.
50. Francisco Pelsaert, Op.cit, pp. 60-64.
51. *Ibid*, pp. 60-64.
52. *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.
53. Tapan Raychaudhuri, and Irfan Habib, *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Volume 1 : c 1200- c 1750*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2008. pp. 461-462.
54. *Ibid*, p. 152.
55. *Ibid*, pp. 282-283.
56. Edward Terry, *Early travels in India*, ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, 1921. pp. 297-300.
57. K.T. Achaya, Op.cit, p. 173.
58. Op.cit, pp. 297-299.
59. Ralph Fitch, *Early travels in India*, ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, 1921, pp. 12-14.
60. I.P. Gupta, *Urban Glimpses of Mughal India*, Tilak Wasan Discovery Publishing House, Delhi, 1986. pp. 56-57.
61. Jean de. Thevenot, *The Travels of Monfieur de Thevenot into Levant*, Part. III, London. 1686. pp. 108-109.
62. *Ibid*, pp.123-125.

## **RISE OF THE INTELLIGENTSIA IN THE PRINCELY STATE OF COOCH BEHAR (1859-1922): A STUDY OF THEIR ACTIVITIES**

**Prosenjit Ray**

Lecturer

Sitalkuchi College, Cooch Behar, West Bengal

### ***Abstract***

*The Princely State of Cooch Behar became a tributary and 'subsidiary State' under the British East India Company from 1773 onwards and indirect rule started in the State since that year. However, from the second half of the nineteenth century, western education was introduced by the intellectuals in the State. The educated personalities transmitted their thoughts socio-culturally and politically from one generation to the next in the State (and outside also). The study starts from the second half of the nineteenth century with the foundation of the Cooch Behar Hitaisini Sabha (1859) and comes to an end with of the Non-Cooperation Movement (1922). In the study period, as part of intellectual activities, education was developed, literary and non-literary works were introduced, magazines were published, new sports were introduced. The Swadeshi concept was utilised, theatre was fostered and Indian nationalism against British power was noticed politically in the State and outside by the intellectuals.*

**Keywords:** Education, Intelligentsia, Mohun Bagan, Nationalism, Swadeshi, Victoria College.

### **Introduction**

The Princely State of Cooch Behar was a tributary State under the British East India Company (EIC, after the British Crown). It was ruled by a Koch dynasty till 1949 from the sixteenth century CE. In 1773 CE, the Anglo-Koch Treaty was signed by the

EIC and Dharendra Narayan, Koch king on the basis of Subsidiary Alliance<sup>1</sup>. As per the conditions of the treaty, the Koch king was compelled to pay half of its revenues obtained since that year on a yearly basis. Since the first half of nineteenth century, Bengal saw a renaissance or intellectual activities led by the Bengalis, which sent ripples of intellectual activities to different parts of India. However, socio-cultural changes were noticed since the second half of the nineteenth century in the State due to the rise of modern western education and the contribution of the intelligentsia. The two consecutive Kings (Narendra Narayan and his son Nripendra Narayan) for the first time had been educated outside the State. The second one had been educated in England also. Due to acquisition of modern education by them and close contact with the British officials, their psychology changed. This kind of change inspired them to bring about socio-cultural changes in the State. Under their patronisation, new kind of social institutions came about in the society. These were academic institutions, literary institutions, theatre, club culture and political institution in the State. Many of the intelligentsia were engaged in writings. Kings got their subjects in touch with modern education in the State. Ultimately, rational thinking took the form of nationalism. The intellectuals protested against the cultural and political hegemony. However, the changes happened in the state as the contribution of the intellectuals, were natives<sup>2</sup> of the State. The non-natives were Brahmo Samajists in faith and highly educated and were engaged in different official posts of the State.

### **Activities of Intelligentsia**

The intelligentsia were engaged in socio-cultural and political work. They were the foundation of the Koch Behar Hitaisini Sabha, the publication of periodicals, academic institutions, literary and non-literary works, sports, theatre, *Swadeshi* thought and political activities.

### **Foundation of Koch Behar Hitaisini Sabha**

Social changes occurred since the first half of the nineteenth century in India as a whole, but the same is traced in the State since



the abolition of sati the system in 1849<sup>3</sup> (though it was abolished in the British Indian territory in 1829. It was the first step towards social change in the State. The next step was the foundation of the Desh Hitaisini Sabha in 1859 CE (it was later turned into the Koch Behar Hitaisini Sabha in 1864/1865), the first socio-cultural association of intelligentsia in the State. Young King Narendra Narayan (1847-63) patronised it. A book recorded that, the Hitaisini Sabha Baktritramala (1865) was an organisation that consisted of thirty-six members, of whom many of them contributed to writings (history and other aspects of society). Some notable writer-luminaries of the organisation were Anand Chandra Ghosh, Shashobhusan Halder, Tribhanga Mukhopadhyay, Harimohan Roy, Nilmani Chattopadhyay. Col. J. C. Haughton (chairman of the organisation and commissioner of the State) and H. Beverage Esq. (vice-chairman of the organisation) who played a leading role with its few associates. The aim of the organisation was to debate and discuss literature, history, agriculture, commerce, archaeology, etc. and organise other welfare programmes in the State<sup>4</sup>. Literally associations started in the State since the foundation of the Desh Hitaishini Sabha and that trend of formation of associations continued. The study period saw a number of organisations, such as the Khagarabari Dramatic Club, Absarranjini, Cooch Behar Dramatic Club, Anushilan Samiti (Mathabhanaga), Anushilan Samiti (Cooch Behar), Cooch Behar Team-A (for football), Cooch Behar Team-B (for football), Young Friends' Dramatic Club, Tufanganj Dramatic Club, which all were by-products of the activities of the intelligentsia of the State. Due to the foundation of associations by the intelligentsia, the study period is called the age of associations.

After the unexpected demise of Narendra Narayan, his minor son Nripendra Narayan (1863-1911) was placed on the throne. During his reign, under the patronage of the royal family, an intellectual work named 'Hitaisini Sabha Baktritramala' was published in 1865 from Calcutta. The work consists of nine articles contributed by eight writers under the editorship of Sashibhusan Halder. This was the first work in the State, which crossed the traditional writing pattern and got into different dimensions of thought (such as agriculture, history, education, and tobacco

production). All the contributors were from Bengal and came to the State as jobseekers, and they represented the educated middle class and accordingly were engaged in State service.

### **Literary and Non-literary works**

Ananda Chandra Ghosh was a member of the Kochbehar Hitaishini Sabha, a serestadar (clerk) in the Commissioner's Office at Cooch Behar and *dewan* for some time in the State in 1869 CE. He wrote a historical article named 'Kochbeharer Itihas.' Ram Chandra Ghosh was a member of the Kochbehar Hitaishini Sabha and a high official of the State; he was originally a resident of Dhaka. He lectured on his three important articles at Kochbehar Hitaishini Sabha. Those were 'Kochbeharer Krishi Karm' (in Bengali), 'koch behar tamaker bibaran' (in Bengali) and 'kochbehar pradese bidyannatir sopan' (in Bengali)<sup>5</sup>. Hari Mohan Roy was a member of the Kochbehar Hitaishini Sabha and teacher at Jenkins School. His valuable article on female education was 'Stree ganer Bidya shiksha'<sup>6</sup>. Bhagavati Charan Banerjee, a Sub-Deputy Superintendent of Schools in the State was a good history writer in the modern sense. He wrote history books named '*Kochbiharer Bibaran*' (1879) and '*Kochbiharer Itihas*' (1882) and they were published from the Cooch Behar State Press.

Prof. Jadab Chandra Charkrabarti (1839-1911) was a civil and sessions judge of the State as well as a notable mathematician-astronomer of the Aligarh Muslim University. He came to the State from Pubna<sup>7</sup>. He wrote '*Kochbihar Rajyer Sankhipta Bibaran*' (in Bengali, 1883) and '*The Native States of India*', (in 1893). The latter book consists of a general description of alphabetical names of the native states and description of the native state<sup>8</sup>. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri, was *naib ahilkar* (Sub-divisional magistrate) and a settlement officer in the State<sup>9</sup>. His famous book is '*The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlements*', (1903). It was the first English book from the State Press under the patronage of King Nripendra Narayan.

Kumar Rangila Narayan, a magistrate of Mekliganj sub-division<sup>10</sup> was a member of the royal family, and a literature-lover.

He wrote a novel named *Amina* and this was published in 1893 CE as the first novel in the State. Ram Chandra Singha, a *Brahmo*, wrote a book named *Jiban Sandarbha* (Bengali) in 1893 CE from the State Press under the encouragement of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. Akhil Chandra Palit was closely associated with the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha. He composed a poetical work known as '*Riday Gatha*'. He translated *Meghdut* in 1908 CE. Moreover, he wrote on different topics in various newspapers and magazines. Pundit Kokilashar Bhattacharya Vidyaratna, the well-known litterateur and Professor of Sanskrit at Victoria College (Cooch Behar) became an associate member of the literary organisation Rangpur Sahitya Parishad. Chiranjib Sharma, a dramatist, composed a play 'Naba Brindaban' (1905, in Bengali)<sup>11</sup> under the patronage of the King. His other works like *Jugal Milan* (1883), *Keshab Charit* (1884) and *Brahmo Gita* (in two vols, 1901) which are valuable works of Bengali literature.

King Nripendra Narayan (4 October, 1862-1911) was a luminary of the State. He assisted the writers and composers in publication of works and patronised different socio-cultural associations. He was allied with the intellectual associations like Rangpur Sahitya Parishad, Uttarbanaga Sahitya Sammilan, Cooch Behar Club, Concord Club, India Club, etc. As the first patron of Rangpur Sahitya Parishad and its life member, he donated 500 rupees to the association<sup>12</sup>. He was popular for his work entitled '*Thirty Seven Years Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar; the Duars and Assam*' (1908).

The first enlightened royal lady of the State was Queen Brindeswari Debee, mother of King Narendra Narayan (1847-1863). She was the first lady poet in the State, who composed a biographical verse named '*Beharodanto*' in Bengali in the 1850s. Sunity Debee, a renaissance lady in the State contributed to both Bengali and English language. The number of her Bengali works are ten, which are *Amritbindu* (vol. i, 1325 BS and vol. ii, 1332 BS), *Kathakathar Gan* (1328 BS<sup>13</sup>), *Sahana* (1915 CE), *Jharer Dola* (1921 CE), *Shibnath* (1921), *Shishu Keshab* (1922), *Sangha Shankha* (year not traced), *Sati* (year not traced) and *Rabindra*

*Janmatithi* (year not traced). Her English works are *The Rajput Princesses*, *Bengali Dacoits and Tigers* (1916), *The Beautiful Mugul Princesses* (1918), *Nine Ideal Women* (1919), *The Life of Princess Yashodhara*, *The Autobiography of an Indian Princess* (1921), *Indian Fairy Tales* (1922) and *Prayers*<sup>14</sup>.

Rai Saheb Panchanan Barma, a son of soil of the State and first sophisticated among the *Rajbanshi* community was a leading figure in north Bengal and Assam in of the socio-cultural-political sphere. He was a secretary of Rangpur Sahitya Parisad. As an editor of the *Rangpur Sahitya Parisad Patrika*, he lectured on his article 'Uttar Bangia Gramya Slok Sangra' (in Bengali) at Rangpur Town Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1907. This article was published later in the name of 'Katha O Chhilka'. His other articles are *Satya Peer* and *Kamata Bihari Sahitya*. Under his assistance, some natives of the State obtained first class membership in the organisation. Those luminaries were Mahendra Adhikary (a *qanungo*, Dinhata), *munsif* Pasar Muhammad (a *jotedar*, Mathabhanga), Amir Uddin Ahmmad (a lawyer, Mekliganj), Debiprasad Sarkar (Nowdawas, Baramaricha, Sitalkuchi), Padma Nath Das (Mathabhanga), Kedar Nath Das (Rajgan Boding, Cooch Behar). Later, under his editorship many valuable writings were published from Rangpur Sahitya Parisad. He was connected also with the *Uttar Banga Sahitya Sammelan* (North Bengal Literary Conferance) and its luminaries. Other luminaries of the state who joined the sessions of the organisation (1910) were Abdul Halim (Persian Teacher at Victoria College, Cooch Behar), Chaudhuri Amnutullah Ahmed (a *jotedar*, Baramaricha), Mahendra Adhikary (*qanungo*, Mathabhanga)<sup>15</sup>. He started a mouthpiece of Rajbanshis called 'Khatrya' from Rangpur<sup>16</sup>.

Brajendra Nath Seal (1864 – 1938) was a world famous philosopher, educationist and a member of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. He was the Principal of Victoria College from 1896 to 1913 CE. He joined and addressed the International Congress of Orientalists in Rome in 1899 and as a representative of India, he inaugurated the First Universal Race Congress in London in 1911 CE. He was assisted by King Nripendra Narayan for his participation in these intellectual forums<sup>17</sup>. His eleven works<sup>18</sup>

consists of *Neo-Romantic Movement in Bengali Literature (1890–91)*, *Positive Background of Hindu Sociology* (with B. K. Sarkar), *A Comparative Study of Christianity and Vaishnavism (1899)*, *New Essays in Criticism (1903)*, *Introduction to Hindu Chemistry (1911)*, *Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus (1915)*, *Race-Origin (1911)*, *Syllabus of Indian Philosophy (1924)*, *Rammohun: The Universal Man (1933)*, *The Quest Eternal-Address at the All India Philosophical Congress, (1936)* and *Autobiography* (unpublished). Victoria College has been named into ABN Seal College in his memory for his outstanding contribution to higher education.

Khan Chowdhuri Amanutulla Ahmed (1873-1958) had been a native scholar and a high official of the State. He joined the third session of Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammelan held at Gauripur palace, Assam in 1910 CE. His works are ‘*Koch-Rajbansi Bhasa Tattva*’ (1910, in Bengali), *Kochbiharer Prachin Bhasa*’ (in 1326 BS, in Bengali), *Kochbiharer Itihas (A History of Cooch Behar, part. I, 1936)*. His *Kochbiharer Itihas* was an important step in regional history writing. He was connected with Rangpur Sahitya Parishad and was secretary of the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha<sup>19</sup>.

### **Rise of academic institutions**

The second half of the nineteenth century saw modernised education under the leadership of the intelligentsia in the State. Both the private and government initiatives were noticed. The new kind of education in the State was through the contribution of the middle class and the patronage of the royal family, well-to-do *jotedars* (big farmers) of the State and merchants got momentum and education became public. Many schools (such as Jenkins School, Sunity Academy, Mathabhanga High School, Dinhat High School, Mekliganj High School.) were established in the State and the teachers of these schools helped to influence positively in the next generations. From data, it is known that in 1874 CE, the State comprised of one hundred ninety-nine schools run by the government and private enterprises and where 4,605 students studied<sup>20</sup>. After three decades, in 1904 CE the number of students increased much more than the previous account. It

was 12,639. The literacy rate was 24.7% as compared to the other districts of Bengal in 1899-1900 CE; but even after thirteen years, the member of females in education was only 517, (whereas total population of the State was 5,93,052 in 1913 CE ) and they studied in the girls' schools. In 1921 CE, the number of girls educated was only 0.9%<sup>21</sup>. However, it is noticed that the teaching contributors in the institutions were from an English educated background and came to the State from the undivided Bengal as jobseekers.

### **Jenkins School**

During the period of Narendranath Narayan, a Bengali school was started in the Cooch Behar city in 1857 for educating the princes and kinsmen of the royal family<sup>22</sup>. Brindeswari Debee turned it into an Anglo-vernacular school at the royal residence in Cooch Behar City in 1859 CE for the elite. Tribhanga Mukhopadhyay, a non-native scholar was engaged as English teacher in the school. Pal says that it was later turned into Jenkins School (1861) by Narendranath Narayan<sup>23</sup> and learning started in this first public Anglo-vernacular school. He (Narendranath Narayan) is considered as a pioneer of English education in the State. It was named after Col. Jenkins, agent to the Governor-General of India in the North-East Frontier for his long service to the state during the minority of Narendranath Narayan. Surely, it acted as a milestone in the spread of modern education in the State. High Caste Hindus like Tribhanga Mukhopadhyay and Harihohan Roy were notable luminaries of the school. Tribhanga Mukhopadhyay was headteacher, who contributed to writings. He was also a member of Cooch Behar Hitaisini Sabha, and he expressed his scholarly thinking on child education in his article published in *Baktritamala* (1865). Harihohan Roy was a teacher of the school as well as a member of the Cooch Behar Hitaisini Sabha.

### **Sunity Academy**

King Nripendra Narayan married Sunity Debee, daughter of the Brahmo reformer Kehsab Chandra Sen in 1878. This marriage is famous as the 'Cooch Behar Marriage Debate' in Indian History. Sunity Debee was a modern educated lady. She believed in liberal

thoughts and patronised a girls' school named Sunity Devee founded by her and her husband King Nripendra Narayan in Cooch Behar city in 1881. It was the first girls' school in the State, where technical education was also taught by lady teachers<sup>24</sup>. With the King's support, an artisan school was founded in the State. A Chinese carpenter was appointed in the school. The professional blacksmiths, weavers, potters and braziers were also engaged to teach their respective trades. The King encouraged the apprentices by providing a small stipend<sup>25</sup>.

Mathabhanga High School, Mekliganj High School and Dinjata High School were established under the benevolent enterprise of the local intelligentsia in 1890 and where later the King Nripendra Narayan started to run schools<sup>26</sup>. The famous socio-political thinker Thakur Panchanan Barma of north Bengal and Assam were the alumnus of Mathabhanga High School.

Mathabhanga Girls' School (1893) was established in 1893 CE, and it was the first girls' school in the Mathabhanga sub-division in the State. Asutosh Ghosh, Magistrate of Mathabhanga sub-division and a member of Brahmo Samaj was the Secretary to the school in 1907 CE. He supported the girls' students with his own fund for female education in the locality. The name of this school was changed to Chhabir Unnesa Girls' School after a wealthy couple, Pasar Mahmmd and his wife Chhabir Unnesa donated land and funds for the school<sup>27</sup>. Haldibari School was another aided school in the Mekliganj sub-division. It was managed by the local intelligentsia, who donated a lot of funds to the school. In 1893, E. E. Lowis, Superintendent of the State wrote that the State gave three hundred rupees out of six hundred rupees in the previous year. The Haldibari jute merchant aided continuously the school<sup>28</sup>. Under the Brahmo Samaj, some schools were founded in Haldibari for social welfare. *Jotedars* of Western portion (Mekliganj) of the State, mostly Muslims subscribed, a monthly amount to upgrade the Mekliganj Middle to high school<sup>29</sup>. Ain Uddin Choudhuri (Per Mekligunj), Chatradhar (Mekligunj) and Amirullah Patoari (Maricha) contributed to the development of education. The last two *jotedars* made a donation of two hundred



rupees each to the Mekliganj and the Mathabhanga sub-divisional schools respectively.

### Victoria College

The foundation of Victoria College (1888) was a new chapter in the history of Cooch Behar for the development of higher education and nationalist activities. It was the sole higher educational establishment in the northern portion of the then undivided Bengal and Assam. It was established by King Nripendra Narayan. The college consisted of First Arts (F. A.), Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Master of Arts (M.A.) and Law subjects also. Some eminent Professors of the college were Jay Kisen Sen (English), Raj Mohan Sen (Mathematics), Gobinda Chandra Das (Science), Jogindra Kumar Singha (Philosophy) and Sharat Chandra Gupta (Sanskrit). Later, the number of teaching staff was increased. They were Bir Chandra Sinha (Philosophy), Upendra Narayan Sinha (Mathematics), Babu Mohini Mohan Ray (Science), Gopi Krishna Kundu (officiating Professor of Philosophy), Jadu Nath Bhattacharjya (Law)<sup>30</sup>. Babu Hridoy Krishna De (Chemistry)<sup>31</sup>. The most outstanding figure of the college was the world famous philosopher Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal.

### Rise of Magazines

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the rise of some Bengali magazines in the State as part of intellectual activities from the State Press under royal patronage<sup>32</sup>. The first Bengali magazine as well as a monthly of the State, was '*Koch Bihar Masik Patrika*' and this was started in 1877 CE under the editorship of Kumar Rangila Narayan. The second monthly was '*Kulsastra Dipika*' published in 1885 CE. Most probably Jadav Chandra Chakrabarti was the editor of this monthly<sup>33</sup>. The third monthly '*Palli Prakash*' was published from 1886 CE by Jogendra Narayan Roy<sup>34</sup>. The fourth monthly '*Sukatha*' was published from 1893 CE<sup>35</sup>. Fifth magazine but the first weekly '*Kangal*' was edited by Krishna Sundar Sen from 1895 CE. Durga Das Gupata, M.B., a senior physician of the State, started a monthly '*Swastha*' in 1897



CE<sup>36</sup>. The *Paricharika* was started by Nirupama Devee since 1916 with the assistance of the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha.

### **Rise of new sports**

The study period saw new kinds of sports like football and cricket, which were introduced by the British. Some educational institutions of the State played an important role in games and sports. Accordingly, a 'Gymnasium was sanctioned for the students of Victoria College and Jenkins School by the King on the scheme submitted by Dellafoss, the Principal of Victoria College<sup>37</sup>. Acharya Brojendra Natha Seal, an eminent professor, philosopher and enthusiastic educationist loved physical education. During his tenure of service as the Principal of Victoria College<sup>38</sup>, the number of the gymnastic class was eighty-nine, of whom forty-eight belonged to the college and forty-one to the school in 1897-98 CE. The cricket and football club consisted of ninety-five members. Football was especially popular in the State and was encouraged and patronised by King Nripendra Narayan. Football became popular in India under his sincere efforts. For example, the players of Cooch Behar earned credit in the football world in 1893 in the Cooch Behar Cup competition held at Calcutta<sup>39</sup>. It was an opening of a symbolic battle against the cultural hegemony of the British supremacy as Indians competed with Europeans in the competitions.

Famous football teams used to arrive in Cooch Behar city from undivided Bengal and Bihar to participate. Famous football players Sib Bhaduri and Bijay Bhaduri arrived from Faridpur with their football team. King Nripendra Narayan was charmed with their (Bhaduri brothers- Sib Bhaduri and Bijay Bhaduri) sports performance and, therefore, he engaged them to the Cooch Behar Team (A team). Bijay was employed directly in the Cooch Behar court and Sib Bhaduri was granted a monthly allowance. Seven students of Jenkins School played from the Cooch Behar B-team (known as Pokas' Eleven). The headmaster of Jenkins School encouraged his students in football. The three students of Jenkins School got chance in the Cooch Behar Team-A. They were

Biren Ghos, Priyabhusan Sen and Dwijes Chandra Guha. Dwijes Chandra Guha joined Aryan Club (oldest Club in Asia founded in 1884) in Calcutta. He was influenced by Shib Bhaduri and followed the sports techniques of Sib Bhaduri<sup>40</sup>.

The history of Mohun Bagan Sporting Club was closely related with the Cooch Behar Cup. Mohun Bagan set out its first tournament with the Cooch Behar Cup held in 1893 in Calcutta and its first challenger team was a European opposition “C” Company of the Sussex regiment. Ronojoy Sen writes that Muhan Bagan won the victories over the Cooch Behar Cup in 1904, 1905, 1907 and 1908<sup>41</sup>. The year 1911 was the most unforgettable year in the history of football in India. The year saw the IFA Shield held in Calcutta. In the finals, Mohun Bagan Sporting Club led by Indians were victorious over the East Yorkshire Regiment led by the British Army. It was remarkable that the five players (Sibdas Bhaduri, Bijay Bhaduri, Bhuti Sukul, Kanu and Rajen Sen) of Mohun Bagan were patronised by king Nripendra Narayan. Rajen Sen was a student of Jenkins School<sup>42</sup>. ‘It thrills every Indian with joy and pride to know that rice-eating, malaria-ridden, barefooted, Bengalis have got the better of beef-eating, Herculean, booted John Bull in that peculiarly English sport<sup>43</sup>.’

### ***Swadeshi* enterprise**

*Swadeshi* means indigenous. The royal family patronised indigenous enterprises, such as indigenous clubs and banks, educational institutions and other establishments. Although King Nripendra Narayan (1863-1911) had good relations with Queen Victoria, he showed his nationhood and self-consciousness in favour of *Swadeshi* enterprises. In 1882, he established The India Club in Calcutta as a counter to European clubs. It was the first club for the Indians and by the Indians. He reminded the Europeans through the foundation of the club that Indians could do as well as the Europeans. An exhibition of *Swadeshi* goods was organised in the Congress session held in 1896 in Calcutta, where he presided over, and delivered his valuable speech<sup>44</sup>. Being sympathetic to *Swadeshi* commercial enterprise, the King engaged

the Hindustan Co-operative Bank in 1905<sup>45</sup>. He subscribed much to the foundation of the Bengal Technical Institute (1906) for the spread of scientific education among the Indians. Queen Sunity Devee was also liberal to *Swadeshi* initiatives. She was linked to an association named *Sakti Samiti*. It organised fairs, where *Swadeshi* goods were displayed and the *Samiti* received a liberal contribution from her<sup>46</sup>.

### **New entertainment through Drama**

In the undivided Bengal, the pioneer of Babu Theatre was Prasanna Kumar Thakur, who started independently in 1831 CE. Cooch Behar State saw theatre culture since 1870 CE under the educated. The other theatres were Cooch Behar Dramatic Club (1907), *Absar Ranjini* party (1911), Young Friends' Dramatic Club (1918, Dinhata), Tufanganj Dramatic Club (1920), Manmohan Natyo Samiti, etc. and they were led by the natives and non-natives of the State. Personalities of magistrate level were connected with some theatres. Sarkar writes that *Ratnabali*, *Chandragupta*, *Upekshita*, *Seeta*, *Sribatsa*, *Nar Narayan*, *Prafulla*, *Debala Devee* etc. was staged by the club members. Even the educated players of the club wrote plays themselves in some cases. A pioneering member of the Club, Siddhanath wrote a play named *Draupadi Parinay* (1884) and it was staged in 1884 for public entertainment. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was very pleased to see the play '*Harischandra*' acted by the members of the club<sup>47</sup>. Young Friends' Dramatic Club (1918) started its journey with some Bengali plays like *Mebar Patan*, *Sarala*, *Bindur Chhele*, *Parinita*, *Karnarjun*. Manmohan Natyo Samiti staged the plays like *Karnarjun*, *Bange Bargi*, *Sahjahan*, and *Resmi Rupal*. Plays were both religious and secular. Historical plays also were staged. Some anti-British plays were staged to dramatise anti-British activities. Plays like *Pather Dabi*, *Resmi Rupal* were political and anti-British in character<sup>48</sup>.

### **Rise of Nationalist thoughts**

The teaching staff of Victoria College was involved in nationalist activities. Some Professors of this college created

national feeling among the students. Sir Brojendra Nath Seal was in favour of Indian nationalist view. He was a member of the National Education Council and got in touch with prominent radicals like Bipin Chandra Pal. It is said that due to his influence, some students got involved in national activities. They were Ambika Chananan Roy, Satyendra Nath Mazumdar, Suresh Chandra Bandhopadhyay, Pulin Das, etc. It is also right that they were influenced by the mainstream anti-British national movement. On the ground of being involved in political activities, Jaygopal Banerjee, an eminent professor (in English) of the college was rusticated. Even two students were under arrest and suspended from the college on the ground of connection with *Swadeshi* dacoity held at Kurul (Rangpur). Provas Chandra Dey, a Professor of English, Victoria College, was closely associated with revolutionary society Atmonnati Samiti. He was deposed from his post in 1916 CE and was arrested on a charge of looting arms belonged to Manton Company, Calcutta and sent to prison till 1920 CE for a period of about four years<sup>49</sup>. Ambika Chananan Roy, an alumnus of the College, founded Model School at Beharampur. Satyendra Nath Mazumdar was inspired by the *Swadeshi* ideology of Archairjya Brojendra Nath Seal. Suresh Chandra Bandhopadhyay in 1906-07 took the membership of *Anushilam Samiti*, when he was studying at Victoria College. Pulin Das (1877-1949), a notable revolutionary was a student of the College. In 1905 CE, he founded a branch of Anushilan Samiti in Cooch Behar city for the first time. Roy Saheb Panchanan Barma, Rajbanshi social reformer and thinker, trained Rajbanshi youths<sup>50</sup>. He was sentenced to a seven-year captivity due to his role in a political plot against the English colonial power and was deported to the Andaman Islands in 1912 CE.

Asruman Dasgupta, an alumnus of Jenkins School got in touch with revolutionary activities led by Cooch Behar *Anushilan Samiti* and was inspired by his classmate Debabrata Mukherjee. His classmates -Ananta Kumar Roy and Tanayendra Ghosh were also linked with the *Samiti*. Within few days, the *Samiti* was banned under the order of the State Government<sup>51</sup>. Kalimohan Ghosh, a brilliant student of Victoria College, joined the Bengal Partition Movement and the *Swadeshi* Movement. He left the College due

to the *Swadeshi* Movement. He joined the Pabna session (Now in Bangladesh) of Indian National Congress in 1906 and sided with the extremist views of the Congress<sup>52</sup>. Dr. Taraknath Das (1884-1958) was an alumnus of Victoria College. He contributed to the Indian national movement as a revolutionary-nationalist. He was a member of the *Anushilan Samiti* in 1900 during his college years.

Mathabhanga Anushan Samiti, was a revolutionary society where a few students of Mathbhanaga High school were connected. The Captain of the *Samiti* was Shushobhan Roy. Upendra Nath Barman, Dhiren Bagchi, Jogen Dutta and Harchanda Roy<sup>53</sup> were the students of Mathabhanga High School, and they were linked to its revolutionary activities. When Upen had been a student of class V, he took membership of the Samiti in 1911 CE under the inspiration of his classmate Jogen Dutta. He practised with fire arms with them. Even he went to his relatives house to prepare for Swadeshi daccoity Later, Upendra Nath became a renowned politician of north Bengal. In 1920, when the Non-Cooperation Movement started, Jogen Dutta, an alumnus of Mathabhanga School and a student of Victoria College left the college to join it. In 1914, Dhiren Bagchi, the eldest son of Brajachand Bagchi, and the Head Master of Mathabhanaga High School, was taken into custody by the British police from his house at Mathabhanaga on the ground of plundering Sankhartola Post Office, Calcutta and was transported<sup>54</sup>.

## Epilogue

Education brought some pshycological changes in the study period in society. Magazines were published under progresive individuals. Modern sports (cricket and football) was introduced and fostered. Theatre was introduced and practised as a part of culture. The IFA Shield was won by the Mohun Bagan Club. This victory was a sambolic victory over the British and had gone down in folklore. Many of the sports historians consider this victory as part of cultural nationalism. It is seen that number of students and professors participated in the national movements in and out of the State.

## References

1. Mazumdar, Durgadas, *West Bengal Districts Gazetteers, Koch Bihar*, Information & Public Relations Departments of West Bengal Government, Calcutta, 1977; Ray, P., 'Agrarian Life in Cooch Behar State (1773-1897): A Perspective of Technology, Agriculture and Calamities', *Raiganj University Journal of History*, Vol. 1, 2019, pp. 56-74.
2. In the article, natives mean subjects of the State and non-natives mean the subjects of British Indian territory.
3. *Selections from the Records of The Bengal Government* (1851), No. 5, (Letter No. 102 of 1849, From The Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal; To Major Jenkins, Agent to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier, Fort William, dated 20<sup>th</sup> September 1849.), National Library, Kolkata.
4. Pal, N. N. ed., *Koch-Bihar Hitaishini Sabha Baktritāmala* (1865), Anima Prakasani, Kolkata, 2004, p. 22-23.
5. Pal, N. N., ed., *Koch-Bihar Hitaishini Sabha Baktritāmala* (1865), Anima Prakashani, Kolkata, 2004, pp. 37- 57, 73-81, 151-156.
6. Pal, N. N., ed., *Koch Bihar Hitaishini Sabha Baktritāmala* (1865), Anima Prakashani, Kolkata, 2004, pp. 25-35, 59.
7. Edition De Luxe, *Who's Who in India* (Part V, Eastern Bengal and Assam), Newul Kishore Press, Lucknow: 1911, p. 15.
8. Jadab Chandra Chakrabarti, *The Native States of India*, S.K. Shaw, Calcutta, 1893.
9. Chaudhuri, Harendra Narayan, *The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlements*, The Cooch Behar State Press, Cooch Behar, 1903, p. 1.
10. *The Annual Administration Report for the Cooch Behar State (henceforth the AAR)*, 1887-88, From Major A. Evans-Gordon, Superintendent of State, Cooch Behar; To His Highness, the Maharajah in Council, Cooch Behar, dated September, 1888, p. 1.

11. Sharma, Chiranjib, *Naba Brindaban*, the Cooch Behar State Press, Cooch Behar, 1905.
12. Das, Nilanshu Sekhar, *Role of the Press and Associations in the Socio-cultural and Political Movements: A Case Study of North Bengal (1869-1969)*, (PhD Thesis, University of North Bengal), 2007, p .212.
13. BS is short form of Bengali Sambat or era, which varies 593/594 years with Common Era (CE).
14. Pal, Nripendra Nath, *Itikathay Cooch Behar*, Anima Prakashani, Kolkata, 2000, pp. 160-161.
15. Roy, Dipak Kumar, *Rangpur Sahitya Parisad Patrikaar Sampadak Panchanan*, Kolkata: Chhaya Publication, 2016, pp. 30-42. For the detailed activities of Rai Saheb Panchanan Barma, see Khetra Nath Singh, *Rai Saheb Panchanan Barma Jibani ba Rangapur Khatriya Samitir Itihas*. Anima Prakashni, Kolkata, 2011.
16. Singh Khetra Nath, *Rai Saheb Panchanan Barma Jibani ba Rangapur Khatriya Samitir Itihas*, Anima Prakashni, Kolkata, 2011, p. 68.
17. Mazumdar, Subhendu, *Adhunik Shiksha O Cooch Behar Victoria College (1888-1938)*, (in Bengali), Paschimbanga Rajya Pustak Parsad, Kolkata, 2000, p. 57.
18. Ghosh Anandagopal, *Acharya Brajendranath Seal: Samakal O Uttarkal Ebang Anyanya Prabandha*, Sangbedan, Malda, 2017, p. 60.
19. Das, B., 'Khan Chaudhuri Amanutulla Ahmed', *Mansai*, 2008, pp. 141-143.
20. See for details, Hunter, W. W., *A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. 10*, Trubner & Co., London, 1876, p. 437.
21. Chakrabarti, C., 'Koch-bihare Nari Shikshar Bibartan', *Madhuparni*, Special Cooch Behar Issue, Vol. 23, 1990, p.208. Also see Nag, H., 'Koch-biharer Musalman: Agragati O Bikash', *Madhuparni, Special Cooch Behar Issue, Vol. 23*, 1990, p. 134.
22. Chaudhuri, Harendra Narayan, *The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlements*, Cooch Behar State Press,

- Cooch Behar, 1903, p. 317. Also see Cooch Behar Gazette, 1884.
23. Pal, N., ed., *Koch-Behar Hitaishini Sabha Baktritamala (1865)*, Anima Prakashani, 2004, p. 10.
  24. Pal, Nripendra Nath, *Itikathay Cooch Behar*, (in Bengali), Anima Prakashani, Kolkata, 2000. pp. 119-65.
  25. W. W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, op.cit., p. 398.
  26. For details, see *Mathabhanga High School Centenary Volume (1890-1990)*, Mathabhanga, 1994.
  27. Biswas R., 'Tahader Katha: Prantikataha Theke Aloy', *Mansai*, 2008, p. 198.
  28. The AAR, 1892-1893, from E. E. Lowis, Superintendent of the State, Cooch Behar, p. 44.
  29. The AAR, 1878-79, p. 62.
  30. The AAR, 1892-93, From E. E. Lowis, Superintendent of the State, Cooch Behar, p. 51.
  31. The AAR 1906-07, No. 1414, p. 22.
  32. Chaudhuri, Harendra Narayan, *The Cooch Behar State and Its Land Revenue Settlements*, The Cooch Behar State Press, Cooch Behar, 1903, p. 349.
  33. "A monthly Magazine by Babu Jadub Chandra Chuckerbutty." which signifies the name of Jadab Chandra Chakrabarti. He was associated with a monthly magazine. A contemporary monthly magazine was *Kulsastra Dipika* printed from the Cooch behar State Press. This is why, he seems to have been the editor of this magazine. The AAR, 1884-85, To His Highness The Maharajah Nripendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, Cooch Behar; From A. Evans Gordon, Major, Supertendent of the Cooch Behar, p. 55.
  34. Bandyopadhyay, Brajendra Nath, *Bangla Samayik-Patra (1868 - 1900)*, Vol. 2, Bangia Sahitya Parishad, Kolkata, 2010, p. 48.
  35. The AAR, 1892-93, From E. E. Lowis, Superintendent of the Cooch Behar State. p. 66.
  36. The AAR, 1897-98, No. 1248, p. 52; Bandyopadhyay,



- Brajendra Nath, *Bangla Samayik Patra*, Vol. 2, Bangiya Sahitya Parisad Patrika, Kolkata, p. 71.
37. The AAR, 1893-94, No. 959, Dated 15 September 1894, p 7.
38. The AAR, 1897-98, No. 1248, p. 42.
39. Biswas, N., 'Kheladhular Kochbihar', in K. Dey, N. Biswas & D. D. Sarkar (eds), *Kochbihar Parikrama*, Part II, ( in Bengali), Cooch Behar Grantha Prakashana Prastuti Samiti, Cooch Behar, 1984, p. 111.
40. Guha, D., 'Jenkins Schooler Kheladhula' in A. Dasgupta, S. K. Biswas, D. K. Ghosh, R. K. Mitra, A. Mazumdar, R. C. Roy & N. K. Biswas (eds), *Jenkins School Centenary Souvenir (1861-1961)*, Jenkins School Satabarshiki Utsab Samiti, Cooch Behar, 1961.pp. 95-96.
41. Sen, Ronojoy., *Nation at Play: A History of Sport in India*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2015. p. 99.
42. Guha, D., op.cit., p. 96.
43. *Report on Native Papers* for the Week ending 5<sup>th</sup> August 1911, West Bengal State Archive, Calcutta, 1911, p. 963.
44. Banerjee, Surendra Nath, *A Nation in Making*, Calcutta, Oxford University Press, London, 1963, p. 146.
45. Sarkar, Sumit, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal (1903-08)*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973, p. 132.
46. Bhattacharya, Malay Sankar, *Studies in Micro History: Political Movements in Some Parts of India & Bangladesh (1857-1947)*, Indian Institute of Oriental Studies and Research, Kolkata, 2007, p. 8.
47. Sarkar D. D., 'Kochbihare Natya Charcha', *Madhuparni*, Special Cooch Behar Issue, Vol.23, August 1990, pp. 297-299.
48. Bhattachariya, D., 'Natyo Charchay Koch-bihar', *Uttar Prasanga*, Special Cooch Behar district Issue, Vol. 2, December 2016, pp. 250-52.
49. Majumdar, Subhendu. *Adhunik Shiksha O Kochbihar Victoria College (1888-1938)*, West Bengal State Book Board, Kolkata, 2000, p. 74.

50. *Ibid*, p. 73.
51. Dasgupta A., 'Puratan Prasanga' in Asruman Dasgupta, Saroj Kumar Biswas, Debendra Kumar Ghosh, Rabindra Kumar Mitra, Amiyabhusan Mazumdar, Ramesh Chandra Roy & Niraj Kumar Biswas (eds), *Jenkins School Centenary Souvenir (1861-1961)*, Jenkins School Satabarshiki Utsab Samiti, Cooch Behar, 1961, pp. 16-17.
52. Ghosh Sujit, *Unish o Bish Shataker Uttarbanger Arthanaitik Jiban Dhara o Anyanyo Prabandha*, (in Bengali), Readers Service, Kolkata, 2016, pp. 12-13.
53. Barman, U. N., 'Chhatra jiban o Anushilan Samiti,' *Mansai*, (no. vol. or number), 2008, pp. 25-28.
54. *Ibid*, p. 27.

## NAUTCH GIRLS OF PRE-COLONIAL NORTH INDIA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

**Tuhina Islam**

Assistant Professor

Department of History, Aliah University, Kolkata

### ***Abstract***

*The history of women has always received less attention from the main stream discourses of patriarchal society through the ages. As a result of this, the segment of Nautch-girls has fallen in this category. These women originated from early Indian civilization as dancers who represented the cultural interaction between the Indian rulers and the British East India Company. The present paper focuses on the historical context of nautch-girls and their influences at Mughal courts, palaces of nawabs and mahals (castles) of Rajas in north India. In addition, it also explores how these women who possessed high status under the patronage of native kings and rulers within society had lost their social, cultural and political influence over the course of the nineteenth century due to the emerging ideologies of the British rulers. However, with the expansion of empire, the British had no longer required the social validation of nautch girls and their political agencies. The changing economic set-up also marginalised the condition of nautch girls and they were forced to work as prostitutes to earn their livelihood.*

**Keywords:** Patriarchal Society, Nautch-girl, Mughal Courts, British, Marginalised Condition.

The word 'Nautch' is an Anglicised form of the Urdu word 'nach' which was derived from the Sanskrit term *nritya* meaning dance. Nautch girls were an integral part of Indian society since

the third century BCE. They were connected to various Hindu temples<sup>1</sup>. Various descriptions are found in Indian scriptures about these dancers or entertainers. The epics give us a colourful portrayal of their intimate connection with royal splendour in the earlier era. However, the *Puranas* highlight the presence of these women as auspicious. The Buddhist literature also portrays the high esteem these women enjoyed in Indian society. They appeared in different *avatars* (incarnations) through the ages i.e, from *apsara* in divine form to *ganikas*, *nartaki*, *devadasi*, *kanchani*, *tawaif* and the *nautch-girl* etc<sup>2</sup>.

About the origin of these women, it has been stated on the basis of Hindu scriptures that Lord Brahma created the *apsaras*, the first performing female dancers to entertain the Gods. Among them the most accomplished *apsara* was Urvashi who imparted the divine knowledge of dance and music to human beings. The *Devadasis* as temple dancers were the first recipients of this art and their devotional dances became an essential part of temple service over the centuries. The *Devadasi* system was prevalent all over India in ancient times<sup>3</sup>. It was a religious practice to offer girls to the deities in Hindu temples. They were dedicated at a young age around seven or eight and devoted themselves to dancing and singing. After reaching the age of puberty, these girls were married to the temple god through a traditional marriage ceremony and it set their connection to the temple and they enjoyed high social status in their role as *devadasis*<sup>4</sup>. Daughters were often offered to the temples of the goddess Yellamma and also other popular goddesses such as Dymavva, Maramma, Hulingamma, and Uchchangiamma etc<sup>5</sup>.

However, with the advent of the Mughals in north India in 1526, this institution of *devadasis* disintegrated and the dancing girls moved out to the royal palaces, and the courts of the kings and nobles. The Muslim rulers were fond of lively entertainment and regarded dance as an essential medium of royal entertainment. But the Indian dancing girls, who were trained in traditional style were not able to satisfy the taste of the Mughals as they favoured

Persian songs and dances. Thus, the Mughals brought professional Persian dancers to India known as *domnis*, *lolonis*, *horokenis* and *hentsinis*, who had their own distinctive style of dancing and music<sup>6</sup>. The interaction of Persian dancing girls with the traditional Hindu style brought a synthesis and a composite art culture evolved which formed a new style of dance known as *Kathak* and it became popular all over north India. The affluent Mughals encouraged this new form of art. The dancing girls became proficient in it and they began to entertain their masters in courts, palace and durbars. The cultural interaction between Indian and Persian art was evidenced by the account of the historian Amir Khusrau. He has praised the dancing girls and musicians who came from all over India to the court of Sultan Alauddin Khalji<sup>7</sup>. Another historian, Ferishta, has mentioned Sultan Balban's son Kurrah Khan who had established a society of musicians and dancing girls who used to come his palace<sup>8</sup>.

The Mughal Emperors became the patron of the dancing girls of north India. The great Mughal emperor, Akbar, had a passion for the arts, which made a large number of musicians and dancers to stay in his court. The high-class dancing girls were famous for their talents and beauty and they received the title of *Kanchani* (gilded one) from Emperor Akbar<sup>9</sup>. During his time, Rupmati, a charming dancing girl of Saharanpur became famous all over north India<sup>10</sup>. Another dancing girl of this period was Anarkali (pomegranate blossom), a title given by Emperor Akbar to Nadira Begum or Sharaf-un-Nisa for her extraordinary beauty<sup>11</sup>. There was also an expert Portuguese dancing-girl who adorned the court of the Emperor Akbar whom he named Dilruba (heart-warmer)<sup>12</sup>. One of the renowned court historians, Abul Fazl, has recorded the state of dance and music at the Emperor's court in his *Ain-i-Akbari* in a chapter entitled '*Nrityadhaya*'. The work describes the different types of professional dancers such as the *nutwah*, *bhugleye*, *sezdehtaly*, *bhimweye*, *kanjari* and the *nut*<sup>13</sup>. Emperor Jahangir, who was fond of wine and dance continued this tradition. He was entertained by the *Kanchanis* and spent lavish sums for their maintenance. Once a French physician, Bernard,

fell deeply in love with one of the dancing girls of Jahangir's court. The foreign traveller Bernier recorded an interesting episode about this affair of Bernard. He has noted that 'the dancing girl was a young and beautiful damsel remarkable for the elegance of her dancing Bernard fell violently in love, but her mother resisted all (his) overtures. Jahangir offered Bernard a present before all the *Omrahs* by way of remuneration for an extraordinary cure. But Bernard asked for a different remuneration i.e, the hand of the young *Kanchani*. In the midst of crowded assembly, the girl was placed on Bernard's back, who withdrew triumphantly with his prize and took her to his house. In those days, *Kanchanis* were the commodity of the Emperor and he decided the fate of that girl. That is the way Bernard was rewarded by Jahangir in the form of this girl'<sup>14</sup>.

The Emperor Shah Jahan was also fond of the fair sex and invited dancing girls to all fairs and festivals and kept them in the seraglio for singing and dancing. According to Bernier, 'most of these *kanchanis* are handsome and well dressed, and sing to perfection; and their limbs being extremely supple, they dance with wonderful agility and are always correct in regard to time'<sup>15</sup>. The foreign traveller, Manucci, clearly states about the patronage of the Emperor Shah Jahan to this dancing girl. He states 'This class is more esteemed than others, by reason of their beauty. When they go to the court, to the number of more than five hundred, they all ride in highly embellished vehicles and are clothed in rich raiment. All of them appear and dance in the royal presence'<sup>16</sup>. Manucci also narrates that during Shah Jahan's reign, these *kanchanis* were under obligation to visit the court twice a week in order to give their performance and when they came, the Emperor kept them in the palace for the whole night. Once Shah Jahan himself fell in love with one of the *kanchanis* and gave her the status of a concubine in his *harem*. Some of the nobles objected that women of that rank were kept in the palace, for which, the emperor replied,

*'Mithai nek har dukan kih baashad'*

(Sweetmeats are good, whatever shop they may come from)<sup>17</sup>.

Prince Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan also followed in the footsteps of his father. He was so much obsessed by the charm and beauty of a dancing girl, Rana Dil, that he married her and gave her the status of his wife<sup>18</sup>. Shah Jahan's other son Shuja was also a passionate lover of dancing and singing and he gave his support to the dancing girls<sup>19</sup>. The Emperor Aurangzeb had forbidden music, dance and tried to curb their activities in his court but the dancing girls continued their services to his queens and daughters inside the palaces<sup>20</sup>.

During the later Mughal period, the performing arts of singing and dancing reached its zenith and had greatly influenced the royal court. The Mughal ruler Jahandar Shah was fond of luxury and pleasure and spent much of his time in the company of women. He married the most glamorous and notorious dancing girl, Lal Kunwar, who enjoyed considerable influence over him and gave her the status of a queen. She was honoured with the title of *Imtiaz Mahal* (Chosen one of the Palace), received large allowances, a lot of cash and jewellery from the royal treasures valued approximately at fifteen crores. She had a melodious voice and her vivacious dance impressed all due to which she came to be known as 'Dancing Empress of India'<sup>21</sup>. The succeeding rulers also extended their patronage to the dancing girls and kept them inside the *harem*.

Another one was Muhammad Shah Rangila, a pleasure loving ruler. During his reign, many dancing girls of north India came to live in Delhi. The most famous among them was the beautiful Nur Bai. According to the contemporary account of Dargah Quli Khan, Nur Bai held an eminent position at the court of Delhi and she conducted her *mehfils* in royal style which impressed the rulers and the nobles<sup>22</sup>. The Emperor Muhammad Shah was enamoured of this beautiful dancing girl. The other dancing woman was Udham Bai, who married by Emperor Mumammad Shah and he elevated her social position by placing her in the royal seraglio. She became one of the favourite queens of the emperor, who designated her as Nawab Qudsia Begum<sup>23</sup>. The chronicler Dargah Quli Khan has

also mentioned the names of few famous dancing women such as Panna Bai, Kamal Bai, Chamani and Chakmak Dahni, who were favourites of Emperor Mumammad Shah and enjoyed his patronage<sup>24</sup>. Besides their accomplishments in dance and music, these low origin-dancing girls also wielded considerable political influence through their marriage with the Emperors.

The historian Dargah Quli Khan has presented the picture of the cultural life of Delhi in the mid eighteenth century, and shows the prominent status of performing arts<sup>25</sup>. During the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, the existence of dancing girls was showed in miniature paintings.

Sometimes the *nautch* girls were employed by the State to act as spies for informing the secrets of enemies and forging political alliances. They were sent as a gift by feudatories for the pleasure of the king. The famous dancing girl Mastani from western India was one of the most charming women of her time. She was remarkably skilful in music. Her romance with Baji Rao Peshwa I (1720-40) became a legend and was a gift to the Peshwa from Chhatra Sal, the ruler of Bundela. The ruler had presented this beautiful *kanchani* or dancing girl to Baji Rao as a token of his gratitude to receive help in fighting with the Mughals<sup>26</sup>. Another beautiful dancing girl was Padma (Lotus), whom Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the lion of the Punjab had received as a gift from the ruler of Kashmir<sup>27</sup>.

However, after the decline of the Mughal Empire, the capital city Delhi lost its former glory and the centre of performing arts had shifted to Lucknow, which was the seat of Oudh *nawabs* and the leading dancing girls from Delhi flocked there and received the patronage of its rulers. The Lucknow culture which was better known for its glories and elegance has greatly influenced the *nautch* girls who were known as *tawa'ifs*. They were regarded as the symbols of *tahzeeb* (elegance) and culture and provided intellectual company to the Kings and Nawabs. They also occupied a respectable position in society by dint of their culture. It was also



a matter of pride for a *tawa'if* to belong to an established *khandani* (aristocratic) household<sup>28</sup>.

The *tawa'ifs* worked in *kothas*, which were often run by an old retired courtesan or the chief *tawa'if*s called as *Chaudharayan* who acquired wealth and fame by her accomplishments of dance and music in her life. She would recruit the young beautiful girls in the *kothas*. The chief *tawa'if* also had received around one third of the amount of the courtesan's income. She resided in the *kotha* and maintained the *kotha*, its servants and also trained the new dancing-girls. They also assisted the older courtesans to maintain their financial independence and activities throughout their lives<sup>29</sup>. The *tawa'if*s practiced their skill from the age of five and was trained in refined manners thoroughly by male teachers known as *ustads* for about ten years<sup>30</sup>. The *nautch* girls were also taught to read and write, appreciate poetry, and participate in polite conversation. The wealthy nobles used to send their sons to these accomplished ladies for learning the manners and arts of conversation. It was also considered to be an honour to associate with a *tawa'if* as their status was high in society and they were accepted by tradition. However, the cultural function of *tawa'if* was same as the *devadasi* in south India but the only difference was in the matter of the *devadasis*'s association with temple service which was not the case with *tawa'if*.

The reign of Wazid Ali Shah, the last *nawab* of Oudh is remembered as the golden age of music. He was himself an accomplished musician and dancer, and founded a dancing institution called as *Parikhana* (fairy-house), where more than hundred girls were trained in the art of dance and music<sup>31</sup>. Some of them were also brought to the palace.

The dancing girls also visited the religious shrines of saints respected by both Hindus and Muslims according to the social custom. These dancing girls sung in praise of the Prophet and also recited the poems of Sufi poets. The first queen of Oudh, Badshah Begum had represented eleven beautiful Syed girls as wives of

the Imams on the *chhati* ceremony of Imam Mehendi. Like the *Devadasis*, these girls were also not allowed to marry and were instructed to offer regular prayers at the tombs of the Imams and dedicate their whole lives to the cause of religion<sup>32</sup>.

By the second half of eighteenth century, the British involved themselves in native affairs. The early English settlers were very much impressed by the customs and manners of the native rulers. They were happy to adopt the local ways of recreation and pleasure i.e, chewing of betel, smoking of *hookah* and the appreciation of Persian poetry with the company of the native aristocracy<sup>33</sup>. They were highly addicted to the traditional entertainment of *nautch* parties without which their amusement was considered incomplete. According to Jemima Kindersley, who wrote an account in 1754 about the British interaction with the native women thus, ‘the *nautch* was one of the most popular forms of entertainment in British circles in eighteenth century India’. She also wrote ‘when a black man has a mind to compliment a European, he treat him to a *nautch*....it is.... (dancers’)... languishing glances, wanton smiles and attitudes not quite consistent with decency, which are so much admired’<sup>34</sup>. Many Company servants and officers took native mistresses, some had *bibis* (Indian wives) and some maintained the *zenanas* or *harems* inhabited by multiple native wives<sup>35</sup>. One was Job Charnock, founder of Calcutta, who married a beautiful young Brahmana girl. Another was General Peter, who was so fond of his *bibi* that he built a church over the grave of his wife. Then there was William Hickey, a famous lawyer of Calcutta who has left an account of his life with his *bibi*, the lovely Jemadane, ‘as gentle and affectionately attached a girl as ever man was blessed with’<sup>36</sup>. All these showed that the *zenana* became a status symbol and the British were deeply attached to the native beauties that made their life more enjoyable.

Thus, the durbars of the Rajas and Nawabs followed the tradition of maintaining troupes of skilled *nautch* girls and musicians at their court to entertain British visitors who were fascinated by the beauty and talents of the *nautch* girls. The

*nautch* became the common mode of entertainment at the house of the English merchants who turned rulers in Bengal and other parts of India. This trend continued till the first half of the nineteenth century.

At that time, Calcutta, the capital of the British raj was known to be the hub of *nautch* and wealthy Bengalis invited the famous *nautch* girls of Lucknow and Delhi to entertain their European guests. The dancers were encouraged by the men's applause of 'wah wah' and received the patronage from the Europeans<sup>37</sup>. The Nawabs of Murshidabad also invited the *nautch* parties to entertain the Company officials at their palace too. They were also presented in the annual *Durga Puja* festival celebrated by all Bengalis with great pomp and show<sup>38</sup>.

In the first half of nineteenth century, there was a famous *nautch* girl of Calcutta named Nicki, who was known to be quite wealthy and charged a thousand rupees for a single performance<sup>39</sup>. The *sahibs* and *memsahibs* were invited to see her *nautch* parties. There is a news report from the *Calcutta Gazette* of 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1814 which stated,

*'The Hindoo holidays of Durga puja have begun. Many of the rich Hindoos vying with one another in expenses and profusion endeavour by the richness of their festivals to get a name amongst men. The principal days of entertainment are the 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup> on which Nickee will warble her lovely ditties at the hospitable mansion of Raja Kishun Chand Roy...Nor will the hall of Neel Mony Mullick resound less delightfully with the affecting strains of Ushoorun, who for compass of voice and variety of note excels all the damsels of Hindostan. Misree whose graceful gestures would not hurt the practised eye of Parisot will lead the fairy dance on the boards of joy Kishun Roy's happy dwelling....'*<sup>40</sup>.

A contemporary of Nicki who dominated *nautch* parties in Delhi was Alfina. The *sahibs* and nobles of Delhi were impressed by her performance. Lt. Thomas Bacon, a British admirer of Alfina called her the '*Catalani of the East*'. She was famous for her melodious singing. Another *nautch* girl of Delhi was Punna, who attracted the attention of the *sahibs*. She won fame for her Persian melody '*Guf-ta-gu*'. The other celebrated *nautch* girls at that time, who delighted the *sahibs* by their performance were Begum Jahn, Rahema Bibi, Zeb-un-nisa, Mahtab and Gauhar Jan etc<sup>41</sup>. The British officials not only enjoyed the performance of *nautch* parties but it was also politically significant for them. It made them familiar with the Indian native culture and also it increased their political authority and power within the subcontinent as the *nautch*-girls began to enter in their social circle.

However, the decline of the *nautch* girls started in the late nineteenth century. During that time, the spread of English education created a new bourgeois class which was influenced by Western ideas and they became alienated from the traditional art and culture of the natives. This educated class had considered it as repulsive and immoral without understanding the nature of this traditional art. They made no difference between the *devadasi*, and *nautch* girls and the prostitute. In the meantime, the missionaries had extended their support to set up educational institutes, which also condemned the religious practices of the natives and their social customs and manners<sup>42</sup>.

Apart from this, the arrival of British women in greater numbers and the increase of their own kinds of entertainment, *nautch* ceased as a source of amusement. Indrani Sen argues that the *memsahibs* were "merely echoing [their] own community's ethnic prejudices and intolerance of other cultures"<sup>43</sup>. They were disturbed by the British's infatuation with the *nautch* and regarded it as 'not quite decent'<sup>44</sup>. So, the *nautch* girls, who earlier received the patronage of British officials and rulers had lost the support of the nobility and the English *sahibs* in the beginning of the twentieth century. Their position became degraded due to the decline of

their social and cultural status and they were forced to take up prostitution for their survival and had acquired the derogatory connotation of fallen women. Thus, the changing social, political and economic environment were responsible for the fall of the *nautch* girls.

To conclude, it can be said that the *nautch* girls were an integral part of Indian society and culture. They were in existence from the Mughal times till the mid nineteenth century. Apart from their important social and political influence on the Kings and *nawabs*, the Indian society had also reflected their cultural contribution.

## References

1. Doris M. Srinivasan, *Royalty's Courtesans and God's Mortal Wives: Keepers of Culture in Pre-Colonial India*, in *The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Martha Feldman and Bonnie Gordon, Oxford University Press, 2006), p.162.
2. Nevile, Pran, *The Nautch Girls of the Raj*, New York: Penguin, 2009, p. 23.
3. *Ibid*, p. 2.
4. Srinivasan, op.cit, pp. 69-70.
5. Vijaisri, Priyadarshini, *Recasting the Devadasi: Patterns of Sacred Prostitution in Colonial South India*, Kanishka Publication, New Delhi, 2004, p. 35.
6. Mundy, Peter, *Travels of Peter Mundy in India in Europe and Asia (1608-1667)*, Ed. By R.C. Temple, Vol-II, Hak. Society, 1914, p.216.  
See also, Nevile, Pran, *The Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, p. 17.
7. Khusrav, Amir, *Khaizan-ul-Futuh*, tr. Wahid Mirza, Lahore, 1975, p.10.
8. Ferishta, Muhammad Qasim, *History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India*, Vol. 1, by John Briggs, Calcutta, 1829, p.105.

9. Abul Fazal, Allama, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol.III, Eng. tr. H.S. Jarrett, Calcutta, 1949, pp.256-57.
10. *Ibid*, Vol.II, Eng. tr. H.S. Jarrett, Calcutta, pp.213-14.  
See also, Lal, Muni, *Mughal Glory*, Delhi, 1988, p.46.
11. Lal, K.S, *Mughal Harem*, New Delhi, 1988, p.143.
12. Nevile, Pran, *Nautch Girls of India: Dancers, Singers, Playmates*, University of Michigan, 1996, p.35.
13. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol.II, op.cit, pp. 171-72.
14. Bernier, Francois, *Travels In The Mughal Empire* (1656-68), revised by V.A.Smith, Archibald Constable, Oxford, 1934, pp.274-76.
15. *Ibid*, pp.273-74.
16. Manucci, Niccolao, *Storia Do Mogor*, Vol.I, Eng. Tr, W.Irvine, London, 1906, p.196.
17. *Ibid*, p.197.
18. *Ibid*, p.222.  
See also, Das, Debasish, *Red Fort: Remembering the Magnificent Mughals*, Mumbai, 2019, p. 123.
19. Mukherjee, Ila, *Social Status of North Indian Women*, Agra, 1972, p.143.
20. Khan, Khafi, *Muntakhab-ul-lubab*, Vol.II, ed. Kabir-ud-din Ahmad and W.Haig, Bib.Ind, Calcutta, 1860, p.211.  
See also, Manucci, Niccolao, *Storia Do Mogor*, Vol. II, op.cit., pp. 8-9.
21. Nuruddin, Faruqi, *Jahandar Nama*, Rotograph-71, CAS, Department of History, AMU, Aligarh, f.37b.  
See also, Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*, Blackwell Publishing, United Kingdom, 2008, p.118.
22. Neville, Pran, *Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, p-87.  
See also, Khan, Dargah Quli, *Muraqqa'-e-Delhi: The Mughal Capital in Muhammad Shah's Time*, Deputy publication, Delhi, 1989, p. 89.
23. Sahu, B.P, *Begams, Concubines and Memsahibs*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997, pp.90-95.

See also, *Red Fort: Remembering the Magnificent Mughals*, op.cit., p.124.

24. Khan, Dargah Quli, op.cit, p. 112.  
See also, Nevile, Pran, *Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, p.87.
25. Khan, Dargah Quli, op.cit, p.108.
26. Sahu, B.P, op.cit, pp.83-89.
27. Banerjee, Projesh, *Erotica in Indian dance*, Cosmo Publication, 1983, p.146.
28. Nevile, Pran, *Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, p.67.
29. Singh, Lata, *Retrieving Voices from the Margins: The Courtesan and the Nation's Narratives*, Indian journal of Gender Studies, Vol.14, no.1, 2008, p.101.
30. Singh, Vijay Prakash, *From Tawaif to Nautch Girl: The Transition of the Lucknow Courtesan*, South Asian Review, Vol.35, no. 2, 2014, p.179.
31. Shah, Wajld Ali, *Parikhaana*, Urdu translation by Sarwani, Tahseen Khan, Karachi, 1958, p.162.
32. Taqi Ahmed, Muhammad, *Tarikh Badshah Begam*, Allahabad, 1938, p. 9.
33. Collingham, E.M, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800-1947*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001.p. 36.
34. Jemima Kindersley, *Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies*, London: J. Nourse, 1777, p. 230.  
See also, Sarkar, Mahua, *Visible Histories, Disappearing Women: Producing Muslim Womanhood in Late Colonial Bengal*, Duke University Press, 2008, p.34.
35. Collingham, E.M, *Imperial Bodies*, op.cit, p. 34.
36. Nevile, Pran, *Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, p.26.
37. Mundy, G.C, *Pen and Pencil Sketches*, Vol.2, London, 1932, p.89.
38. *Ibid*, p.34.
39. Roberts, Emma, *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan:*

*With Sketches of Anglo-Indian Society*, 2 Vols, London, 1837, 192.

40. Nugent, M.A, *Journal from the year 1811 to the year 1815*, London, 1984, p.124,
41. Bacon, Thomas, *First Impressions*, Vol.2, London, 1837, p.89.
42. Nevile, Pran, *Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, pp.113-114.
43. Sen, Indrani, *Memsahibs' Writings: Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, Orient Longman, 2008, p. xix.
44. Nevile, Pran, *Nautch Girls of the Raj*, op.cit, p.30.



## CONTRIBUTION OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN MADRAS UNDER THE BRITISH

**Lygi T Jacob**

Research Scholar

Department of Historical Studies, Bharathi Women's College  
Chennai.

### ***Abstract***

*The main objective of this paper is to the contribution of missionaries to the field of education in Colonial Madras. The paper sights instances of the roles played by missionaries in achieving social change among the oppressed section and the women in the nineteenth century. The paper identifies the roles of missionaries in bringing about the process of social change. This is linked to the key idea & thought that social change was related to the growth of education, which thus was liable for creation of a new social consciousness among the women that led them to fight for their privileges. The role of the Christian Missionaries in spreading the awareness of modern education under British rule was pivotal in defining a class of highly educated women who, with the assistance of the Christian Missionaries, were in a position to contribute to the society in large. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the development of education for women and its relation to the Christian Missionaries in Madras during British rule.*

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Christian Mission, British Rule, Mission History, South India, Women Education, Social Reforms.

### **Introduction**

It is generally noted that Madras was one of the most progressive cities in India especially in the field of education as compared to other Indian cities. The debased system of education

in the 18th century is described by Schwartz as follows: '*under a frame of Government so wretched, the education of the young is miserably neglected. Few children learn to read and write and cast accounts and they are exclusively boys*'<sup>1</sup>.

Christian missionary activity in India generally involved the establishment of high-quality schools. Obviously, the Christian community's impact does not end there. Accompanying the schools came printing presses, which were helpful in the spreading of literature of all kinds. In fact, the early overseas missionaries were responsible for pioneering English and modern education. R. L. Rawat, in his *History of Indian Education*, suggests that India will forever be indebted to the missionaries for the production of textbooks, dictionaries, and grammars, and for their zealous pursuit of educational advancement.

The Christian missionaries were also pioneers in the field of female education. Much of this work was taken up by the wives of early missionaries, and by single women missionaries, of whom there were many. In the nineteenth century, the commonly accepted view in India was that formal education was not for women of any kind, much less for those from respectable families. In 1834, it was reported that only 1 percent of Indian women could read and write.

Yet by 1900, a large number of schools and colleges had been opened in major cities, towns, and even villages throughout India for both men and women. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries began to take more seriously the needs of the tribals and the Dalits and went to minister to them. The missionaries started schools. In response, people from these groups converted to Christianity in great numbers. This was particularly so in the mass conversions of Tamil Nadu.

### **Various missionary efforts towards education**

The first Protestant missionary in Madras was the German Lutheran Benamin Schultze, who had come to Tranquebar in

1719. He began work in Black Town (now George Town) teaching children and conversing in Tamil with adults who came to his lodgings. Being a gifted linguist, he was able to speak Telugu, Portuguese, and Hindustani. The first church of Mission was near the old Light house<sup>2</sup>. There were many missionaries who came to Madras like the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), the London Missionary Society (LMS), the Baptist Mission Society (BMS), the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Danish Missionary Society (DMS), the Leipzig Missionary Society (LMS), and the Jesuit Missionary Society.

The tradition of the history of the educated women in early times conserved in classical literature had become almost a thing of the past. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the number of educated women was negligible. A systematic survey on education of women was done only in 1826 Munro. According to it only 5,480 girls were in schools out of a total enrolment of 18,110<sup>3</sup>.

Long before the Government took up the cause of women's education, the missionaries were already at work. They came to India mainly to spread Christianity. They selected education as a tool to carry on their missionary work. Gradually, their work in the field of female education also increased. The greater part of female secondary education was provided by the missionaries.

With the arrival of the Protestant Danes at Tranquebar on the south east coast in 1706 begins the history of the European System of Indian education<sup>4</sup>. The activities of the English missionaries began in the year 1727 and the first Protestant English mission began to adopt the work of the Danes. Utilising the services of Schultze and Schwartz, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge started schools at Madras, Thanjavur, Cuddalore, Palayamkottai and Trichinopoly<sup>5</sup>.

The missionaries were very particular about including Christian instruction in their curricula of studies. Education was

the most effective means of establishing contact with the people. Christian girls were not forced into early marriage and thus it was possible for them to continue their education beyond primary school<sup>6</sup>. In Madras, the first attempt of the missionaries towards opening a school for Indian girls was made in 1821<sup>7</sup>. In the same year, the Church Missionary Society opened at Tirunelveli, first of the Madras boarding schools. The missionary societies limited their work to the elementary level.

But after the Act of 1833, they paid greater attention to secondary and collegiate education<sup>8</sup>. In the early 1820's, the Court of Directors of the East India Company instructed the provincial Governors to undertake educational surveys within their respective provinces<sup>9</sup>. According to Sir Thomas Munroe, only one woman in a hundred could read in the Madras Presidency by the beginning of the nineteenth century<sup>10</sup>.

The absence of formal education for girls was a clearly visible feature of the period. There was a prejudicial attitude towards girl's education. Dr. Altekar commenting on this says, 'It was a Society that had a general prejudice against female education. Therefore, it may be stated that by the time British rule was established, female education had practically disappeared<sup>11</sup>.

Among many services, education was one of the major achievements of the Christian missionaries. They had started many schools in and around the city of Madras. The Christian missionaries contributed a lot through their societies to the people of Madras city. They worked very hard to educate women in Madras city. The societies such as the Society of Jesus, Sabsians of Don Bosco, Brothers of Patrick and Sisters congregations like, Presentation, Franciscan Missionary of Mary, Daughters of Mary, raised the standard of women in Madras through their educational institutions<sup>12</sup>.

The Christian missionaries believed that they had undertaken the sacred duty of teaching children according to God's command.

This teaching evidently meant primarily religious and moral teaching<sup>13</sup>.

The Christian missionaries, rendered valuable service in the field of education and social service. The contribution of missionaries to educational development has been great in India, especially in Madras city. They opened many schools and colleges in Madras like St. George's School and Asylum (1680), Santhome Higher Secondary School (1821), Christ Church School, Mount Road (1842), St. Joseph's Anglo – Indian High School, Vepery (1875), St. Andrew's High School, Choolai (1892), Ursula's Anglo Indian School (Church park), Sacred Heart Matriculation school, Church Park (1909), St. Antony's Anglo – Indian High School, Pudupet (1911), All Saints Covent and St. Joseph's Girls High School, Perambur (1911), Holy Angel's Anglo – Indian School, T Nagar (1935), Queen Mary's College, Women's Christian College, Loyola College, and Stella Maris College .

One of the first English magazines for women was “*the Indian ladies*” magazine edited by Kamala Sathianandan, the first women post graduate of south India<sup>14</sup>.

### **Missionary progress towards education**

The idea of imparting education to women emerged in the British period. Earlier, it was almost universally hailed that since women need not earn their livelihood, there was no need of education for them. But the Christian Missionaries took an interest in the education of the girls. The Hunter Commission too emphasized on the need for female education in 1882. The Calcutta, Bombay and Madras institutions did not permit the admission of girls till 1875. It was only after 1882 that girls were allowed to go for the higher education. Since then, there has been a continuous progress in the growth of education among females. Though the number of girls studying at various levels was low, yet there has been a marked increase in the number of female students at every level from 1941 onwards.

The following table indicates the condition of education in India since 1901<sup>15</sup>.

Year	India		Madras
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Female (%)
1901	9.83	0.60	-
1911	10.56	1.05	-
1921	12.21	1.81	-
1931	15.59	2.93	-
1941	24.90	7.30	-
1951	24.95	7.98	10.06
1961	34.44	12.95	18.17
1971	39.45	18.69	26.86

Female education has been the key to the progress of every nation. Educating a girl meant educating a mother and, in turn, educating her children, the future citizens of the country<sup>16</sup>. While emphasizing the importance of women's education, Jawaharlal Nehru, said: "Education of boys is education of one person, but the education of a girl is the education of the entire family"<sup>17</sup>.

## Conclusion

The main aim of the Christian missionaries in Madras was to introduce English education as well as English culture and tradition. The missionaries established many schools, colleges and higher education institutions at various places in Tamil Nadu.

The colonials treated men and women as equals with no biases; the result of the same was that women who till then played supporting roles were drawn into the main stream. A lot of credit of the same goes to the missionaries who created equality in education, which in turn, resulted in a rise in the number of educational institutions and the number of girls studying in elementary schools. The impact of this can be seen in the large number of women who participated in the freedom struggle. Many of them went ahead to take up important responsibilities leading to community development, promoting the cause of the girl child's education etc.

## References

1. Aiyangar.S.K., *A History of Tirupathi*, Vol-II, Madras 1940, P.450.
2. *Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, The Madras Tercentenary Celebration Committee, Oxford University Press, Madras 1929, p -343.
3. *Revenue Consultations*, March 10, 1826, Vol. 314, p. 875.
4. Radha Krishna Sharma, *Nationalism, Social Reforms and Indian Women*, New Delhi, 1981, p.136.
5. Packiam, S., *Secondary Education in Tamil Nadu, Tuticorin*, 1986, p.136.
6. Lakshmi Misra, *Education of Women in India*, Madras, 1966, p.136.
7. Datta, K.K., *A Social History of Modern India*, New Delhi, 1975, p.127.
8. Lakshmi Misra, *Education of Women in India*, Madras, 1966, p.28.
9. Rai Garg, B., *Indian Education Review and Preview*, Ambala Cantt., 1974, p.14.
10. Mathur, V.S., *New Angles in Indian Education*, Ambala Cantt., 1975, p.24.
11. Altekar, A.S., *The Position of women in Hindu Civilization*, The Culture Publishing House, Benares, 1938, p.24.
12. Arulappan, R., *An Outline of the History of the Archdiocese of Madras and Mylapore*, Madras, 1986, pp.84-94.
13. Siqueira, S.J., *Catholic Education in India*, New Delhi, 1990, p- 609.
14. Pillai, J.K., and Rajeshwari, K., *Leading in Women's Education*, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, 1988, p-44.
15. *Census of India*, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 1971
16. Radha Krishna Sharma, *Nationalism, Social Reforms and Indian Women*, New Delhi, 1981, p.136.
17. Kochchar, S.K., *Pivotal Issues in Indian Education*, New Delhi, 1981, p.225.

## A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS OF THE PULICAT REGION

**M. Sandhiya**

Assistant Professor

Department of History and TTM, Ethiraj College for Women  
Chennai

### ***Abstract***

*Pulicat, located in the Ponneri district of Tamilnadu, is a town with enormous heritage value, and is naturally made up of a complex of wetlands and lagoons. Its history gives a unique character to its man-made heritage. Pulicat port was one of the natural harbours located on the Coromandel coast of south India since the ancient period. It was further popularized by the advent of the Dutch in the region. This place served as the headquarters of the Dutch East Indian Company. Pulicat Lake, the second largest brackish water lagoon in India is a shallow depression and spreads over an area of 450 sq.km. However, the region that was once an important centre of trade had lost its importance with advent of the British. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the socio-economic and religious conditions of the Pulicat region.*

**Keywords:** *Pulicat, Pulicat Lake, Fishery Society, Religious Monuments.*

### **Introduction**

Being one of the most important historical places in Tamil Nadu, Pulicat has a definite history, starting from the third century BCE. It was one of the major port cities of the Cholas and went on to become an important centre for trade to the Dutch in India. The ancient kingdoms of the Tamil region succeeded by the Pallavas and Cholas had raised the status of Pulicat to a great



centre for trade, and reinforcement of trade during the period of the Vijayanagar rulers and of the Portuguese led to an increase in importance of the port. Moreover, the Dutch influence and their trade with the Muslim settlers of the region had made the former, the masters of the city. Development of the Dutch economy was to a large extent attributed to Pulicat, that served as an excellent marketing and shipping centre for both inland and foreign trade. With the arrival of the British, the Dutch monopoly, however, lost its lustre, and thus the region lost its glory. Today, the city remains to be a neglected centre of the government and an underdeveloped place for the public.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The aims of this paper are to study the historical background and significance of the Pulicat region in Indian history, to understand the socio-economic and religious conditions of the people in the Pulicat region to promote the economic empowerment of the people, to highlight the hidden entrepreneurial potentialities, and to evaluate the entrepreneurial performance and socio-economic problems of the people in the region.

### **Historical background**

The first historical reference to Pulicat dates back to the period of the Imperial Cholas. Inscriptions that were found in the Śiva temple at Thiruppalaivanam refer to Pulicat by the names Pazhaverkadu, Pular Kottam, Puliyur Kottam and Payyar Kottam. According to a fifteenth century inscription found on the walls of the Adinarayana Perumal Temple at Pulicat, the region was first referred to as '*Pralaya Kaveri*'<sup>1</sup> during the Vijayanagara rule. In 1422 CE, during the reign of King Deva Raya II, the governorship of the region was given to '*Anandaraya*', following which the name '*Pralaya Kaveri*' was changed to '*Anandarayan Pattinam*'<sup>2</sup>. There was a mention of the name '*Pavazha Maanagar*'<sup>3</sup>, meaning the 'Big City of Corals' in the Catholic Church located at Pulicat. Thus, one could understand that the name would have undergone further changes, such as, '*Pavazhakkadu*', which might have been

‘Pazhaverkadu’, the present name in Tamil. With the arrival of the Europeans, the port city belonged to the Dutch and they corrupted Pazhaverkadu into ‘Palliacatta’, also called as Pallekatta and Polikat. The Dutch retained Palliacatta till 1781 A.D, when it surrendered to the English. Then in 1825 CE the British further corrupted the name Palliacatta to Pulicat<sup>4</sup>.

The main feature of ancient south Indian history was a constant struggle for supremacy among the three states – the Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas. While the Cholas were a dominant political power from the early first century BCE. to the first century CE, they were followed by the Pandyas and the Cheras, who were equally competent<sup>5</sup>. During their period, Pulicat was a northern settlement of Tamil territory, and with the decline of the Tamil kingdoms in the third century CE, a major portion of the Tamil territory, including the northern region, came under the Pallava Kings of the north<sup>6</sup>. In the ninth century CE, one of the Tamil kingdoms in the south had expanded to include the northern territory. This northern territory, which harmonizes roughly to today’s Chingleput district was then called Thondaimandalam and whose coast was studded with ports containing Arab settlements<sup>7</sup>. Pulicat thus became one of the most important places for Arab settlement. In the tenth century AD, referred to as the “Golden era of the Cholas”, Pulicat functioned as an active trading port. This is evident from the presence of the Samayeswarar temple in Pulicat built during the period of the Cholas.

The early sixteenth century witnessed the Portuguese entry into the trading scene, and the first Portuguese toe-hold on the Coromandel coast was Pulicat, where a settlement was established in 1518 CE. By 1545 CE, the Portuguese settlement in the region had increased to about 600-700 *casados* (Portuguese army reservists who were married to Indians and had families)<sup>8</sup>. However, the major cause for the decline of Pulicat as a major trading port city was the battle of Talaikotta in 1565 CE<sup>9</sup>. The battle was fought between the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagara against the grand alliance of five smaller Muslim Sultanates of Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Berar, Golconda and Bidar, that led to the

downfall of the mighty Hindu kingdom. As a result of the war, Pulicat that was directly under the rule of Vijayanagar started to lose its importance.

The Dutch focused to mobilize their trade from Pulicat and there were many reasons that forced them to construct a factory in that region. First of all, the Raja of Vellore had permitted them to construct a factory at Pulicat<sup>10</sup>. Then the King of Chandragiri had invited them to commence trade in the region. However, Venkat II did not allow the Portuguese to live or trade in Pulicat and he constructed a stone building at the place for the safe custody of his war materials. Thus, under the direct patronage of the empire, the Dutch were allowed to construct a factory at Pulicat<sup>11</sup>.

By 1616 CE, Pulicat had developed as the headquarters of the Dutch on the Coromandel coast<sup>12</sup>. In the meantime, a group of English agents had arrived at Pulicat in 1620 CE and for a year, their trade went smoothly forward. But the Dutch opposition, which culminated in the tragedy of Amboyna, soon rendered the position of the English indefensible at Pulicat, and in 1623 CE, they were forced to leave the lagoon-haven for a refuge further north. Following the event, the English were not seen in Pulicat for almost a century. Thus, the exit of the English had helped the Dutch to re-establish their position at Pulicat. Finally, by the treaty of 1824 CE, Pulicat came under the English Company in 1825 CE,<sup>13</sup> and after independence, the city of Pulicat came under the control of Madras State.

### **Social Conditions**

In general, the Hindu women of the Pulicat region were denied the right to remarriage. However, some tribal people like Vedar, living in the region accepted remarriage after the death of the husband. Instances of *Sati* in Pulicat were also reported during the Vijayanagar period. When King Venkata I of Pulicat died in 1614 CE, his three wives, including queen Iraivi and Obayama, sacrificed their life by burning themselves along with their husband's corpse. *Sati* was also in practice among the fishermen

communities, who were dominant in the region. However, the traditional practice of *Sati* was prohibited after the Vijayanagar Empire was overrun by the Muslims<sup>14</sup>. At present, women from the fishing community and the artisan classes enjoyed freedom within the society in all probability due to economic necessity. Marriage, according to the Hindu people of Pulicat was believed to be a social obligation based on caste rules or horoscope matching. Fishermen called the Brahmanas for the performance of all marriage ceremonies, and there were first cousin and cross-cousin marriages that prevailed among their community.

Widow remarriage and divorce were refused according to the Islamic Shariath law, and during the later medieval period, the *Purdah* system was strictly imposed in Pulicat. The *Purdah* system, among the Muslims is a traditional practice of demanding women to cover their bodies, so as to cover their skin and hide their form from the public. It executed limitations on the mobility of women and restricted their right to act easily<sup>15</sup>. The contribution of ordinary women in political, social and economic life was occasional in Pulicat where seclusion of women or '*Purdah*' became widespread.

Widow remarriage and divorce were accepted among the Christian community in Pulicat, and their Baptism and marriage records are maintained from 1762 A.D at the "Our Lady of Glory Church".

The system of education in Pulicat is by far poor, as there is just one high school, and one primary and elementary school run by the government, while there is absolutely no college found in the region. However, some of the private institutions are trying to develop the education system in this place. The Christian missionaries under the control of "Our Lady of Glory Church" have founded a Higher Secondary school, which helps the students, who prefer to continue their higher studies in Pulicat. The Muslim community has also opened a *Madarsa* (Arabic College) near Chinna Pallivasal for the development of their community. The NGOs like *Centre for Research on New International Economic*

*Order (CReNIEO)* had started a primary school with LKG up to third stranded in both English and Tamil medium.

February 2<sup>nd</sup> of every year is observed as the *Pulicat Day*, for the people at Pulicat, in order to create awareness among them about the importance of protecting the lagoon. The day is celebrated on the World Wetlands Day, with an array of activities like catamaran race, *Kolam* competition, quiz and drawing competition for children, heritage walk, and folklore programmes. The idea was initiated and conducted by the Art and Architecture Research Development and Education (AARDE) Foundation.

The major income of the people is through fishing in the lake and the coastal area of Pulicat. Due to the huge availability of seafood, it has become a practice of daily consumption by the people. However, due to aquatic pollution and food practice, many residents reportedly suffer from skin diseases.

### **Economic conditions**

Fishing serves as the backbone for the economy of Pulicat and its hinterlands due to the decreased availability of agricultural land. The distinctiveness of fishing in Pulicat is that, it is the only place in the world where prawn fish is available throughout the year. It is also observed that Pulicat is ranked second in India, in terms of catching fish every year. Since the 1970s, about 34 companies that export prawn, mud-crab and fish from the Pulicat lake have been established in the region, and this has intensified the over-use of prawns, crabs and fish from the lake<sup>16</sup>. Mulletts and prawns remain to be the chief fisheries of Pulicat lake, while white and tiger prawns species has great overseas export potential.

Most of the fishing villages do not have other employment opportunities, as they are unaware of any other option that can improve their economic status. In Pulicat, the *Paadu* system (fishing by rotation) allows three to four villages to share a particular fishing area. This system in Pulicat was described as a customary practice of yielding authorization to eligible members

of a particular community. There were regulations of fishing days for the people belonging to the *kuppams* as every fisherman was allowed to go for fishing only three days in a week using his boat. The fishing areas were also restricted. Therefore, for the remaining days of the week, the fisherman used to go for fishing using cast nets and hooks and lines. However, at Pulicat, there was no particular time for landing of fishes. The landings continued from morning till evening. But the peak landing hours were between 5 a.m. and 9 a.m. While net fishing contributed to more than 80 percent of the total annual landings, the rest was through the assorted methods of fishing by hooks and lines. Thus, the total landings, of the Pulicat lake were about 1412 tones. The landings were mainly segregated into two forms, such as, exportable (stored) and domestic (fresh). Out of the total landings the fresh domestic fishes were estimated at about 919 tones. It formed 65.08 percent of the total catch and is accounted for 34.75 percent of the total value<sup>17</sup>.

The fishermen of Pulicat depend upon this lake for their livelihood. The special characteristic is that two-third of the lake belongs to the Andhra Pradesh State, while Tamil Nadu occupies only one-third portion of it. As there are 17 Rural Fishery Demonstration tanks in the district, the private entrepreneurs willingly take up fish culture in an advantageous way. The fishes caught from these tanks are sold to the public and 10 tons of fishes are harvested annually and from which a revenue of Rs. 30,000/- is gained. The Fish Farmers Development Agencies also support the private entrepreneurs to take up fishing and fish trading business in the region.

The Fishermen Cooperative Society is a blessing to the fishermen community, since it carries out all the welfare measures required by their people. There are even co-operative societies that aid the poor and the middle class in the region. There are twenty-five fishermen co-operative societies in the villages surrounding Pulicat lake. The Irular Fishermen Co-operative Society, and the Fishermen Co-operative Society which are inter-connected with integrated fishermen development projects are some of them. Their role in fishery was limited to arranging loans and in distribution

of subsidy wherever available. The Pulicat Co-operative Fish Marketing Union was formed on June 19, 1963 CE and it had built a fish market at a cost of Rs. 35000 besides charging a monthly rent of Rs. 215. The Union also arranged transport of fish to Chennai by departmental vehicle and this has resulted in very heavy losses, and therefore, the operation was shut down. All the co-operative societies, however, contribute to the welfare of the backward people and their economic development<sup>18</sup>.

Most women of the Pulicat region seldom engage themselves in any kind of work. While the young housewives are not permitted to go out of the village, the elderly women go out for fish vending. Though they would like to engage in some activity to support the family, they are often prohibited to do so, owing to their customary practices. Among the Muslim community, women do not go out of the house and even the girl children are denied permission to pursue higher education after they attain a certain age limit.

Since the resource constraints are forcing a change in the system, women are beginning to find ways of asserting their rights. Earlier, women-headed households had no access to village funds. But now, with the founding of Self-Help Groups (SGHs) in Pulicat, women have started to come out and examine some of their problems in the society, and they have also started to participate in a few village level activities. Earlier they were allowed only to work in the house, but now they have started working even in the markets. Handpicking of prawns using simple indigenous devices by wading women is a unique practice in limited areas adjoining Pulicat lake<sup>19</sup>. Women between the age group of 16 to 75 years and numbering about 50, regularly engage themselves in this avocation, while most women are involved in selling and drying fish that are caught by their husbands.

Apart from that, the fisherwomen are also involved in self-help groups that obtain loans from the Government, with which they set up small scale industries like manufacture of candles, match sticks, preservation of dry fish and various other work by

co-ordinating with the other women in the villages. The seashore town, famous for its fort, prawns and flamingos, has been churning out colourful palm leaf artifacts for several decades now. Fancy and utility articles, are made out of palm leaves by women, particularly those belonging to the Muslim and fishing communities in Pulicat, who have mastered the craft from their home. They produce articles like pen stands, jewelry boxes, different sizes of baskets, pencil boxes, fruit boxes, saree boxes and so on, as per the orders received from their customers. Their goods have been exported to places such as China, U.K., Dubai, Germany, Switzerland and Canada and they also find clients across the State, like Chennai that houses numerous craft shops with stocks from Pulicat<sup>20</sup>.

### **Religious conditions**

The people of Pulicat belong mainly to the religions of Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. All religions are at least four centuries old, with Christianity being introduced by the Portuguese and strengthened by the Dutch, while Islam was brought by the Arabs during Chola times. Hinduism however, evolved even before the other religions. With the presence of a multitude of religions, the people of Pulicat belonged to varied professions. The following account is based on the presence of various sections of the Pulicat community. The most notable feature, however, is that the religious attitudes of its people are very liberal and not fanatic in nature. Hindus form the major religious group and they have many temples, some of which were constructed during the Vijayanagar period<sup>21</sup>.

At Pulicat, the Brahmanas form the priest community, especially the priests of the *Lingayat* sect. While the Brahmanas play a significant role in the day to day activity of the people irrespective of their caste. It is a common belief that it is the right of the Brahmanas who knew the Vedas to perform the rituals in full and that they could control the day to day activities of the common people. Before undertaking a journey or beginning a business, the people of the land looked up to the Brahmana priests to check if the time was auspicious and apt to do so<sup>22</sup>. The major deity of the



people is 'Amman' and every street has a temple dedicated to the deity. This shows that matrilineal domination in religious field has prevailed since the early period in the region.

The Hindus were present in Pulicat always, and their presence has been dated even before the entry of the Dutch and the battle of Tallikota. After the battle, the administration of Pulicat kept on shifting between the Hindu and the Muslim rulers and during this period, the Hindu presence had considerably reduced. But today, Hinduism is the predominant religion of the Pulicat region and all the major Hindu festivals like Diwali, Pongal are celebrated by its people.

Pulicat's history of local Muslims, written in Arabic Tamil script (Arwi), reflects the view that Muslims had a major presence in the region for centuries. Those Muslims were originally Arabs, who were came in ships from Arabia during the period of Yousuf bin Hajjaj, the governor of Baghdad in the early eighth century<sup>23</sup>. They were first settled in the town of Kayal from where they travelled to Pulicat through Nagore, Tanjore and Mylapore. This migration happened during the period of the Cholas.

Throughout the history of Pulicat, the Muslims have inhabited the region and this is evident from the number of mosques and Muslim residences found on its streets. The main mosques found in Pulicat are *The Periya Jamiya Pallivasal* and *Chinna Pallivasal*, both more than 300 years old and serve as the most important places for worship. Pulicat Muslims on the Coromandel coast traded with the Muslim traders in Malabar<sup>24</sup>. In 1646 CE, Nawab Mir Jumala gained control of the government of Pulicat<sup>25</sup>. Under him, Muslim rule was prominently established in Pulicat<sup>26</sup> and since then, it has become a home for the Muslims settlers<sup>27</sup>. The general religious festivities of *Eid*, *Milad un Nabi* and the *Bakri eid* are commonly celebrated in Pulicat. Other than these, the annual *Urs* of the *Dargah* located near the *Periaya Pallivasal* is also celebrated.

At present there are two ancient churches in Pulicat located at the Christian *Kuppam*. The name of the bigger church is "Our

Lady of Glory Church” and the other which is a much smaller in size is called the “St. Anthony’s Church”. It is generally believed that the present Mada church was built by the Portuguese. The “Church of Our Lady of Glory” was constructed in 1515 CE and it was extended and rebuilt by the people, during the Dutch rule. This church now is declared as the first parish to be established in the Archdiocese of Madras, Mylapore, the first in Tamil Nadu and even the first parish to be established on the Coromandel coast of India. The people of Pulicat have celebrated the Church feast since 1515 CE<sup>28</sup> and the Portuguese who were living in Chennai had the practice of bringing their children to Pulicat for baptism. The annual feast of the parish of ‘Our Lady of Glory’ is celebrated in a grand manner on the second Sunday after every Easter Sunday, and is usually attended by thousands of local Catholics from neighboring parishes and also from Madras city parishes. Men and women belonging to this place and settled elsewhere make use of this opportunity to pay a visit to their parents. Not only the Catholic Christians, but also the people belonging to different caste and creed in and around Pulicat also participate in this holy happening.

The Dutch followed the pattern of building the city with walls, canals, churches and some gabled housing. Pulicat also had a similar pattern like a wall surrounding the city with an entrance. Canals and channels run around the city and served the people living in different types of houses within the city. The only Christian religious institution that remains today is the St. Anthony’s Church, which has a rich historical past in Pulicat. The exterior of the Churches marked with an elevation reflecting a style, which mostly pertains to the Renaissance style. At present, Christmas and other Christian festivals are also celebrated in Pulicat.

There is no evidence to prove that there are religious conflicts between Hindus, Muslims and Christians in Pulicat. The typical feature of Pulicat society is that the temple and mosque are

built in the same campus. The distance between the Adinarayana Perumanl temple and mosque in Big Street of Pulicat is just ten meters. Thus, Pulicat is one of the best examples of a secular village, where no conflict is created based on religion and creed till date.

## Reference

1. *South Indian Temple Inscriptions, Vol. VII, Madras, 1953-1957*, Archaeological Survey of India, Madras, 1960, n.p.
2. *South Indian Inscriptions, (Nagalapuram Inscription), Vol. XVIII*, Archaeological Survey of India, Madras, 1990, pp.311-313.
3. Thulasi Das, T., 'Kavaraipettaiyum Adthan Sutrupura Urgalum', *Chengalpattu Mavatta Varalatu Karutharangu, (Tamil)*, Madras, 1988, p.146.
4. Gopala Krishnan, M., (ed.), *Gazetteers of India, Tamil Nadu State, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur District Gazetteers, Vol. II*, Government of Tamilnadu, Chennai, 2000, p.1746.
5. Sailendra Nath Sen, *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*, New Age International (P) Limited, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 443-444.
6. Vincent A. Smith, *The Early History of India: From 600 BCE. to the Muhammadan Conquest including the invasion of Alexander, the Great*, Oxford, New Delhi, 1999, p.447.
7. Muthiah, S., *Madras, Its Past & Its Present*, East-West Press Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1995, p.12.
8. Muthiah, S., *Madras Miscellany: A Decade of People, Places & Potpourri*, Tranquebar, Chennai, 2011, n.p.
9. Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, *History of Medieval India: From 1000 CE to 1707 CE*, Atlantic Publishers, New Delhi, 2002, p.111.
10. S. Arasarathnam, *The Dutch Power in Ceylon, 1638-1687*, Messrs. Djambatan Ltd., Amsterdam, 1968, p.1.
11. Om Prakash, (ed.), *Dutch Factories in India (1617 -1623 CE)*, New Delhi, 1980, p.7.

12. Om Prakash, *The New Cambridge History of India: European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India*, Cambridge University Press, UK, 1998, p.127.
13. Sir William Wilson Hunter, *History of India: From the First European Settlements to the Founding of the English East India Company, Vol. VII*, Cosimoclassics, New York, 2008, p.220.
14. Sandhiya, M., 'Women Empowerment in Pulicat with Special Reference to Self Employment', *Socio-Cultural Transformation in 20<sup>th</sup> Century South India*, University of Madras, Chennai, 2018, p.289.
15. Shobana Nelasco, *Status of Women in India*, Deep and Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p.10.
16. Sanjeeva Raj, P.J., *Macro Fauna of Pulicat Lake*, National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai, 2006, p.65.
17. Uma Kantsrivastava, *Inland Fish Marketing in India: Brackish Water Culture, Estuaries, Lakes and Swamps, Vol. 6*, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, 1984, p.472.
18. *Ibid.*,
19. Rao, N.S., *Ethnography of a Nomadic Tribe: A Study of Yanadi*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2002, n.p.
20. Akila Kannadasan, *Generations of Women at Pulicat have been Creating Magic with their Palm Leaf Baskets and Artefacts*, *The Hindu*, Chennai, 31.07.2015.
21. Paul E. Schellinger and Robert M. Salkin, *International Dictionary of Historic Places: Asia and Oceania, Vol. 5*, New York, 1996, p.437.
22. Methold, W.H., *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century*, Ashgate Publishing, New York, 2016, p.109.
23. Muthiah, S. (ed.), *Madras, Chennai: A 400-year Record of the First City of Modern India, the Land, the People & their Governance*, Palaniappa Brothers, Chennai, 2008, p.120.

24. More, J.B.P., *Muslim Identity, Print Culture and the Dravidian Factor in Tamil Nadu*, Orient Longman Private Limited, Hyderabad, 2004, p. 16.
25. William Foster, *English Factories in India (1646-50)*, Vol. III, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1912, p. 174.
26. Peer Mohammed, M., 'Muslims of Madras: an Historical Overview', *History of People and their Environs: Essays in Honour of Prof. B.S. Chandrababu*, Ganeshram S. and Bhavani C. (ed.), Indian University Press, Tamil Nadu, 2011, p. 333.
27. Muthiah, S. (ed.), *op. cit.*, Palaniappa Brothers, Chennai, 2008, p.119.
28. Muthiah, S., *Madras Rediscovered: A Historical Guide to Looking Around, Supplemented with Tales of Once Upon a City*, East West Books, Chennai, 2015, n.p.

## DISCOURSES ON NATIONALISM, CASTE AND RELIGION IN TWENTIETH CENTURY KERALA

**M.P. Mujeebu Rehiman**

Associate Professor

Department of History, University of Calicut, Kerala

### ***Abstract***

*Time and again, the essence of Indian nationalism is proved to be its diversity rather than homogeneity. The paper attempts to explore the role of caste and religion in the formulation of nationalism in India, by taking the discourses on nationalism of a south Indian state, Kerala as a case. In fact, the idea of nation and nationalism are the by-products of modernity and so that any claim of its antiquity proves to be baseless. Interestingly, nationalism, understood to be a binding force of citizens, in the contemporary Indian praxis, works to be a force of divisiveness. The historiographical understanding of nationalism makes us believe that, 'nation as an imagined political community' which was established on the basis of a strong historical narrative. The paper seeks to highlight the role of caste and religion in the formative phases of nationalism and argues that the roots of the exclusion lie in its own lineage. Surprisingly, the nation by birth, attempts to exclude several sections of people, who are not in conformity with the contours of nation. It is argued that religion and caste had a prominent role in the birth and growth of nationalism. And a large section of Indian population has to feel that this nation is theirs; otherwise, each one has to be felt included in the nation rather than becoming the 'other' in the exclusivist nation.*

**Key Words:** Nationalism, Kerala, Religion, Caste, Exclusion, Untouchability, Vaikom Satyagraha.

Time and again, nationalism appears to be an unsettled issue even with regard to the everyday life of an average citizen of contemporary India. It is a fact that from the status of a binding force of the people, nationalism appears to be a tool of manufacturing discord in the social fabric in varied occasions. Several major challenges that our country faces today, to a certain extent, are really owed to the distorted ways of understanding and practicing of nationalism. The present paper is an outcome of my recent enquiries with regard to the functioning of nationalism in everyday life in the present scenario and, in that way, it was worth exploring, how the idea of nationalism was perceived by the different sections of society in Kerala in the past and the way in which it came into practice in the region. The available source materials lead one to believe that nationalism among the various sections of the Indian people worked in different ways and for the depressed classes, it was not at all an idea to enthuse them by any means, because it could not offer any ray hope to them. This paper is organized in two sections, where the first section forays into the theoretical aspects of the phenomenon of nationalism with special reference to India, whereas, the second section deals with the discourses on nationalism and the functioning of religion and caste in the context of twentieth century Kerala.

### **Nationalism in Theory and Practice: the Indian Experience**

In an attempt to define the very idea of nation, Benedict Anderson in his *magnum opus Imagined Communities*, explains that ‘it is an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign’<sup>1</sup>. What Anderson emphasizes is the imagination of a nation, in a limited space and so that a finite though elastic, boundaries beyond which begins the land of other nation(s). The most significant contention from him is that, ‘no nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind’<sup>2</sup> is somewhat a hard reality, which illustrates the limitations of a nation. Significantly, this project of imagination was actually materialized by the emerging print capitalism in the context of Europe. For Anderson, ‘the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a

new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation'<sup>3</sup>. The role of imagination is emphasized by another eminent scholar, Sudipta Kaviraj, to whom, nationalism is viewed as an 'imaginary institution'<sup>4</sup>. The element of imagination and narration are highlighted by Homi K. Bhabha who rightly calls, 'imagi-nation', where the nation is represented as an idea whose cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force<sup>5</sup>.

Interestingly, as a historical reality, nationalism itself had to create a narrative of its own by which it could avoid the great chaos of varying ideological events in a single thread and as Sudipta Kaviraj cautions, in order to understand nationalism, one has to step outside the history that nationalism gives to itself<sup>6</sup>. Partha Chatterjee also is of the conviction that, history, or nationalism's autobiography, is fundamentally flawed<sup>7</sup>. Nationalism as a modern phenomenon was introduced by and among the western educated Indian middle class, where the society *per se* was the same having not departed with pre-modern structures. According to Sudipta, the nation in India as much as in Italy, is a thing without a past. It is radically modern. It can only look for subterfuges of antiquity<sup>8</sup>. And also it is profitable to examine whether a national community existed before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Looking back to history, nationalism as an idea was accepted not in the uniform way at least in the case of our country. So, the nation was not a given thing, though geographically speaking, it was there. Thus, the idea of nation and nationalism are the by-products of modernity and so that any claim of its antiquity proves to be baseless.

In India too, especially in Bengal, from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the new elite had started to take the lead in mobilizing a "national" effort to start schools in every part of the province and then to produce a suitable educational literature<sup>9</sup>. The project of Indian nationalism was the brain child of the Indian nationalist elite and so that, for Partha Chatterjee, it was 'in principle a hegemonic project'<sup>10</sup>. The foundation of nationalism is built upon the ideals of modernity and the inherent nature of which is exclusion, where a section of people is represented as the other.



It was none other than Rabindranath Tagore, the first prominent figure to critically engage with nationalism, firmly believed that Indian nationalism is nothing but a menace<sup>11</sup>. He was concerned that how far it would be functional within Hindu society, for Hindu society to unify the many castes and races into a nation in the European style<sup>12</sup>. Tagore made it clear as early as 1908 that, “I will never allow patriotism to triumph over humanity as long as I live”. He offered the idea of humanity in the place of nationalism. In a similar vein H.H. Risely, the British ethnographer cum administrator, shared the apprehension that how far is it possible to go hand in hand with the regime of caste and the modern idea of Indian nationality, and for him, the two things appear to be antagonistic and incompatible<sup>13</sup>.

The exclusive nature of the very idea of nationalism seeks to expel those who are not suitable to the nation since they are inferior or having secondary positions. Considering nationalism, we see the centrality of caste and religion [class also] in nationalism, where all such identities had to be washed away by the high tides of modernity. However, the process of rationalization and secularization mediated through colonial modernity was obstructed by the saviours of the tradition in disguise of social reform. It was in the course of time that a self-defence to save the emerging so called ‘Hindu’ religious formation in the backdrop of missionary critique. It was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that modern Hinduism was originated and developed, which later found manifestation in, what G. Aloysius calls, ‘Pan-Indian political-national Hinduism’<sup>14</sup>. So much so that nationalism was the continuity of the ‘renaissance,’ which stood against the emerging trends of missionary criticism on the one way and also resistance against the British colonial state on the other.

In such a way, nationalism is interpreted to be contradictory that, it is a mission to get power transferred to preserve the pre-national form of differential power realization within society<sup>15</sup>. The most plausible identities such as religion and caste were actively working within the Indian National Congress, as an instrument of Indian nationalism. On several occasions, the objectives of the

Congress was declared to be preservation of Hindu values. The writings and speeches of prominent nationalist leaders proved to be reflective of their predominant upper caste Hindu identity rather than the Congress identity. For example, G. Subrahmania Iyer, who along with five other Brahmanas launched the first issue of *The Hindu* weekly newspaper (1878), wrote a book entitled, *Arya Jana Ikiyam Allathu Congress Mahasabhai* (Unity of the Aryan People or the Congress Party). Travelling from the past to present, Iyer argues that the basic aim of the Indian National Congress was 'to create unity and brotherhood among the Hindu people'<sup>16</sup>. Obviously, the objective of such writings essentially was identifying Indian nationalism with *savarna* Hinduism. There were also instances of caste bias with regard to the nationalist newspaper, *The Hindu*, which was trying to shut out the non-Brahmana from its pages, which proved to be short lived<sup>17</sup>.

### **Nationalism, caste and religion: beyond discourses**

In Kerala, the germs of nationalism were crystalized in the early decades of the twentieth century. It is interesting to see how the Congress was functional with regard to caste and religion in Kerala. As a matter of fact, the educated middle class were active members of the Congress as elsewhere in India. Naturally, the upper class/ caste people started to join the Congress and started functioning in a nationalist way. Naturally, the lower castes' entry into the INC was not at all a concern. Initially, it was Kings such as Samutiri Raja, Kollamkode Raja and other local rajas<sup>18</sup> who were organisers of the conferences. When the issues of the *Kutiyans* (tenant-cultivator) were raised, it was suppressed ruthlessly<sup>19</sup>. When the young M.P. Narayana Menon raised the issue of *Kutiyans* in the Ottappalam session of the Indian National Congress, he was fiercely criticized by all other members with elitist leanings. Similarly, when the tenant cultivators, lower caste agricultural labourers and Mappilas were assembled in the Manjeri session of the Indian National Congress of 1920, the elitist leaders raised their eyebrows and asked, 'why were these people with smell of dirt enter into the pavilion?'. It was none other than the Theosophist and Congressman Manjeri Rama Iyyer

who shared the apprehension of the upper castes<sup>20</sup>. Significantly, in the Manjeri conference, the representatives included big landlords and Rajas such as Cheriya Raja of Calicut, Ilaya Raja of Nilambur Mooppil Nayar of Mannarkkad, Udaya Varma Raja of Mankada, K. C. Veerarayan Raja etc. When a resolution demanding the redressal of the tenants' sufferings was presented, it was challenged by the said representatives of the landlords<sup>21</sup>, though it was passed subsequently.

Likewise, M. P. Narayana Menon, [M. P. N.] the great nationalist leader, was very much close to the lower castes and the Mappilas and was often criticized by the Congress leaders for his habit of inter-dining and associating with the Mappila Muslims. He used to have food with the Mappilas, which was a taboo for the people belonging to the Nair caste, and he was the first Nair to wear a *lungi*, which was considered to be the typical dress of Malabar Mappila folk. During his student days, M. P. N. used to wear a Turkey cap, for which he was penalized by the British principal. In such a way, he was considered to be an out-caste among the nationalists. Strangely enough, for the same reasons, caste Hindu Congress leaders never preferred to stay at his residence. This sort of caste prejudice of the Congress leaders caused to spread the image that the Congress was a party of upper caste Nairs. And the term 'Chalappuram Congress' also was illustrative of its caste leanings.

Indeed, the attitude of the leaders caused the people belonging to the lower castes to keep aloof from the INC. For instance, Ezhavas (Thiyyas), one of the lower castes of Kerala were not at all co-operating with the Indian National Movement. The great social reformer and leader of SNDP Yogam, Sree Narayana Guru had declared that, 'The British are like our guru: it is they who gave us *Sanyas*', recalling the age-old denial of the right to ascetic practice to the lower caste in Hindu society<sup>22</sup>, which in another way was an approval of the British government towards its emancipatory policies. Similarly, the great poet and SNDP Yogam general secretary, Kumaran Asan, in one of his *Vivekodayam* editorials shared the apprehensions of his caste towards nationalism in this

manner: “Presently there has not been preparedness for a united Indian *swaraj*. If we start to rule ourselves, we have to go back to 150 years, and will undo all reforms initiated by the British. The Indians will not be capable of *swaraj* without anybody’s help until the caste differences ends...So that those people who have suffered the inhumaneness of the caste for centuries cannot join the side of the *swarajists*” [read nationalists/ Congressmen]<sup>23</sup>. Apart from that, Asan had accepted *Pattum Valayum*, [literally silk and bangle. One of the most coveted awards in those days] from the then government and he was highly eulogistic of the British while speaking of their reforms with regard to the depressed castes in India. Another Ezhava leader and beloved disciple of Sree Narayana Guru, Sahodaran Ayyappan, never felt any remorse in accepting the ‘Raja Bahadur’ title of honour from the British government. For him it was a memento for his political stand point and campaign against social inequality<sup>24</sup>.

An influential Ezhava leader of Malabar, Mithavadi C. Krishnan (He was the President of SNDP Yogam and Tiyyar Malabar Yogam), had severely criticised the Congress ideology and programmes. In one of his articles titled, ‘Indyayile Aswaasthyam’ (Indian Unrest), published in *Kerala Pathrika* (edited by Moorkoth Kumaran) on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1907, Krishnan severely criticized the Congress’s political strategies<sup>25</sup>. It was in the context of his scathing attack on nationalism that Dr. Ayyathan Gopalan, a physician and Ezhava activist, prompted Krishnan to start a newspaper supporting the [British] government. In response to which, Krishnan launched *Mithavadi*, (weekly) in October 1907, with Moorkoth Kumaran as the editor. Krishnan had recognized the fact that thousands of his people’s voice was remained unheard in the cacophony of the Congress workers and Caste Hindus. He had the intention of laying the foundation of *Swathanthra Samudayam* (independent community), which declared that the Ezhavas would abandon Caste Hinduism and by which they could be free from caste oppressions<sup>26</sup>. He had also made a severe attack on Gandhi and the INC on the ground that ‘the destructive’ Civil Disobedience Movement and Non- Cooperation Movement could only contribute miseries to the people of India<sup>27</sup>. He firmly

believed that when the British crown transferred its power to the dominant class of this land, the depressed classes would have to endure the oppressive forces of that ruling class, means INC<sup>28</sup>.

Murkoth Kumaran, a Tiyya intellectual and editor from North Malabar, is reported to have spoken thus in a meeting of the Tiyya community in North Malabar during the period of the Non-Cooperation movement: "Congress is the organization of the upper castes who should take a bath if they touch us. If the Congress gets political power from the British, our country would be ruled by the upper castes... It is the British who have done us good... It is our duty to oppose them in the interest of our community and help those who try to end the rule of the British and who are the only well-wishers of the lower classes<sup>29</sup>". Interestingly, such apprehensions were common among the lower castes and communities in other parts of India as well. For instance, in Bengal, the Namasudras were alienated from the national movement because they could in no way identify themselves with the aims and aspirations of the high-caste *bhadralok* fighting against the British<sup>30</sup> because during the times of their need, they could to get support only from the local officials of the British government. As the nationalists demanded self-government, the educated members of this caste apprehended that if more power was transferred, it would only be monopolized by the more privileged upper castes<sup>31</sup>.

It was during the time of the Khilafath movement that even the ordinary Ezhavas started to ridicule the Congress leaders of Malabar calling them "*Kilapath, Kilapath*" [Khilafath], states Moyyarath Sankaran. Lining up with the British police, they were directly scolding and ridiculing the Congress leaders<sup>32</sup>. When Madhava Menon, one of the Congress leaders reached the locality of Moyyarath to visit him, the Ezhavas mocked him calling 'the absconding Moyilyar [Mulla] from Eranad'. On another occasion, the followers of Moorkoth Kumaran had started to question the Congress leaders. When K. Kelappan, popularly known as 'Kerala Gandhi' started to speak at a function held at Thalasseri, some obstructed him and asked how could the problems of the *avarnas* of Kerala get solved, when the *savarna* Congress leaders come

to power. They had apprehensions that even Mahatma Gandhi believed in *Varnasramadharma*<sup>33</sup>.

It does not mean that every Ezhava was hostile to the Indian National Congress. T. K. Madhavan was a great Ezhava leader who joined the INC. However, Madhavan was not beyond the criticism of his fellow leaders from the community. It was C. Kesavan, another influential Ezhava intellectual and leader who also had almost similar views and was critical of T.K. Madhavan. Kesavan wrote that all other Ezhava leaders except T.K. Madhavan, simply looked at the INC as an all India organization of those who wish to sustain the worst tradition of *savarna* Hinduism<sup>34</sup>. He goes on to explain that Ezhavas were having the impression that unless the British had established suzerainty over India, the six crores of depressed castes of India could not have seen the ray of light at all<sup>35</sup>. Thus, nationalism in the perspective of the depressed castes was non-sense or an obstacle in the way for the development of the *avarnas*.

T. K. Madhavan, the only Ezhava Congress leader during that time had explained what prompted him to join and work in the INC. Like many other Ezhava philanthropists, Madhavan also had high praise for the colonial administration, for its reforms and sympathetic attitude to the depressed castes. He was also thankful to the British for that matter. At the same time, he had realized that the impact of the colonial administration on Indian economy and society was disastrous and so that those who were suffering under British rule wished for *swaraj*<sup>36</sup>. His justification for joining the Congress was that Gandhiji as the leader of the Congress had started to introduce the anti-untouchability movement in the political agenda of the Congress, which naturally gave him great expectations. And also he was not in the fold of activists who argued that political freedom is to be assured only after resolving social disparities. Whereas, he was of the belief that, action towards social and political emancipation should be done simultaneously<sup>37</sup>. Eventually, he decided to associate himself with the INC and got a chance to present a resolution on untouchability in the Kakinada

session in 1923, and got it passed by the Congress. Still he had the apprehension that, whether this would be put into practice by the leaders and workers of the INC in the future.

The occurrences that came up during the Vaikom *satyagraha* of 1924 proved that the afore-mentioned anti-Congress stream of thought was absolutely right and nationalism in Kerala was not at all devoid of predilections of caste or religion. The Vaikom *Satyagraha* was a peaceful Gandhian mode of struggle to get the roads adjoining the Vaikom temple opened for *avarvas*. Those were not temple roads, but public roads which were restricted to the untouchables. In this case, we can see that inside the INC, it was not only caste but religion also did matter. For instance, the experiences of the convener of the *Satyagraha*, and a great leader of INC, George Joseph had bitter experiences simply due to his religious identity. When he reached Vaikom to organise the *satyagraha*, Gandhi's letter to George Joseph was unbelievable. The letter inter alia to read as follows: "as to Vaikom, you should let the Hindus do the work. It is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen but not by organizing the movement and certainly not by offering *satyagraha*. If you refer to the Congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchability. I was surprised to learn that the disease has infected the Syrian Christians<sup>38</sup>". The message of advice of Gandhiji in the last sentence was very much obvious, that if he wished to take part in the campaign against untouchability, he should work within his own community, but never among the Hindus.

One can observe the deliberate exclusivism during the whole course of the *satyagraha* which was begun by the pledge itself. The opening line of the pledge was defining one as "I am a Hindu"; which was followed by "I strongly believe that unapproachability and untouchability are to be eliminated. And I will attempt to ensure the freedom of travelling to the *avarvas*"<sup>39</sup>. The connotation of this Gandhian strategy was nothing but integrating the Congress with *Savarna* Hindu values. While one volunteer who declares himself as Hindu will try to eradicate unapproachability, it means

that he is a *savarna* Hindu. Presumably, it was a premeditated *satyagraha* sponsored by *savarnas* for the *avarnas*<sup>40</sup>.

Similarly, the nationalist movement failed to educate its leaders and workers to think and act beyond the boundaries of caste and religion. The biographical sketches of the great nationalists of Kerala shed light on this fact.

Swami Ananda Theertha, a disciple of Sree Narayana Guru, a committed nationalist and above all, a Gandhian from Malabar, was a man who dedicated his life to the cause of removal of caste and tried to synchronise the anti-caste movement with the activities of the INC. He was a great social activist who fought legally and politically against all sorts of discrimination in the name of caste. He staunchly fought against untouchability and for the rights of the untouchables. He persuaded the *dalits* not to offer prayers at the temples where the depressed castes were segregated. He had served in several parts of South India in association with *Harijan Seva Sanghom*, founded by Gandhiji. But later he had to move away from the movement because of his realization that the *Sanghom's* political and ideological objective was to keep the depressed castes within the fold of Hinduism. Swami later understood that his and Gandhiji's ways to the objective of eradication of untouchability were diametrically opposed; that Gandhiji believed in the mental transformation of the upper castes and eventual removal of untouchability, whereas Swami found recourse to the agitations by the oppressed castes.

The experiences in the Congress with regard to caste issues forced him to keep away from the Congress. For instance, in 1931 when the Guruvayur *Satyagraha* was launched, leaders such as A. K. Gopalan and K. A. Keraleeyan had started a *jadha* in order to get some volunteers recruited to *satyagraha*. When the *jadha* was passing in front of a Tiyya temple near Payyannur, the Congress boycotted the same<sup>41</sup>. From this incident, he realized that though India may get political freedom, the depressed castes would not get actual freedom and, thereafter, he decided to abstain from politics in order to actively engage in social activities to eradicate



untouchability. For the national movement, caste was not a very serious problem to be dealt with. As 'Gandhi and the Congress defined the problem of caste inequality in terms of an opposition between cleanliness and the lack of it, locating the whole issue not in terms of economic or social realities but as physical state'<sup>42</sup>.

To conclude, nationalism in India was exclusive rather inclusive. Caste and religion were determining factors throughout its course of formation and growth. Though the nationalist leaders were trying to entertain the people on the margin on the one side, the forms of caste and religion worked in a direct or in a disguised manner.

## References

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Verso, London, New York, 1983, 2006, pp. 5-6.
2. *Ibid.*, p.7.
3. *Ibid.*, p.46.
4. See, Sudipta Kaviraj, '*Imaginary Institution of India*', *Subaltern Studies, VII*, Delhi, 1993(1992), pp.1-39.
5. Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration*, Oxon, 1990, p.1.
6. Sudipta Kaviraj, *op. cit.*, pp.1-2.
7. Partha Chatterjee, *Nation and its Fragments*, Delhi, 1994, p.6.
8. Sudipta Kaviraj, *op. cit.*, p.13.
9. *Ibid.*, p.9.
10. *Ibid.*, p.86.
11. Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism Lectures*, 1916-17, New Delhi, 2009.
12. Partha Chatterjee, 'Tagore's Non-Nation', in *Lineages of Political Society*, Ranikhet, 2011, p.96.
13. H. H. Risely, '*Caste and Nationality*', in Ishitha Banerjee-Dube, ed., *Caste in History*, Delhi, 2010(2008), pp.74-75.

14. G. Aloysius, *Nationalism without a Nation in India*, Delhi, 1997, p.104.
15. *Ibid.*
16. G. Subrahmania Iyer, *Arya Jana Ikiyam Allathu Congress Mahasabhai* [Unity of the Aryan People or the Congress Party], Madras, 1888, p.1, cited in M.S.S. Pandian, *Brahmana and Non Brahmana*, Delhi, 2007, p.55.
17. M. S. S. Pandian, *Brahmana and Non Brahmana*, p.3.
18. Moyyarath Sankaran, *Ente Jeevitha Kadha*, [My Life Story] Janardhanan Moyyarath ed., Trivandrum, 2012, p.34.
19. A.K. Pillai, *Keralavum Kongressum*, [Kerala and Congress], Thiruvananthapuram, 1982, p.31.
20. See, P. Śivadasan, 'Theosophy as Rescuer of Colonialism: Nuances of the Manjeri conference of 1920', Paper presented at the UGC National Seminar, Department of history, NSS College, Manjeri, 16-18 September 2011.
21. *Ibid.*, p.33 and 40.
22. See, Udaya Kumar, *Writing the First Person: Literature, History and Autobiography in Modern Kerala*, Ranikhet, 2016, p.43.
23. Kumaran Asan, 'Swaraj Vazhakku' [Quarrel on Swaraj], editorial, *Vivekodayam*, 1088(M.E.), Tulam (1913 Oct-Nov.), Book 1, Issue7, in G. Priyadarsan ed., *Kumaran Asante Mukhaprasangangal*, [Editorials of Kumaran Asan] Moongode, 1981, pp.128-129.
24. Ajay Shekhar, *Sahodaran Ayyappan, towards a Democratic Future Life and Select Works*, Calicut, 2012, p.141.
25. K.R. Achuthan, C. Krishnan, Kottayam, 1971, p. 66.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
29. See, M. Gangadharan, *The Malabar Rebellion*, Kottayam, 2008, Ch. I, fn.38, pp. 36-37.
30. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Caste, Protest and Identity in*

- Colonial India, The Namasudras of Bengal, 1872-1947*, Delhi, 2011, p.99.
31. *Ibid.*,p.109.
32. Moyyarath Sankaran, *Op. cit.*, p.45.
33. *Ibid.*, p.57.
34. C. Kesavan, *Jeevitha Samaram*,Kottayam, 2005 (1968), p. 226.
35. *Ibid.*
36. See, P. K. Madhavan, *Desabhimani T. K. Madhavan* [The Patriot T. K. Madhavan], Kottayam, 2015(1937), p.131.
37. *Ibid.*
38. George Gheverghese Joseph, *George Joseph, The Life and Times of a Kerala Christian Nationalist*, Hyderabad, 2003, p.166.
39. Dalit Bandhu N.K. Jose, *Vaikom Satyagrahatthile Sathyangal*, Vaikkom, 1994, p. 31.
40. *Ibid.*, p.31.
41. Dr. Mathew Erthayil, *Malabarile Dalit Prasthanangal*, [Dalit Movements in Malabar], Kottayam, 2016, p.46.
42. Dilip Menon, 'Shrines and Politics in Malabar, 1900-24', in Sumit Sarkar and Tanika Sarkar ed., *Caste in Modern India*, Delhi, 2014, p. 499.

## WOMEN INTELLECTUALS ON THE SARDA ACT IN COLONIAL ANDHRA\*, 1928–1942

**Shaik Mahaboob Basha**

Assistant Professor of History

Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad

### ***Abstract***

*The problem of child marriage was acute in colonial Andhra, which was a part of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. The British Government banned child marriages by passing the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popular as the Sarda Act. The Act was passed in 1929 and came in to force since 1 April 1930. However, the Act was not successful in containing child marriages because of the various loopholes present in it. The conservative sections made use of them and routinely violated the Act. This paper discusses how the women intellectuals in colonial Andhra perceived the Act. They denounced the undying conservatism among people, and were highly critical of the British Government for the loopholes in the Act. They demanded positive amendments to the Act to make it more meaningful and stringent in application. The paper is based exclusively on primary sources – a number of journals, including women's journals, in Telugu language, which have been untapped so far. It makes a small addition to women's history in colonial India.*

**Key Words:** *Colonial Andhra, Child marriage, Child Marriage Restraint Act, Sarda Act, Women Intellectuals.*

The issue of child marriage and its attendant problems engaged the serious attention of intellectuals in the nineteenth and early twentieth century Andhra. Women intellectuals undertook a sustained campaign against the brutal practice right from the dawn of the twentieth century. In response to the mounting pressure

from native intellectuals and also to prove that their rule was a ‘civilising mission’, the British government banned the practice of child marriage by passing the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, (popular as the Sarda Act), which fixed 14 and 18 as the minimum marriageable ages for girls and boys, respectively.

However, the Act was not successful because of various reasons and it was routinely violated causing intense disappointment to the reformers. In this paper, an attempt is made to understand the way, the women intellectuals in colonial Andhra perceived the Sarda Act in a span of about a decade. We see their initial enthusiasm about the Act being eroded in due course of time, and the way they questioned the British government for its failure in strictly implementing the Act. More significantly, it establishes women as thinking and negotiating individuals striving for ameliorating their problems and thereby effecting social change. We hear the voices of women like Kanuparti Varalakshamma, Kadapa Ramasubamma and Deshiraju Bharati Devi, the leading activist intellectuals of the time.

The following tables demonstrate the magnitude of the problem of child marriage in India, Madras Presidency and the Telugu speaking districts.

**Table: 1 - Number of child marriages and child widows in India as per 1931 Census (0 – 15 age group)**

Age (Years)	Child Marriages		Child Widows	
	1921	1931	1921	1931
0 – 1	2, 144	21, 330	197	594
1 – 5	82, 860	3, 77, 983	6,536	13,196
5 – 10	8,26,483	20,19,675	46,275	54,475
10 – 15	27,69,585	33,33,957	1,36,509	98,326
<b>Total 0 – 15</b>	36,81,072	57,52,945	1,89,517	1,66,591

Source: *Grihalakshmi*, December 1933, p. 833<sup>1</sup>.

Census figures revealed that, in Madras presidency, the number of married girls under the age of 15 increased between 1901 and 1931. It increased from 92 to 108 among Hindus, 44 to 55 among Muslims and 25 to 35 among Christians per every 1000 girls married<sup>2</sup>. Between 1921– 1931, ‘Infant marriages’, i.e., marriages of girls below the age of five, increased from 21 to 47 among the Hindus<sup>3</sup>. The problem of child marriage was acute in the coastal region of Andhra; in the Ceded Districts (the last five districts in the following table), it was less<sup>4</sup>.

The following table, which gives the number of girls married per every 1000 marriages in the age groups of 0–5 and 5–10, reveals the then contemporary situation in Andhra.

**Table. 2 Number of Child Marriages in Andhra in the age group of 0-5 and 5-10 (per 1000 marriages performed; as per Census 1931)**

District	Number of Child Marriages	
	0-5 years	5-10 years
Vishakhapatnam (plains)	111	442
East Godavari (plains)	104	193
Guntur	103	167
Ganjam (plains)	98	416
West Godavari	87	177
Krishna	57	145
Nellore	24	86
Vishakhapatnam (agency)	13	77
Ganjam (agency)	08	416
East Godavari (agency)	04	96
Bellary	6.60	–
Kurnool	4.80	–
Cuddapah	3.35	–
Anantapur	2.00	–
Chittoor	1.87	–

Source: Garimella Satyanarayana, ‘Andhrulu – Atibalya Vivahamulu’ (‘Infant Marriages among the Andhra People’), *Grihalakshmi*, May 1933, p. 195<sup>5</sup>.

Given the gloomy situation, Andhra women intellectuals regularly campaigned for banning the practice. The contemporary women's journals were flooded with their writings. They passed resolutions in the women's conferences demanding an immediate ban of child marriages<sup>6</sup>. The sustained campaign undertaken by the reformers and intellectuals—both women and men—in Andhra/India, coupled with several other factors, resulted in the passage of the Child Marriage Restraint Act in September 1929. The Act came into force from 1 April 1930<sup>7</sup>.

Reformist women celebrated the passage of the Sarda Act while the conservative women condemned it<sup>8</sup>. Reflecting on the various advantages that the Sarda Act would be accruing to Indian women, Kanuparti Varalakshamma, a prominent activist woman intellectual, who was more famous for her *Sharada Lekhalu* (*Letters of Sharada*), wrote:

*'So far, in our country, marriage was a potential obstacle to the development of women's education. It is a common practice in our country that, howsoever enthusiastic parents of girls may be to educate their daughters, given the current practice, they will have to get them married by the time they attain 11 or 12-years-of-age, the time when the girls really begin to evince some interest in education. Later on, the mother-in-law (who did not have the benefit of education) impedes the education of her daughter-in-law by exercising her power. The Sarda Act, which has come because of the fortune of today's women, has removed such a great difficulty [from their lives]. Because of the advantage of the Sarda Act, girls, by the time they complete fourteen years and enter into the fifteenth year, will pass the matriculation exam, if they study in English schools, and the Vidushi exam, if they study in nationalist schools. Providing opportunity for receiving education and choice in marriage are the chief most objectives of the Sarda Act. There are many more benefits that the Act will bestow upon women. The problems of girls becoming pregnant by 12-years-of-age, the consequent delivery*

*deaths, suffering from terrible weakness and diseases all through their lives, in case they escaped delivery death, etc., are removed by the Act. And, it is certain now that the innocent girls will not be thrown to old men. Foolish parents, out of their own selfish interest, cannot sell their daughters anymore. Further, we are not going to see child widows in large numbers [as we do now]. Therefore, the Sarda Act, which is useful to women in a variety of ways, is definitely a sweet fruit of the fortune of women and certainly not an indicator of a state of deluge as a few are [baselessly] arguing. ... Today, Hindu women do not have the capacity to make use of them [the various rights like the right to inheritance and representation in political bodies, etc.]. Without proper education and wisdom, women cannot put these rights to good use. Therefore, I wish that our Hindu women take the advantage of education being provided by Sarda Act and gain the wisdom of fruitfully enjoying the new legislations sanctioning women a variety of rights, which are a result of the sympathy of God and humans. By doing so, I wish, they contribute to the reconstruction and development of India. I wish them the blessings of God<sup>9</sup>.*

Hardly did women begin to express such grand hopes when the deadly ‘deluge’ of child marriages descended. There was a gap of six months between the passage of the Act and its coming into force. Fearing that they might not be able to perform child marriages any more, the conservative people rushed to perform them in whatever manner they could. During the six months period, 900 marriages were conducted in the town of Machilipatnam alone, which had a population of 49,000<sup>10</sup>. Terrified by the Act, a man in a village near Nellore fixed the child marriage of his daughter. Though the girl was infected by chicken pox just one day before the scheduled date of her marriage, ‘being afraid of the Sarda Act’, he got her married<sup>11</sup>. Reporting an ‘infant marriage’ in 1932, a news item observed that a Vyshya man from Ongole conducted his 6-year-old daughter’s marriage to escape the regulation of the



Sarda Act. Further, it informed that ‘the groom passed away 2 months ago’, and ‘the girl was 8- years-old now.’ In this regard, the news item made an interesting remark that ‘the Sarda Act was unable to check its transgressors, but it caused such calamities [as mentioned in the news item]<sup>12</sup>.’

To Bolisetty Venkata Hanumantha Rao, the situation reminded the saying, “By the time the Setty had adorned himself, the town was in dead silence” (“*Setty singaarinchukone loga patnam maatu maniginadi*”), i.e., everything was over. He mentioned that, threatened by the impending danger of the Sarda Act, the traditionalists hurried up and performed a number of child marriages, including the babies of hardly 2 or 3-years-old, without even observing the auspiciousness or otherwise of the stars (*‘tithi vaara nakshatramulu’*), a must procedure observed in a normal Hindu marriage<sup>13</sup>.

In a letter (05.02.1930) written to her fictitious friend, Kalpalata, Kanuparti Varalakshamma beautifully described the obnoxiously panicked behaviour of the orthodox sections during the six months before the Child Marriage Restraint Act came in to effect<sup>14</sup>.

What strange marriages! What strange processions! What a hubbub! The prices of all commodities have gone up. The cloth stores are emptied. Vegetables in market are exhausted. ... The washer men have ceased washing clothes and are rushing to carry the marriage palanquins. And not to talk about the bustle of the music bands. ... No need to say about the [heavy] earnings and hurriedness of the cooks and the *purohita* Brahmanas. ... Attending the marriages one after the other, the invitee women (*‘perantandru’*) have no leisure at all. There is no doubt that they have forgotten their homes. Single marriage, joint marriages, marriage after marriage, one marriage within the other, [like this, any number of marriages were performed] during the months

of *Kartika* and *Margashira*, and three fourth of the railway income came from these marriage parties. ... Though I received only one invitation during this deluge of marriages (*'pendlindla pralayamulo'*), no one would have faced the troubles and suffered sleeplessness, because of the disturbance these marriages caused, as I did. May you ask, how come? Our home is on the main street, the compound wall bordering the main road. Scared of cold and wearied by watching [these incessant marriage processions], though I sleep inside the home fully covering the blanket, how can I stop the uproar of the music bands of the incessant marriage processions from penetrating my ears? Thus, I lost peaceful sleep throughout this *Margashira* month during which period a large number of marriages are performed. One night in the last week, I resolved to watch with patience every procession that passed by, but in vain. Five processions passed by in just half an hour. No sooner than I lied on the bed after watching one procession did the high-pitched sound of the music band of another procession pierce my ears. Hardly had I returned inside the home after watching that, when the *bam, bham, boo, boo* sounds of another procession were heard. ... But because of the continuous noise of the music bands, there was no chance to sleep. Not just on that one night. I had to pass the whole of the month of *Margashira* without sleep. The no moon day (*'amavasya'*) came. Thinking, "today is no moon day. The *shoonyamasa* is forthcoming. There will not be any disturbance of the music bands hereafter. Let me have a peaceful sleep at least today," I slept. [However, I was wrong], and there was no rest on that night even for a marriage procession suddenly descended. The bride, an innocent kid, might have completed hardly three years. Sitting like a doll in the marriage of dolls, she was dusting and holding up the new frock and was keenly gazing at the new gown

she wore. The ten-year-old groom was dropping asleep. ... After four days, another procession came by. The bride and the groom are eight-years-old. Dressed in trousers and coat made of the *muslin* cloth, the boy was seated. Wrapped in a big saree, the girl was seated like *Podalakamma* [a beautiful local Goddess]. Wrapped in the big saree, she appeared like a bird trapped in a [hunter's] net. The fear of the impending Act, however, caused some sort of reform among the traditionalists [sarcastic remark]. The various taboos such as observing auspicious time and stars, *vaarapu pattimpulu*, *shoonyamu* and *moudhyamu* are not found in these marriages. Shastra has approved of this reform as an interim measure, they say. Our poor Shastras really are very good. They save the traditionalists by supplying a suitable *sloka*, whenever one needs one, and according to ones wish and convenience. There is no [mis]adventure they [the traditionalists] are not undertaking in the name of the *Kalpavriksha* [of conveniently and easily manipulating Shastras]. They married off the infants and made them recite the chants of *garbhadana*. ... One or two? [The number of child marriages performed is big]. The *Margashira* month of this *shukla* year, the best of all the months, got tainted by such infant marriages. There are no accounts of such infant marriages our Lords Nrisimha [Narasimha] of Mangaladri, Venkateshwara [Balaji] of Tirupati and Appanna of Simhadri performed in their presence. As per the saying of Vemana “were stones be Gods would not they swallow any amount of grain”, during these marriages, [our] Gods turned into stones. Had it not been so, could [the foolish] parents have performed such irregular marriages in their presence?

As women saw a ray of hope in the Act, they were very eager to protect it and, therefore, consistently opposed any amendment, which rendered it ‘useless’<sup>15</sup>. Sharply reacting to the amendment

proposed by Surapat Singh, Kanuparti Varalakshamma angrily remarked that it was 'improper' to propose any such amendment to the Act. She explained that 'the Act was not made in haste.' It was a result of 'careful thinking of about two years.' The Sub-Committee (Joshi Committee) toured all over India conducting public hearings and collecting opinions of a cross section of people, including scholars, doctors, lawyers and, importantly, women, and recommended 14 as the right marriageable age for girls<sup>16</sup>. Further, she said that it was passed in the Assembly, where great leaders like Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Madanmohun Malaviya were present. 'Moreover', she said, 'it was not imposed over the heads of people immediately' and was 'decided to bring it into force after about five months.' Remarking that 'the members had every chance to repeal the Act, [but they did not],' she sarcastically questioned 'whether the opponents of the Act dropped asleep or had been enjoying the feasts in the uncountable number of child marriages performed all these five months<sup>17</sup>.' Worried about the proposed amendment, she said:

Like this<sup>18</sup>, after a large number of child marriages were performed without any obstruction, after the innocent children were completely hanged [by performing child marriages], after the people's representatives returned from the Assembly, after three months of its [Sarda Acts'] coming into effect, is not it strange to propose amendment now? What kind of amendment is it? The amendment proposed by Mr. Surapat Singh provides opportunity to those, who obtain a certificate from the civil court, to marry children below the age mandated by the Sarda Act. Then, what for the Sarda Act? All those who want to conduct child marriages will obtain a certificate and conduct child marriages as usual. ... What is left now? The Sarda Act will in fact be like the dead while being still alive. If some fees are to be paid for securing a certificate, it may generate some income to the court. If there are any problems, it may provide some income to the lawyers. Kalpalata! The living corpse like Sarda Act will cause another important damage. There are two kinds of

people, who are opposed to the Sarda Act. The group of the traditionalists argues that marriages after 14 years of age are against the Shastras. The pragmatists' group, though wholeheartedly agrees to conduct adult marriages of girls, opposes on the ground that our right of marriage should not be surrendered to the government. This problem of losing the right of marriage was in the minds of the reformers, too, who favoured the Act. However, because the evil effects of child marriage increased day by day, and because the common people were unable to come out of the grips of tradition despite so much of preaching, some great people, who wanted the development of women, became ready to forgo their right thinking that it was enough if the child marriages were stopped at least by the government. If at all this amendment succeeds, there will be no worse damage to the country and no greater humiliation to the Indians. Why because, the very fact that, to marry our girls, we are required to approach the government for a certificate establishes that we are surrendering our marriage right to the government. Is not it to abolish child marriages that the Sarda Act is made? Through an order, if the government allows those, who want to perform child marriages, what is the use of Sarda Act? Therefore, Mr. Surapat Singh's proposed amendment will result in both the loss of the right of marriage and the loss of a benefit that is to accrue through the Sarda Act. *The situation will be like the saying, "rentiki chedda revadi" (incurring loss at both the ends)*. Therefore, my dear friend! The Sarda Act, which is made keeping in mind the development of women, either has to be implemented as it is or be wholly destroyed. At any cost, the country's people must not approve the amendment of Mr. Surapat Singh. Mr. Emerson has [luckily] obstructed Mr. Surapat Singh's amendment, which is aimed at destroying the Sarda Act, with the proposal that public opinion be collected. Therefore, the nation's people must once again give their strong

consent in favour of the Sarda Act and resist the amendment condemning it as harmful. Because the matter concerns women significantly, all women have to exhibit their strongest opposition to the amendment. It is my desire that *Grihalakshmi* (the women's journal), too, should cooperate in this regard. I have read in the newspapers that, having understood its dangers, our [sisters of the] Madras Women's Association conducted a conference condemning the amendment. This is a very auspicious sign. I hope that the amendment will face opposition throughout India. Kalpalata! It is true that if the nation's people remain indifferent at this moment, we will be harming the nation rather than doing any good. Let us see how the future will be. [emphasis added]

The future was that the government did not succumb to conservatives' hue and cry and amend or repeal the Act as they expected<sup>19</sup>. Women profusely thanked the government for not surrendering to the pressures and threats of the conservative sections. In the Ganjam Mandal Women's Conference, held in Barampura (Berhampore) on 30 October 1932, 'women unanimously resolved to congratulate the members of the Indian Legislative Assembly for refusing the proposal of amendment to the Sarda Act<sup>20</sup>.'

Though women celebrated the passage of the Sarda Act, their enthusiasm was short-lived because, the Act contained certain loopholes and was more complex in fixing the guilty and to execute. The conservative elements poured cold water on the zeal of women by strategically making use of the loopholes. Most importantly, as the Act's jurisdiction was initially confined to British-India only, the conservative sections performed child marriages outside the British territories in places such as Yanam,<sup>21</sup> a French colony, near Kakinada, the Portuguese territories and the Nizam's domains, adjoining the British-Andhra region<sup>22</sup>. While those who feared punishment undertook holy excursions to the Hyderabad State or the French Yanam, etc., a few daredevils openly violated the Act within the British boundaries<sup>23</sup>. While a

few of them received punishment,<sup>24</sup> many went scot-free. At times, quite ironically, the complainants themselves landed in troubles as the judgments were made in favour of the transgressors<sup>25</sup>.

As the Sarda Act proved highly ineffective in restraining child marriages for the reason that it was confined to British India alone, Lalchand Naval Rai proposed an amendment Bill to apply it to the whole of India, and it got the assent of the Governor General on 12 March 1938. According to this, the subjects of the British Government could be punished for violating the Act anywhere in India. Another amendment was proposed by B. Das to empower the Judges to issue an injunction to the parties concerned prohibiting a child marriage from being arranged or solemnised, which was also accepted, on 9 April 1938<sup>26</sup>.

This caused commotion among the conservatives and rekindled hopes in the hearts of the reformers. Now that the British subjects learnt that they would be punished for violating the Act even in those safe havens which had earlier provided them shelter to carry out their conservative mission, they conducted child marriages 'in their very homes, in a clandestine manner<sup>27</sup>.' The unhappy environment enraged Kanuparti Varlakshamma.

Infuriated by the ineffectiveness of the Act in containing child marriages, and the undiminished conservatism among people, Varlakshamma reviled that 'the throat slitting [of girls] began again. Marriages of babies of days and months of age were being performed day after day without any obstruction. We did not know when the deluge would subside.'<sup>28</sup> Providing a picturesque presentation of the extreme haste and abominable abnormality involved in the Sarda-fearing child marriages performed, post amendment, she said:

The vulgarities being committed by the traditionalists, who think that their *shrotriyatva* is in danger, in such marriages are countless. [Unlike the normal procedure], no white washing of the walls is done. Turmeric and vermilion on the thresholds are not applied; no *toranas* [garlands made preferably of

mango leaves] are hanged across atop the doors; and no *pandiri* [shed made of leaves] is made in the courtyard. [They observe] nothing [of these ritualistic decorations essential in a marriage]. At some midnight, some four elders are surreptitiously gathering in some remotely situated dirty home ('*kompa*'). By throwing the two extremely innocent infants, who are still drowsy [and unable to sit or stand properly] on the marriage seats, and by reciting some two chants, and by getting the sacred thread tied, they are somehow completing the marriage. Like this, marriages are being performed in great haste, and in an inauspicious manner, and in a way worse than that of the marriages performed of dolls made of the leaves of the barb tree. To avoid others' attention, all the marks of marriage— *paaraani* (red dye applied by women on their feet at a wedding) on the feet, sandal paste in the neck, the marriage *bottu* on the forehead, another *bottu* on the cheek — are erased. They are contented if marriage is over in some or the other way<sup>29</sup>.

She was shocked to learn that such improper or zigzag marriages were covertly conducted under the guise of observing the Satyanarayana Swami *vrata*m (religious ritual) to escape being noticed. She sarcastically remarked that it was quite contradictory that a *vrata*m in the name of that God, whose name started with the adjective 'Satya', which meant 'truth', was misused to perform such 'false marriages' ('*asatya vivahalu*'). Pitying the Lord for being misused, but at the same time complaining against Him for saving the culprits, she commented derisively:

These days, Lord Satyanarayana is helping such improper and untruthful marriages very much. Now, if anybody is asked as to what is the special occasion in their home, everyone replies that s/he is observing Satyanarayana Vratam, and none says that marriage is being performed. Everything related to the marriage from performing marriage to inviting



relatives and friends for feast is done under the guise of Satyanarayana Vratam. Perhaps that Lord Satyanarayana is so much a protector of falsehood, so much he is committed to rescuing those who sought his refuge, and so strong hearted that, he is tolerating the whole of the sin of this illegal infant marriage and protecting the same. To conduct such marriages, earlier, people used to go to some princely state. Now, that facility is also lost. Having learnt that they will be caught [and punished] there also, and thinking that why incur wastage by going there, people are secretly performing child marriages in their homes alone<sup>30</sup>.

Sadly noting that the non-Brahmanas, who did not have to fear post-puberty marriages, and who faced no religious danger in this regard, also performed infant marriages imitating the *dwijas*, Varlakshmamma pessimistically stated:

Looking at the foolish behaviour of the irrational parents, I am being overcome by sorrow. I am afraid if at all the practice [of child marriage] will ever be eradicated. I fail to understand who the Sarda Act will save, after all these girls, for whose welfare it is made, are married off in the manner of the madness of auctioning<sup>31</sup>.

Emphasising the importance of people's vigilance in bringing about an effective implementation of the Act, and thus give a crushing defeat to the orthodox elements, she exhorted people:

In this way, the more the Sarda Act is tightened, the more it is being loosened. If the great calamity of infant marriage is to be permanently removed, the concerned have only one way. That is to establish societies for the propagation of the Sarda Act in every village, complain to the District Collector on behalf of such Sarda Societies, if somebody is going to perform child marriage, and ensure that he [the District Collector] sends prohibitory orders to the parents of girls. If two-three such prohibitory orders

reach every village, people will [be threatened and] keep quiet. The orthodox will assume a subdued position the same way rats hide noiselessly in a home where the cat roams around. And the small children will have protection<sup>32</sup>.

Reminding women that they had a major role to play in this, Varalakshamma said:

Women have a major responsibility in eradicating these ignoble marriages. If women were aware of their own wellbeing, howsoever orthodox men might have been, could they have arranged the marriages of such small children, who played hiding behind the hem of the sarees (*'pamita kongu'*) of their mothers? Howsoever sharp the axe may be, can it fell a tree if it is not fixed to a wooden post?<sup>33</sup>

Delivering the inaugural address at the fourteenth Andhra Rashtra Mahila Mahasabha held at Cuddapah (Kadapa) during 16-17 December 1939, Kadapa Ramasubbamma stated that 'evil customs like child marriage and child widowhood [enforced widowhood], which checked the progress of any society, had been sucking the sap of (*'peelchi pippi cheyuchunnavi'*) Indian society'. She reminded women that 'it was their duty to eradicate them'. Dissatisfied with the Sarda Act in bringing about a substantial change in women's lives, she pointed out that the Act had 'still not become very useful [and successful]. Hence, it needed to be amended: all the child marriages conducted in violation of it be dissolved, [and the defaulters be sternly punished] to benefit the country<sup>34</sup>.' Given the fact that the Act does not have any provision for dissolution of marriages conducted in violation of it, her demand for the dissolution of the same is remarkable. It is a radical idea for the reason that the Hindus treat marriage to be a sacred institution and, therefore, an indissoluble one: her idea must have sounded to the conservatives as blasphemous.

Deshiraju Bharati Devi, whose conviction it was that 'child marriages, which caused such a great harm, should get completely destroyed', and who believed that 'law was the only

refuge to eliminate such things' because 'such evil practices did not completely die with mere preaching', was partially happy to state that 'the Sarda Act was useful to some extent for the development of women's education and girls' health. But, the British Government ('*doratanamuvuru*') remained indifferent without taking any action as people freely violated the Act. People were also indifferent.' Enraged at the existing state of affairs, particularly the calculated inaction of the colonial government, she remarked:

Keeping quiet after making the Sarda Act is useless. The Sarda Act in execution at present is of no consequence. People have no fear of the Bill [Act]. If disallowed in Guntur, marriage can be conducted in Mathira [in the adjoining Nizam's State]. There is no fear of conducting child marriages once people cross the British boundaries. The British Government is not punishing the violators. Unless the violators have any enemy, and s/he files a suit by incurring some financial loss, the culprit is not punished<sup>35</sup>. Because of this, out of a hundred, not even ten cases are coming to light. Therefore, we should get all the existing provisions in the Sarda Act, which is made on behalf of and for the wellbeing of women, changed [amended]. For this, the British Government must take utmost interest. Just as the British Government assigned to the village level employees the task of collecting census, it must order the village *munasabs* to enquire if any marriage is conducted in any home and ascertain the age of the brides and grooms and take necessary action. They only know well about the age of boys and girls because they have in their possession the records of the census. So, it is the duty of women to undertake an agitation and force the Government into bringing about instant changes in this regard<sup>36</sup>.

Further, she appealed for scrapping of Clause 9 of the Act,<sup>37</sup> which read as: "No Court shall take cognizance of any offence under this Act save upon complaint made within one year of the solemnisation of the marriage in respect of which the offence is

alleged to have been committed<sup>38</sup>.” The Clause proved costly to one certain K. Sanyasi Rao, who made a complaint on behalf of the Sarda Vigilence Society of West Godavari District and was punished<sup>39</sup>.

In the Narasarao Peta Taluq Women’s Conference, organised by the ‘Stree Vidyabhivardhani Samajamu’ at Narasarao Peta, on 26.10.1932, women ‘unanimously resolved to appeal to the government’ for scrapping the sub-clause mandating a security deposit of one hundred rupees, because of which, nobody was ready to lodge a complaint against the violators of the Act, and which rendered the Act ineffectual. Presenting the resolution, Munta Kotishwaramma, President of the Stree Vidyabhivardhani Samajamu, lectured detailing the disadvantages of child marriages, importance of the Sarda Act, and appealed to women to ensure that such marriages did not take place<sup>40</sup>.

As women treated the eradication of child marriages as ‘their responsibility’, they ardently appealed to the public to remain vigilant, be sensitive themselves and sensitise others in this regard. To ensure the effective implementation of the Act, they formed civil society organisations. Peddada Subbamma and Damerla Kamalaratnamma were elected vice-president and joint-secretary, respectively, of the Sarda Vigilence Society (‘*Sangha Samskaranabhivridhdhi Samiti*’)<sup>41</sup> of the Godavari District<sup>42</sup>. Women like Smt. M. Subhadramma were on the Executive Committee of the *Sarda Shashana Paripaalana Sanghamu* (Society for the Implementation of the Sarda Act) at Madras<sup>43</sup>.

The foregoing presentation demonstrated the way women intellectuals in colonial Andhra perceived the Sarda Act. In the beginning, they expected great returns from it. But, various provisions of the Act, the indifference of the British government in strictly implementing it and the undying conservatism in society disappointed them to the extent of airing despair. Despite the fact that the Sarda Act threatened the conservative sections of society to a large extent, the contemporary women intellectuals viewed it as a toothless tiger. What was more significant was that the implementation aspect of the Sarda Act tore the mask of

the colonial government's claim to being a 'civilising mission'. Women saw the 'saviour' British government as compromising. However, undeterred by the challenge, women intellectuals continued propaganda through the Sarda Vigilance Committees and appealed to the British government to take proper action. This paper argues that, even during the heyday of the national movement, women firmly held the issues of social reform. They did not allow the whirlwind of nationalism to swallow women's issues. Further, it emphasises that mere legislation is insufficient to combat social evils like child marriage and that progressive legislations alone cannot defeat social conservatism. Sustained propaganda needs to be undertaken to change the minds of people. And, victims did and must wield the weapons.

## References

- \* Colonial Andhra (Telugu districts of the Madras Presidency) consisted of the districts of Northern Circars, i.e., Ganjam, Visakhapatnam, Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Nellore (coastal Andhra), and the Ceded Districts of Bellary, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and Chittoor (Rayalaseema region). It formed a part of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. The area broadly corresponds to the state of Andhra Pradesh today. Today, the districts of Ganjam and Bellary are in the states of Odisha and Karnataka, respectively, while the state of Andhra Pradesh has a total number of thirteen districts.
- 1. Statistics furnished by Muthu Lakshmi Reddi in her presidential address to the seventh Andhra Rashtra Mahila Sabha held at Eluru on 4.11.33. Data relates to the population in Madras, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam. See 'Saptamandhra Rashtriya Mahilasabha, Eluru, 4.11.1933 lo Srimati Doctoru Muthu Lakshmi Reddigari Adhyakshapanyasamuloni Pradhana Bhagamulu', *Grihalakshmi*, December 1933, pp. 832-834.
- 2. Garimella Satyanarayana, 'Andhrulu – Atibalya Vivahamulu' ('Infant Marriages among the Andhra People'), *Grihalakshmi*, May 1933, pp. 194-197, for this reference, p. 194.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 194-195. It was Satyanarayana's definition.
4. Analysing the statistics, Garimella Satyanarayana said that, compared to other regions of the Madras Presidency, child marriages were more prevalent in the coastal districts of Andhra. It was this region that contributed most and increased the average of Madras Presidency in terms of child marriages. He sarcastically remarked that the 'more modern/civilised' districts such as East Godavari (plains), West Godavari (plains), Krishna and Guntur occupied top positions. The practice of child marriage was more prevalent among the people living in plains than among the 'superstitious' [uncivilised] people living in the agencies (forest regions). He observed that, in Ganjam district, it was more among the Kalingas and the Karanams than people of other castes. He made an interesting observation that, as the Telugu districts moved northwards closer to the Odhra [Oriya] districts, so did the number of child marriages increase, with Vishakhapatnam ranking first. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
5. If we take a caste-wise analysis of infant marriages, during 1921-31, they increased from 6 to 20 among the Telugu Brahmanas, from 8 to 15 among the Odhras, 160 to 353 among the Kalingas, 35 to 55 among the Telagus, 5 to 26 among the Malas, decreased from 15 to 02 among the Tamil Brahmanas and from 2 to 1 among the Tamil Vishwa Brahmanas. Among the Telugu Malas ("untouchable" castes), the number increased by 30 times than the Tamil Malas. Between 1921 and 1931, while infant marriages among the Telugu Brahmanas increased by more than three times, among the Telugu Malas, the increase was by more than five times. As per 1931 Census, among the Karanams, for every 1000 marriages, 142 were infant marriages. While there were 31 widowers aged below one year, there were 47 widows. Excepting one, who belonged to South Canara, all others were Telugus. Of them, 14 were from Ganjam, 34 from Vishakhapatnam and the remaining were from other districts. *Ibid.*, p. 196.
6. For example, condemning child marriages at the All Andhra Women's Educational Reform Conference held at Kakinada on 16-17 January 1928, women passed the following

resolutions: a). Child marriages are chiefly responsible for the lack of education, presence of ignorance, shorter life span, physical and mental weakness among Indian women. b). This practice of infant marriage is against nature, Shastra and tradition, and is harmful in every way. Therefore, this conference prays to the Government to ban by law the marriages of girls and boys under the ages of 16 and 21, respectively, and punish parents for non-compliance, and thereby protect and uplift Indian Hindu women. c). This conference is of the opinion that the All India Women's Conference must undertake propaganda in this regard in all the states, and also submit a *mahzar*, signed by one to two lakhs of women and men, to the Viceroy. See 'Vivaha Samskaranamunugoorchina Tirmanamu' ('Resolutions Regarding Marriage Reform'), *Hindu Sundary*, January 1928, p. 16.

7. For the national level lobbying of women to secure passage of the Act, their responses once the law was passed and their efforts to make the law more meaningful in terms of effective implementation, see Aparna Basu and Bharati Ray, *Women's Struggle: A History of the All India Women's Conference, 1927 – 2002*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2003 (first published 1990), pp. 55-60.
8. However, the conservative women intellectuals like Pulugurta Lakshmi Narasamamba, the editor of the women's journal, *Savithri*, were strongly in favour of child marriage. In her inaugural address to a conference of the women's wing of the 'Andhra Desha Varnashrama Dharma Sabha' held at Vijayawada, Rayaprolu Shesha Somidevamma spoke about the 'greatness' of child marriages and the 'evil effects' of girls' adult marriages. Informing her female audience about the way the Sarda Act outraged women's *dharma*s, she appealed to them to come forward to 'protect' the same. As of now, all that we know about her is that she was the founder of the 'Durga Rishikula Vidyalayam' and authored two books, *Baalya Vivaha Chandrika* and *Satidharma Sangrahamu*. See 'Andhra Desha Varnashrama Dharma Sabha Stree Shakha, Bezawada: Durga Rishikula Vidyalaya Sthapakuralagu Rayaprolu Shesha

Somidevamma Garicheniyabadina Swagatopanyasamu', *Abhinava Saraswati*, June 1930, pp. 5-8. The conference was held in November 1929, where more than 1800 'traditionalist' women assembled. Women 'condemned' the Sarda Act and 'resolved to disobey it'. A *hartal* (agitation) was staged opposing the Act. The conference was presided over by Gudipudi Indumati Devi. *Swadharma Prakashini*, Vol. 6, No. 7, (?) December 1929, p. 24.

9. Kanuparti Varalakshamma, 'Streelaku Navina Chattamulu, Vaani Prayojanam' ('The Usefulness of New Legislations made in favour of Women'), *Andhra Patrika Samvatsaradi Sanchika*, 1930, pp. 207-208. Achanta Satyavatamma wrote that the Sarda Act was made keeping in mind the 'future wellbeing of girls' and with the hope that they would enjoy 'companionate conjugal life and turn their homes into a heaven on the earth'. She earnestly appealed to young men to realise this fact and help materialise this. For this, they would have to resist the temptation of dowries and discourage the old age marriages of men. Young men were to consider only the suitability of girls, their virtues and beauty, and not the dowries they offered. They were to convince their parents against making dowry demands. Otherwise, the purpose of the Sarda Act would be defeated and girls' condition would be like the saying, "He watched [the field] until the harvest, and then let it go to the jackals" ("*Eenakachi Nakkala Palynatlundi*"). The proverb is very appropriately used – girls compared to the produce, and the old men who married them to jackals. See Achanta Satyavatamma, 'Sharada Chattamu – Yuvakula Badhyata' ('Sarda Act and the Responsibility of Young Men'), *Grihalakshmi*, August 1940, pp. 328-329. Also see, Deshrajju Bharati Devi, 'Abhivridhdhi Kavalenanna' ('If We [women] have to Prosper'), *Grihalakshmi*, October 1941, pp. 433-434.
10. See the editorial titled 'Apriyalu Okati' ('1 April 1930'), *Grihalakshmi*, April 1930, p. 83.
11. See 'Kathalu, Kaburlu: Tattammavaru Posinanu Pelli Chesitirenu', *Grihalakshmi*, May 1930, p. 220.



12. See 'Vaartalu: Pasi Paapa Pendli' ('News: an Infant Marriage'), *Vasavi*, August 1932, p. 182. Many others held similar views that the Sarda Act caused more child marriages than it checked.
13. Bolisetty Venkata Hanumantha Rao, 'Baalya Vivaha Nirodhaka Sanghamulu' ('Societies for the Abolition of Child Marriages'), *Vasavi*, August 1930, p. 210. The attitude of different sections of people was vividly described by a pseudonymous writer 'Sanjayudu', who remarked that both the pro and anti Sarda Act parties 'created an unnecessary fuss rebuking each other'. See 'Sharadaiahgari Marriage Billu' ('Sarda Bill/Act'), *Anandavahini*, January 1930, pp. 39-43. 'Sanjayudu' was skeptical that, with Sarda Act, 'India was not going to become a heaven, as believed by the reformers.'
14. Kanuparti Varalakshamma, *Sharada Lekhalu*, part-I, op. cit., pp. 155-160.
15. However, they desired amendments that made it more effective. Discussion on this follows.
16. Varalakshamma was perhaps confused about the recommended age. In fact, the Joshi Committee recommended fifteen as the minimum age-of-marriage.
17. Kanuparti Varalakshamma, *Sharada Lekhalu*, part-I, op. cit., pp. 186-191. The letter was dated September 1930.
18. She remarked that, between the time of the passage of the Act and its coming into force, uncountable number of child marriages ('*anuchita vivahamulu*', meaning 'improper marriages') had been performed by the traditionalists. It was calculated that in the town of Machilipatnam alone 900 marriages were conducted. 'It was impossible to explain as to how many lakhs of marriages must have been conducted throughout India,' she wondered. The conservatives, as if they had gone mad, performed the marriages of such innocent children 'who did not yet open their eyes, who did not yet open their fists, who did not yet start speaking and who did not yet start walking.' *Ibid.*, p. 187.
19. For more details, see Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1998, p. 89.

20. Mallimadugula Lalitamba, a scholar and a social reformer from Srikakulam, chaired the conference. Damerla Bhramaramba and Davuluri Viralakshamma proposed and seconded the resolution, respectively. B. Sitabai, a member of the All India Women's Conference, reported the news item. See 'Ganjam Mandala Mahila Sabha' ('Ganjam Mandal Women's Conference'), *Andhra Patrika*, 05.10.1932, p. 16. The month should be November.
21. 'The *Madras Mail* reported that ninety weddings were performed in Yanam on one July day in 1934, and that "the brides and bridegrooms are the children of people whose homes are in British India territory." Arriving on "trains and motor buses ... girls between the ages [of ] five and ten were hurriedly married to boys of fifteen and eighteen." *Madras Mail*, 3 July 1934. Cited in Mytheli Sreenivas, *Wives, Widows and Concubines: The Conjugal Family Ideal in Colonial India*, Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, 2009, pp. 80-81&143. Also see 'Sampadakiyamulu: Sharada Chatta Savaranalu' ('Editorials: Amendments to the Sarda Act'), *Grihalakshmi*, March 1938, pp. 67-68.
22. For example, in Errupalem alone, the first village in Nizam's state (Hyderabad) as one crossed the railway line dividing British Andhra (Bezawada) and Nizam state, a total number of 418 child marriages were performed in a span of four years during 1933-36. Places like Paritala, Mathira, Bhadrachalam, Paloncha, Alampur and Manthena, etc., provided safe sanctuary to the timid violators. For a detailed discussion, see Shaik Mahaboob Basha, 'A Princely Escape Route: Violation of the Sarda Act in Hyderabad State, 1930-1940', paper presented at the National Seminar on "Historical Perspectives and Future Prospects of Telangana", organised by the Department of History, Nizam College, Osmania University, Hyderabad, 23-24 January 2015. Mimeographed paper.
23. One certain Nadendla Ramalingaiah of Kuchipudi informed the *Trilinga*, an anti-Sarda weekly, that while he was on a tour in Krishna district in the month of May 1930, he found '5 to 6 child marriages being conducted in each village violating the Sarda Act. However, there was no

news about those marriages [which served to encourage the conservatives].’ Therefore, he took up the responsibility of informing and publicising them. According to him, in Ulapalli village in Ramachandrapuram Taluq of East Godavari district, 3 child marriages were held among the non-Brahmanas on 9.5.1930 violating the Sarda Act. In the month of April, 5 child marriages were performed by the ‘untouchables’ (*‘panchamulalo’*): the brides were aged below 10 or 11. In Kuchipudi village in Tenali Taluq of Guntur district, between 1 April 1930 to 15 May 1930, 50 child marriages were performed ‘transgressing the Sarda Act’; the brides were below 10-years. About 200 marriages were held in Tenali, Pedarapuram, Pedapudi and Amrutaluru villages and ‘a few more were likely to take place’. Reproduced in the *Swadharma Prakashini*, May 1930, p. 9. In Uttamadhanapuram of Papanashanam Taluq, 2 child marriages took place on 19.5.1930; the Brahmana brides were below 12 years-of-age. On 16.4.1930, two ‘untouchable’ men named Bangaraiah and Roshaiyah of Emmiganore, Adoni Taluq of Bellary district, performed the child marriages of their daughters; the brides were below 12-years-of-age. In Bhyrapuram village, Nandikotkur Taluq of Kurnool district, a child marriage was performed in the home of Mokshagundam Shastri. *Ibid.* A news item published in the *Grihalakshmi* informed that, in Adoni (presently in Kurnool District), a man of the Kurava caste (sheep breeders) conducted two child marriages in his home, took out a procession and violated the Sarda Act (*‘sharada shasanamunu dhikkarinchenu’*). *Grihalakshmi*, May 1930, p. 234. The conservative journals were more enthusiastic about publishing the rich details of violations across British India for such details served to encourage many others to follow. For example, see *Swadharma Prakashini*, May 1930, pp. 10-13; ‘Sharada Billunatikraminchi 16 vela Vivahamulu’ (‘Sixteen Thousand Marriages were conducted Violating the Sarda Act’), *Swadharma Prakashini*, June 1930, pp. 4-5.

24. The contemporary journals widely publicised the instances of punishments awarded to the guilty for violating the Sarda

Act. *Vakil* Vemuri Chinnaiah Rao's 11-year-old stepsister's (name not mentioned) marriage was conducted on 23.6.1932 in Machilipatnam. The groom (name not mentioned) belonged to the Hyderabad State. *Vakil* L. Srinivasa Rao acted as *kanyadata*. The priest and the *kanyadata* were fined Rs. 50 each. As the case progressed, the accused advanced interesting arguments to evade responsibility and escape punishment. Chinnaiah Rao, the stepbrother, argued that the girl lived with all his brothers, and that his name was printed on the wedding cards by virtue of his being the eldest of them. 'Then, why catch me only' was perhaps what he intended. The *kanyadata* argued that he performed only the *kanyadana*, and that alone did not complete the marriage proceedings. The priest argued that he was unaware of the bride's age. As the groom's party belonged to the Hyderabad State, they were acquitted. The complainant's name and the punishment given to the stepbrother are not mentioned in the source. See 'Vivaha Visheshamulu' ('Marriage Matters'), *Grihalakshmi*, November 1933, p. 756. The same source informed two such violations in Nellore. One was among the Vyshyas, in which, the groom was aged 50 and the bride just 10 (names not mentioned). The other was among the Brahmanas, in which, the ages of the groom and the bride were 20 and 10, respectively (names not mentioned). As the fathers of the brides and grooms accepted their guilt, the Collector fined them Rs. 25 each, and made each of them cough up Rs. 10 as *mudara* to the complainant against the expenses he incurred. *Ibid.* In one such case of violation in Vishakhapatnam, the District Magistrate gave a verdict on 23 January 1934 awarding exemplary punishments to the following. Dasu Kanaka Raju, father of the bride, was punished with a fine of Rs. 200 or imprisonment for a week; Kusumanchi Ramamma, mother of the groom, was awarded a fine of Rs. 50 or, imprisonment for a week; Kodukula Chinna Subba Rao, the priest ('*purohitudu*'), was awarded a fine of Rs. 50 or, imprisonment for a week. See 'Vivaha Vishayamulu' ('Marriage Matters'), *Grihalakshmi*, March 1934, p. 73. According to a report published in the *Vasavi* (reproduced from *The Hindu*), one certain

Chintalapati Yagnaiah got his 8-year-old daughter married to a boy of 14-years. One certain Manepalli Bapanaiah filed a complaint against the child marriage. E.C. Wood, the Collector of Krishna District, took the matter seriously and heavily fined the guilty. The fines were: Yagnaiah, the bride's father, with Rs. 700; bride's mother with Rs. 100; groom's father with Rs. 700; groom's mother with Rs. 100; Chiruvuri Yagnanarayana and Borupalli Amaraiah, the priests, with Rs. 300 each. From the fine collected, Manepalli Bapanaiah, the complainant, was given Rs. 150. The Magistrate was reported to have stated in the judgment that 'the Act was known to all then. The transgressors willfully violated the law. Hence, the culprits deserved stringent punishment. However, because they had accepted their crime, he was awarding lighter punishment [only]. Hence, he was not sentencing them to jail.' While B.V. Kutumba Rao, an Advocate, and T.V. Rao, a Barrister, were the Counsels of the complainant, V. Dasharatha Ramaiah was the Counsel of the accused. See 'Sarda Act Krinda Shikshalu' ('Punishments under the Sarda Act'), *Vasavi*, April 1934, p. 35. Tatikonda China Venkata Ramana (groom's father; groom was aged 16), Karnatakapu Venkata Ramanaiah (bride's father; the bride named Parvatamma was 11-years-old) and Chikkapalli Kameshwara Rao (the priest) were fined with Rs. 50 each or fifteen days of imprisonment for violating the Sarda Act. *Grihalakshmi*, June 1937, p. 378.

25. See 'Pendli Mutchchatalu' ('News of Marriages'), *Grihalakshmi*, October 1933, p. 676.
26. Bulusu Venkatramaiah, *Baalya Vivaha Nirodhana Chattamu: 1938 Sam.pu 7, 19 Savarana Chattamula Prakaramu Savarana Cheyabadina 1929va Sam.pu 19va Chattamu*, Author, Rajolu, 20.5.1938. Also see 'Sampadakiyamulu: Sharada Chatta Savaranalu' ('Editorials: Amendments to the Sarda Act'), *Grihalakshmi*, March 1938, 67-68; Jaya Sagade, *Child Marriage in India: Socio-Legal and Human Rights Dimensions*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2012 (first pub. 2005), pp. 52 and 68-69.

27. Kanuparti Varlakshamma, 'Manasulo Maatalu' ('Words from the Heart'), *Grihalakshmi*, June 1938, p. 224.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
33. *Ibid.*
34. See Grihalakshmi Pratyeka Pratinidhi, 'Cuddapahlo Jarigina Andhra Rashtra Mahila Mahasabhalo Mahilamanula Gambhiroktulu', *Grihalakshmi*, January 1940, pp. 750-763.
35. She was referring to Sub-Clause (I) of Clause XI, according to which, a complainant required to execute a bond of Rupees one hundred. It read as under. "11. (1) Power to take security from complainant: At any time after examining the complaint and before issuing process for compelling the attendance of the accused, the Court shall, except for reasons to be recorded in writing, require the complainant to execute a bond, with or without securities, for a sum not exceeding one hundred rupees, as security for the payment of any compensation which the complainant may be directed to pay under section 250 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898; and if such security is not furnished within such reasonable time as the Court may fix, the complaint shall be dismissed." Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India, 1800- 1990*, Kali for Women, New Delhi, 1998 (first published 1993), p. 70.
36. Deshiraju Bharati Devi, 'Abhivridhhi Kaavalenanna' ('If We have to Prosper'), *Grihalakshmi*, October 1941, p. 434.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing*, op. cit., p. 70.
39. Sanyasi Rao complained that K. Sooraiah, Vice-President of Velpuru Village Panchayat, West Godavari District, performed the child marriage of his 11-year-old son with the 9-year-old daughter of Palani Chiranjivi on 22.5.1932

and V. Viraiah acted as the priest. The accused defended that the marriage was actually conducted on 29.4.1932, and the complaint, made after one year of the marriage, stood null and void as per the provision of the Act. Rao Bahadur R. Subbaiah, the District Magistrate, held the argument of the accused to be 'true', charged the complainant of mala fied intentions, and ordered him to pay the accused a compensation of Rs. 20, Rs. 10 and Rs. 5, respectively. See 'Pendli Mutchchatalu' ('News of Marriages'), *Grihalakshmi*, October 1933, p. 676.

40. See 'Narasaraopeta Talukaa Mahila Sabha', *Andhra Patrika*, 29.10.1932, p. 5.
41. A number of Sarda Committees were formed throughout Andhra to educate public opinion and also ensure that child marriages did not take place. The committees lodged complaints against the violators of the Act. A 'Sarda Act Propaganda Committee' was formed in Vishakhapatnam District with K. Venkata Rao Pantulu, Joint Registrar, Vishakhapatnam, as Secretary. 'Its chief aim was to educate the public in the district, on the benefits, arising out of the "Sarda Act" and to induce them to educate the girls sufficiently, on right lines.' See *Bharatamata*, November 1929, p. 184. *Bharatamata* was a English monthly published from Madras.
42. See 'Vivaha Visheshamulu' ('News of Marriages'), *Grihalakshmi*, December 1933, p. 841. Avasarala Rama Rao and Kavikondala Venkatrao were elected President and Joint-Secretary, respectively, of the Society.
43. Located in House No. 13/14, George Town, Madras, the Society was formed to ensure that none violated the Sarda Act, and the violators were punished. The vigilant Society served legal notices ('*hechcharika notisulu*') to a few to stop performing the intended child marriages. See 'Sarda Shashana Paripaalana Sanghamu, Madrasu', *Vasavi*, July 1932, p. 137.

## DAIRIES AND KITCHEN-GARDENS IN THE PRISONS OF TAMILNADU

**K. Lingappan**

Assistant Professor

P.G. & Research Department of Historical Studies  
Sir Theagaraya College, Chennai

### ***Abstract***

*A prison, especially a Central Prison like those at Puzhal, Vellore, Coimbatore and Trichy is thought of as “a home away from home”. Convicts are sent to prisons for punishment and they live there more or less a full life with three square meals a day, adequate clothing and shelter protecting them from sun and rain. The one thing that they miss in prison is freedom, but it cannot be helped because prisoners have to be shown and told that they are there because they are criminals and have to pay for their crimes.*

***Keywords:*** Kitchen, Garden, Dairies, Prison, Tamilnadu, Puzhal, Chennai.

A prison, especially a Central Prison like those at Puzhal, Vellore, Coimbatore and Trichy is thought of as “a home away from home”. Convicts are sent to prisons for punishment and they live there more or less a full life with three square meals a day, adequate clothing and shelter protecting them from sun and rain. The one thing that they miss in prison is freedom, but it cannot be helped because prisoners have to be shown and told that they are there because they are criminals and have to pay for their crimes.

A convict cannot be kept in a prison all the 24 hours like a bird in a cage. Therefore, he is employed in a variety of ways like his fellowmen in the free world. For example, he can be engaged



in prison chores like sweeping, cleaning, washing, cooking etc., but only a few can be engaged in this manner. The vast majority of them are employed in a variety of useful and profitable work like spinning and weaving as in Coimbatore, making shoes and sandals as in Vellore, printing and binding as in Puzhal. But still there would always remain a few hundreds, who are not fit for meaningful work, and such people can be accommodated in farms and fields to work in dairies and kitchen gardens.

This observation does not mean that work in dairies and kitchen gardens are a waste of convict labour. They have their own rewards to the prisons as well as to prisoners. A prison does not function without milk and milk products and without vegetables no food can be cooked. This paper is all about such dairies and kitchen gardens.

A Committee appointed under the orders of the Governor General in 1889 proposed that dairies could be maintained in jails to ensure supply of pure and fresh milk and that vegetables required for prisoners' consumption be raised in jail gardens, and fish be raised in jail ponds and wells<sup>1</sup>. Thus, a welcome beginning was made in all these directions towards the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Dairies**

A model dairy was opened in the Central jail in Vellore in 1923; other jails too followed. For the first time, patients in jail hospitals were assured of fresh and unadulterated milk, and whatever was left over was sold to the public. But such surplus milk could have been issued for prisoners, who suffered from deficiency diseases or who were invalids and convalescents. Or, better still, it could have been converted into butter milk and distributed among those who wanted it most. Freedom fighters who hailed from affluent families hungered for butter milk. Newspapers like the *Swadesamitran*, the *Dinamani*, the *Mathrubhumi* and the *Andhra Patrika* supported the prisoners in their agitation for butter milk<sup>2</sup>.

Why were dairies in jails? It was not always easy to get milk in required quantity and requisite quality from the open market. A jail was not made to depend on fluctuations of the free market – therefore, it was always better to keep a herd of its own. There was always green grass free of cost in the jail campus, and vegetable refuse too to feed the cattle. By 1945, the government began to strengthen its dairies, and even deputed District Veterinary Officer T. Seshachalam Naidu to evolve a scheme. Thanks to his proposal, Sindhi, Sahiwal, and Ongole cows and Murrah buffaloes were bought, cattle sheds were built, and pasture lands were acquired.

The Central jail, Coimbatore earned huge profits from its dairy. The following table would reveal the total value of milk raised in the dairies and the net profit from 1944 to 1973.

Year	Value Rs.	Year	Profit Rs.
1944	23,732	1959	26,200
1945	31,856	1960	34,900
1946	42,544	1961	33,725
1947	51,901	1962	56,170
1948	83,539	1963	16,317
1949	1,18,312	1964	31,155
1950	1,17,979	1965	37,193
1951	1,34,163	1966	11,113
1952	1,19,715	1967	17,566
1953	1,34,247	1968	30,729
1954	1,03,992	1969	32,070
1955	94,078	1970	21,138
1956	92,203	1971	15,451
1957	25,537	1972	43,138
1958	26,400	1973	54,189

It is a matter of surprise that profit alone in 1973 amounted to Rs. 54,159; in addition to profit from milk, small sums of money were realized from the sale of bulls, bull calves, aged cows, and manure; a sum of Rs. 11,937 was realized from this source alone in 1956.

But unfortunately, the jail dairies ceased to be profitable in the 1980's. In 1995, the department incurred a loss of Rs. 1,78,004 in the Central Jail, Trichy, Rs. 2,66,089 in Coimbatore, and Rs. 74,780 in Palayamkottai. The Government was not prepared to incur further loss on dairies, and thus, ordered them to be closed once and for all in 1996.

### **Kitchen gardens**

No less an authority than the Madras Jail Manual (1950) would say that "the vegetables required for the prisoners' consumption, when possible, be grown in the jail garden". The Administration Report of the Jail Department in the year 1919 observed that every effort was undertaken in raising a large supply of vegetables and condiments in jails. During the cold season, cabbage, knoll-khol, beet-root, turnip, carrot, lettuce, pumpkin, butter bean and all varieties of greens, and during the hot season, radish, brinjal, ladies finger, country bean, bitter gourd, snake gourd and tomatoes were raised. Wherever necessary, Government bought lands near jails for cultivating vegetables. The Government even went to the extent of publishing *A Manual of Market Gardening* in 1928; Major Upshun showed tremendous interest in gardening in the Central Jail at Rajahmundry, and he was called the department's "premier gardener<sup>3</sup>." Administration reports show that every year jails sold to the public a portion of the vegetable raised in their premises. But this could have been avoided because surplus vegetables raised in the cold season could have been frozen and stored and issued to the prisoners in the hot weather. The following table shows income from and expenditure on jail gardens in the Madras Presidency:

### Jail Gardens: Income and Expenditure

Years	Value of garden produce realized	Amount spent on maintenance	Net amount realized
1919	34062-0-11	---	---
1920	32677-15-11	---	---
1921	35526-0-3	---	---
1922	42266-15-3	---	---
1923	44180-3-0	---	---
1924	48625-2-3	---	---
1925	42049-5-8	---	---
1926	50879-7-9	---	---
1927	51231-4-11	6526-1-9	44705-3-2
1928	52130-3-7	9474-2-0	42656-1-7
1929	45790-0-0	8096-12-9	37693-3-3
1930	46851-1-7	6788-10-3	40062-7-4
1931	38619-9-0	6090-0-0	32529-9-0
1932	37371-0-9	7482-14-0	29888-2-9
1933	34209-11-5	4225-10-7	29984-0-10
1934	37706-4-11	5940-2-11	31761-2-0
1935	40837-6-5	2892-12-6	37944-9-11
1936	40659-13-10	1946-3-3	38713-10-7
1937	38786-9-1	2135-7-5	36651-1-8
1938	35055-4-10	1863-8-1	33191-12-9
1939	31067-2-11	1760-4-6	29306-14-5

Vegetable raising was a huge success in the jails of the Presidency. For example, in 1945, the Central Jail, Trichy, bought

66 acres of land for cultivation, and it supplied 17,234 lbs of vegetables to the Penitentiary, Madras.

Vegetable cultivation was not always easy. There were years when monsoons failed, wells became dry, electric pumps did not work, and lease of lands lapsed. But the jail department did not lose heart. In 1952 alone 1,40,000 lbs of pumpkins and 18,000 lbs of tomatoes were raised in the jail gardens. Not to be beaten, the Penitentiary of Madras, with only one and half acres of land, managed to grow 84,550 lbs of greens in 1953<sup>4</sup>.

The Jail department experimented with a few other agro-based industries like poultry, bee keeping and fish rearing. It was O.P.Ramasamy Reddiar, Premier of Madras in 1950 and a Gandhian to the core suggested that the jails would do well if they maintained poultry in their campus<sup>5</sup>. He choose poultry because even unskilled convicts could look after the birds and feed them with kitchen refuse. It was introduced as an experimental measure in the Central Jails in Rajahmundry and Trichy on a modest investment of Rs.1255 each. Similar units were started in Central Jails at Coimbatore, Vellore, and Salem and District Jail at Pudukottai in 1954.

Poultry units earned profits till 1965, and thereafter started incurring heavy losses. In 1972, the loss amounted to Rs.12,038 and in 1973 it was Rs.12,467. Though the government did not offer any explanation for such losses, one can see that the losses were due to mismanagement. But the Government did not mind such losses because poultry units represented an ideal. Persons unfit for hard work could handle birds with ease.

### **Bee – keeping**

The Inspector General of Prisons wrote to the Government in 1950 that bee keeping could be introduced in the Central Jail, Salem<sup>6</sup>. A warder was deputed for training in bee-keeping at the

Agricultural College, Coimbatore. The experiment was extended to the Central Jail at Coimbatore, and Madurai by installing six beehives in each. It was believed that the flora in the neighborhood of jails could support colonies of the beehives. But the industry did not prosper in any jail. The jail at Coimbatore could collect only an ounce of honey, costing Rs.1.86 during 1959.

### **Fish rearing**

Fish rearing too was tried in the prisons of Tamilnadu. The Superintendent, District Jail, Pudhukottai, recommended its introduction in the wells in the jail premises. The Inspector of Fisheries, Pudukottai, stated that the wells in the jail were ideal for fish culture<sup>7</sup>. The Director of Fisheries too found the idea “absolutely sound”. The Scheme was extended to Cuddalore, Coimbatore, Vellore, Salem, Madurai and Trichy. But there is no indication in Government records that fish culture prospered in the prisons. They seem to have made a silent exit.

### **Conclusion**

The Jail department was very sincere when it introduced projects like dairies, kitchen gardens, poultry, bee keeping and fish rearing in its jails. Its intention was that unskilled convicts should learn some kind of work, which did not involve huge capital but would help them to earn atleast a humble means of livelihood after discharge.

### **References**

1. *Report of the Committee appointed under the orders the Governor General, 1889, A.p. XCVIII.*
2. *Report of English and Vernacular papers, 7 of 1934, Report of English and Vernacular papers, 11 of 1935, Report of English and Vernacular papers, 7 of 1931, and*

*Report of English and Vernacular papers, 22 of 1932.*

3. *Report on the Administration of Jails in the Madras Presidency, 1930.*
4. G.O.No: 1712, Home, 14 June 1954.
5. G.O.No: 1382, Home, 29 Mar 1950.
6. G.O.No: 4884, Home, 17 Nov 1950.
7. G.O.No: 992, Home, 13 Mar 1962.

## QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT AND THE VIOLENT MASS UPSURGE IN TAMIL NADU

**S. Babu**

Principal

Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Arts College, Puducherry

### ***Abstract***

*Mahatma Gandhi, the pre-eminent personality of the Indian freedom struggle adopted many strategies for the attainment of swaraj from British imperialism. He devised various techniques and methods to achieve his goal with truth and non-violence as the basis of his movements. The last fight of Gandhiji for swaraj was the famous India August Movement or Quit India Movement. With the outbreak of the Second World War on 1 September 1939, British Government, without consulting Indians included India into the war on behalf of the Allied Powers. The Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji resented the decision of the British Government. To enlist the support of Indians in their war effort, a British delegation under Sir Stafford Cripps was sent to India but it failed to fulfill the expectations of the Indians. When the Japanese army overran major parts of Southeast Asia, its invasion of India became inevitable. There was a strong feeling that the British, who lacked sufficient war materials on the Indian front, might leave India, leaving her in the lurch at a critical hour; as they had done with Burma and Singapore. Gandhiji therefore wanted the British to vacate India. If Britain vacated India, he believed that danger to India would cease to exist. When Britain failed to respond to his appeal, the Congress working Committee under Gandhiji launched the Quit India Movement. The Madras Presidency responded to the call, more particularly, the Tamil region burst into violent activities. This study attempts to throw light on the violent mass upsurge in Tamil Nadu during the Quit India Movement.*



**Keywords:** *Swaraj, Warda, Hartal, Quit India, Press, Lathi Charge, etc.*

## **Introduction**

Mahatma Gandhi, the pre-eminent personality of the Indian freedom struggle adopted many strategies for the attainment of *swaraj* from British imperialism. He devised various techniques and methods to achieve his goal with truth and non-violence as the basis of his movements. The last fight of Gandhiji for *swaraj* was the famous India August Movement or Quit India Movement. With the outbreak of Second World War on 1 September 1939, British Government, without consulting Indians included India into the war on behalf of the Allied Powers. The Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji resented the decisions of the British Government. To enlist the support of the Indians in their war effort, a British delegation under Sir Stafford Cripps was sent to India but it failed to fulfill the expectations of the Indians. When the Japanese army overran major parts of Southeast Asia, its invasion of India became inevitable. There was a strong feeling that the British, who lacked sufficient war materials on the Indian front, might leave India, leaving her in the lurch at a critical hour, as they had done with Burma and Singapore. Gandhiji therefore wanted the British to vacate India. If Britain vacated India, he believed that danger to India would cease to exist. When Britain failed to respond to his appeal, the Congress working Committee under Gandhiji launched the Quit India Movement. The Madras Presidency responded to the call, more particularly the Tamil region burst into violent activities. This study attempts to throw light on the violent mass upsurge in Tamil Nadu during the Quit India Movement.

## **Quit India Resolution**

The idea of “Quit India” occurred to Gandhiji after the failure of the Cripp’s mission. He came out with his clarion call mantra of Do or Die!. “It was during my “Monday of Silence” that the idea was born in me” said he to Louis Fischer, when the

latter was curious to know about the origin of the movement<sup>2</sup>. On 14, July 1939, the Congress working Committee which met at Wardha passed the resolution previously drafted by Gandhiji and authorized him to take charge of the movement and lead it if Britain failed to respond to his appeal to withdraw<sup>3</sup>. It was a 1700 worded mild resolution with a friendly request to withdraw.

Pattabhi Sitaramayya was entrusted with the task of circulating the discussions of the Wardha committee meeting in the Presidency of Madras. He went to Masulipatnam first where the work was taken up by Kala Venkata Rao and then he proceeded to Madras to outline the programme to leading Congressmen in Madras. The circular issued by Venkata Rao was popularly called the Andhra Circular<sup>4</sup>.

The Quit India Movement coined by Gandhiji and put into shape by the Congress Working Committee was launched by the All India Congress Committee by its famous resolution of 8 August (1942) adopted at Bombay. It demanded the immediate withdrawal of Britain from India and complete independence from the British Government and sanctioned a non-violent mass movement under the leadership of Gandhiji if the British did not accede to the demands.

In his stirring message to the nation on the morning of 9 August (1942), Gandhiji exhorted the *Satyagrahis* to seek and face death as only then the nation would survive. He said *karenge ya marenge* (we will do or die)<sup>5</sup>. The same morning the British Government committed the “colossal blunder” of arresting Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru and members of the Working Committee and other prominent Congress leaders. All detainees were taken to unknown destinations<sup>6</sup>. Congress was declared as an unlawful body and Congressmen all over India were indiscriminately arrested.

### **Violent Mass Upsurge**

Gandhiji was kept for two years in the Aga Khan's Palace

in Pune<sup>7</sup>. These arrests were a signal for the outbreak of uprisings everywhere in the Presidency as elsewhere in India, in which violence was freely intermingled with non-violence paralyzing the administration<sup>8</sup>. The Government accused Congress of indecision and arrested the leaders of the Provincial Congress. In Tamil Nadu, veteran Congress leaders like S. Satyamurti, K. Kamaraj, Vellore V.M. Ubayadulla, Tiruvanamalai A. Annamalai, C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliar, M. Baktavatsalam, and many more, were arrested while they were returning to Madras after attending the AICC meeting held at Bombay on the night of 11 August, 1942 under the Defence of India Rules at Arakkonam Junction and sent to Vellore jail<sup>9</sup>. On 13<sup>th</sup> August 1942, M.P. Śivagnanam, Secretary, Madras District Congress Committee, was arrested at Royapuram<sup>10</sup>. Other prominent Congressmen who were arrested on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> August 1942 were Kala Venkat Rao, T. Prakasam, Nageswara Arya, and Kamala Arya. Kamaraj Nadar was arrested on 16<sup>th</sup> August at Virdhunagar<sup>11</sup>. V.V. Giri was arrested at Madras on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1942<sup>12</sup>. Among them, S. Satyamurti was soon shifted to Amraoti Jail in Madhya Pradesh. Within three months of reaching Amraoti, his condition became so serious that his seventeen year old daughter Lakshmi, who was with him wrote to her relatives in Madras about her father's condition. When her letter was shown to G.A. Natesan, he was so moved, that he forwarded it to Governor Hope stating that while Satyamurti's politics was not his, he had no doubt in mind that Satyamurti would be the last person to be a party to any subversive activity. In about a month, Satyamurti was brought back to Madras and was admitted in the General Hospital on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1943<sup>13</sup>. However, he died on 28<sup>th</sup> March while still a prisoner.

The unexpected arrest of the national leaders provoked spontaneous protests across the country. The condition in the Madras Presidency became very critical than anywhere else. Rajaji had resigned from the Congress on the issue of Pakistan and other leaders who would have had a restraining influence on the people had been incarcerated. In Madras, total *hartal* was observed. College students abstained from classes immediately after the movement was launched. In Loyola and Pachaiyappa's

colleges, students threw stones at police and there was a *lathi* charge to disperse them<sup>14</sup>. Throughout the movement in the Presidency, the students of Loyola, Christian and Engineering colleges figured prominently in staging demonstrations and obstructing trains, bravely facing *lathi* charges and whipping and courting imprisonments. On 12<sup>th</sup> August 1942, the students of the Presidency College held a meeting, which was addressed by Mohan Kumaramangalam, a veteran Communist leader. He urged them to call off the strike in vain. The meeting passed a resolution to continue the strike. There were also resolutions protesting against the arrest of Gandhiji and other Congress leaders and condemning the *lathi* charge on students<sup>15</sup>. These events necessitated the visit of S.V. Ramamurti of the Indian Civil Service and Advisor to the Governor to the Presidency College on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1942. This was followed by an issue of order intended to curb the activities of the Students' Congress. According to this order, permission had to be obtained from the District Magistrate or Commissioner of Police before any training camps were held for the student volunteers. Educational institutions did not function, police resorted to *lathi* charge and firing, in which nine students died and several were wounded<sup>16</sup>.

The Director of Public Instruction issued a circular asking heads of educational institutions to report to him the daily attendance class-wise until normal attendance was restored and also about any demonstration by students in their institutions<sup>17</sup>. In Annamalai University, Chidambaram, students hailing from various linguistic regions conducted protest meetings against Gandhiji's arrest and delivered fiery speeches in their respective mother tongues. They hoisted the National Flag. When they were about to take a procession, they were prevailed over by their Vice-Chancellor K.V. Reddy Naidu, who threatened to take action against the demonstrators under the Government communique on students' strike issued in November 1940<sup>18</sup>. Women students also came out during the Quit India Movement to protest against British imperialism. Students of Queen Mary's College observed *hartals* and led processions shouting "Quit India" slogans all along the way until they were dispersed by the police<sup>19</sup>.

Hundreds of labourers from the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills and the public workshops were also involved in the strike. A large number of labourers of the Madras Port Trust, Madras Electric Tramway and Madras Corporation carried on labour agitations. There was also picketing of toddy shops in certain parts of the city and a toddy shop in Choolaimedu was set on fire. Several post boxes were burnt and some attempts at incendiarism were made in the High Court Complex and a bomb was thrown in the Muthialpet (Madras) Police Station<sup>20</sup>.

### **Movements in Districts**

The Quit India Movement spread like wild fire to the districts in the Tamil region. In north and south Arcot Districts, the agitators went berserk and cut off telegraph and telephone lines, burnt Government properties and derailed goods trains. The students of Annamalai University actively participated in the agitation<sup>21</sup>. Protest meetings were organized in the districts of south Arcot, north Arcot, Trichinopoly, Coimbatore and Tanjore<sup>22</sup>. The Tanjore district witnessed several attempts at sabotage and surreptitious activities<sup>23</sup>. Widespread violence broke out in Coimbatore district. The Singanallur Mill workers defied the law and went on a procession. The Sullur Aerodrome was burnt and about 200 tanks were damaged. About thirty agitators died in the police firing there. In a neighbouring village, all males were arrested and confined in a small place<sup>24</sup>.

A total *hartal* was observed in Madurai district. At several places, young agitators clashed with the police. A. Vaidyanatha Iyer, B. Chidambara Bharathi, K. Rajaram Naidu and others were arrested for making inflammatory speeches. There was a confrontation between the public and the police at the Jhansi Rani Park resulting in firing and burning of the Post office. Circle Inspector Viswanathan was subjected to an acid bomb attack. As the situation went out of control, curfew was clamped and the district administration was handed over to the army<sup>25</sup>.

In Virudunagar district, Rajapalayam played a conspicuous role in the Quit India Movement. On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942, youth of the town organized a serpentine procession led by P.S. Vasanthan<sup>26</sup>. The town police station was attacked. The statue of George V near the police station was smashed to smithereens. The procession at the Golden Jubilee Hall condemned the arrest of the leaders and chalked out a further course of action. Women of the town joined the agitation to strengthen the movement<sup>27</sup>.

Protest meetings were held in Sattur taluk. *Hartal* and picketing was observed in Arupukottai taluk. During the second week of August, the movement was intensified in many districts resulting in violent activities in most parts of Tamil Nadu. Conspiracy cases had been foisted on Congress leaders and awarded varied degree of sentences. The agitators in the Tamil region demonstrated that they would not desist from violent and destructive activities in order to attain freedom for their country<sup>28</sup>.

In Coimbatore, there were large scale strikes organized in a number of Mills; an ammunition train from Cochin consisting of two engines and forty four wagons was derailed between Podanur and Singanallur railway stations; and at Sullur aerodrome all the sheds and the motor vehicles stationed therein were burnt. Madurai became the storm centre of the movement necessitating the deployment of both the police and the army. Roads were barricaded in many parts of the districts and Government servants assaulted. A mass meeting was held in defiance of prohibitory orders, which resulted in police firing and some were killed and many injured. In Ramnad district, at Rajapalayam, Karaikudi, Tiruvadana and Poolankurichi, there were many cases of arson and incendiarism<sup>29</sup>. In Tanjore district, people turned violent in places like Tiruvaiyar, Tanjore, Mannargudi and Kumbakonam. Therefore, there were many arrests in these places. At Nachiarkoil, an attempt was made to blow up a bridge. At Thiruthuraiipoondi, an attempt was made to derail a train. In Tirunelveli district, the salt factory at Kulasekarapatnam was attacked by a crowd carrying lethal weapons. In Trichnopoly, students played an active role in

picketing schools, colleges and courts and organizing meetings and *harthals*. A violent mob derailed a passenger train between Pugaalur and Noyyal railway stations and a goods train near Trichnopoly. The mob also removed fish-plates from the railway line between Lalgudi and Valadi stations. It was only in Salem district that the mob did not turn violent<sup>30</sup>.

### **Ruthless Repression**

When all the important leaders of the Congress were put behind bars by the British Government, the leaderless mass without knowing direction plunged into violence, destroying and damaging the public properties resulting in lawlessness in society. The Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Kerala Congress Committees were all declared unlawful associations by the Madras Government as the object of all had been interference with the maintenance of law and order<sup>31</sup>. Censorship was imposed on the press which included restrictions on reports of the Congress movement and the counter measures to quell it. The Government came down so heavily on some of the leading newspapers and journals, both English and vernacular, including the *Mail* that all papers advised the Government to treat the Indian press with courtesy and consideration<sup>32</sup>. But the Government paid the least heed to it. It imposed a ban on even non-violent activities such as *hartals*, meetings, processions and demonstrations. As a result, a popular resentment with “virulence hitherto unknown in the political annals of Madras” broke out. People indulged in acts of vandalism and courted arrest in large numbers.

Two types of punishments were meted out uniformly by the Government to all the districts which indulged in violence. One was the imposition of collective fines on those villages in each district which organized the Quit India Movement and the other one, suspension of all local councils, which supported the movement for six months<sup>33</sup>. *The Hindu*, while denouncing the policy of the Government warned the people against the grave consequences of indulging in collective violence. The paper characterized mob violence as “degrading and pointless”<sup>34</sup>.

The Government on its part did nothing to release the Congress leaders from jails. The leaders would have been able to contain the movement within the limits of non-violence. But the Government showed no signs of coming to terms with the Congress leaders. On the contrary, the Government was busy administering heavier doses of repression to quell the Quit India Movement. It did not realize that the National Movement had reached a stage where it badly needed a gesture of goodwill on the part of Britain. Britain was least interested to do anything that might promote mutual goodwill between the two countries<sup>35</sup>.

By the beginning of September 1942, the Madras Government became ruthless in suppressing the movement. A communiqué of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1942 forced students to call off strikes. They were warned that disciplinary action would be taken against them if they continued to abstain themselves from schools and colleges. Some college students vacated their hostels in protest against the ban on the hoisting of national flags in their hostels. The students of Annamalai University continued their strike against the policies of the Government. The illness of its Vice-Chancellor Reddy Naidu had deprived his controlling authority over the students at a crucial period in the University<sup>36</sup>.

On 30<sup>th</sup> September 1942, a Bill was passed in the British Parliament providing for the continuance of the existing temporary administrative arrangements in Madras and other five provinces for the duration of the war and for 12 months thereafter. Till the end of the war, the Presidency was ruled autocratically<sup>37</sup>. Pre-censorship and restrictions were imposed on the press. The All India Newspaper Editor's Conference which met on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1942 under the leadership of K. Srinivasan urged the repeal of the restriction imposed on the press. The Government appropriately responded by withdrawing the rigorous restrictions imposed earlier on newspapers. Papers which were forced to close down resumed publication<sup>38</sup>. But this was not the end of the battle between the Government and the Nationalist press. The Madras Press Advisory Committee had met on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1942 and requested the Government to withdraw the warning issued to



the Editor of the *Hindu* and the order requiring security from the most popular Tamil weekly *Ananda Vikatan*. But the Government refused to accept its request<sup>39</sup>.

Amidst this stalemate, came like a bombshell the news on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1943 that Gandhiji had started his 21 day fast from that date. It was conceived as an appeal to the highest tribunal for justice. It was provoked by the Viceroy's firm refusal to listen to any suggestion and repeated insistence on the prior repudiation of the All India Congress Committee resolution of 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942<sup>40</sup>. Gandhiji considered this attitude of the Viceroy "an invitation to fast"<sup>41</sup>. News about the starting of the fast by Gandhiji excited public interest in the Presidency. The agitation aroused by it reached its peak on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> February 1943, when many colleges had poor strength. Students staged demonstrations in front of the Secretariat buildings and in the Chief Presidency Magistrate's Court. The Annamalai University remained closed following a students' meeting. When the students refused to disperse, *lathi-charge* was ordered<sup>42</sup>. In a strongly worded letter, the Tamil daily *Dinamani* demanded the removal of Viceroy Linlithgow. The general cry was that it was not enough if Gandhiji was released, but that Linlithgow must be shipped off immediately<sup>43</sup>.

Two prominent women who came forward at this time to organize strikes were Ammu Swaminathan and Manjubhashini<sup>44</sup>. They were well known social workers and freedom fighters of Madras. Both the ladies were arrested and detained under Rules of the Defence of India Act<sup>45</sup>.

Gandhiji rejected the Government's offer to release him during the period of the fast. Many leaders of all shades of opinion from the Presidency including Rajaji pointed out to the Government that if Gandhiji should die, the task of reconciliation between the two nations would become next to impossible. But the Government did not seem to realize the implications of the warning<sup>46</sup>. In fact, officialdom pooh-poohed the fast as a ruse for his release<sup>47</sup>. Dunlop ICS, Madras, stated that it was a "grave abuse (of a rite) which Gandhiji with characteristically crooked twist,

has borrowed from Hindu mythology<sup>48</sup>. Miraculously, Gandhiji survived his fast, which he broke on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1943. The most disappointed man at Gandhiji's survival was Winston Churchill, then Prime Minister of England<sup>49</sup>.

The Quit India Movement had almost died down in the Presidency by October 1944. The political climate throughout India had been glum and sullen because of the continued detention of Gandhiji and other Congress leaders and the adamant and unkind attitude of both Linlithgow and his successor Wavell. The situation became no better even after the release of Gandhiji on 7 May 1944 because many other leaders were still languishing in jails<sup>50</sup>.

While the leaders of the Congress languished in jails, the other political parties supported the war and gained organizational strength. The underground publications criticized the ruthless suppression of the Congress, but had little control over events<sup>51</sup>. At the end of the war, the British government gave clear indications that power would be transferred to Indian hands. At this point, Gandhiji called off the struggle, and around 1,00,000 political prisoners were released, including the Congress leaders<sup>52</sup>.

## **Conclusion**

When the Congress leaders were imprisoned by the British government, the leaderless movement was spearheaded by the students, peasants and workers and the lower middle classes. The British government was able to crush the open movement with heavy hand. But the underground movement continued for a long period. The Socialist Party under the leadership of J.P. Narain, Ram Manohar Lohia and Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, and many more participated in organizing underground movements. This movement sparked off an aggressive national consciousness. Many people sacrificed their careers, property and even lives. It gave a death blow to the British rule. The movement also created a worldwide opinion, particularly in the USA and China, in favour of India's independence. The United States President F.D.

Roosevelt put pressure on the British Government to grant the right of self determination to India. On the whole, the movement had its own importance and facilitated the freedom movement in India. Though the movement was suppressed by the British with a heavy hand, it made them to understand that the people of India were dead set against the continuance of British rule. It was the biggest movement that shook British power in the post Mutiny period and caused their decision to leave India at the earliest. One of the important achievements of the Quit India movement was to keep the Congress party united through all the trials and tribulations that followed.

### References

1. R.C. Majumdar, *Struggle for Freedom*, Bombay, 1969, p. 624.
2. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, (2 Volumes), Vol. 2, S. Chand & Co., Delhi, 1969, p. 337.
3. Saroja Sundararajan, *March to Freedom in Madras Presidency 1916-1947*, Madras, 1989, p. 600.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 601.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *The Hindu*, 22 November 1942.
7. As a political prisoner here, Gandhiji suffered two terrible blows in his personal life. His Secretary Mahadev Desai, aged 50 years old died of a sudden heart attack and his wife Kasthurba died after 18 months of imprisonment on February 22 1944; six weeks later he suffered a severe malaria attack. He was released before the end of the war on 7 May 1945 because of his failing health and the British Raj did not want him to die in prison and enrage the nation.
8. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 602.
9. *District Calendar of the Civil Disobedience Movement, Secret*, 1942-43, p. 78.
10. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 606.

11. *The Hindu*, 17 August 1942.
12. *The Hindu*, 18 August 1942.
13. G.A. Natesan to Governor Hope, 3 December 1942, *G.A. Natesan Papers*.
14. *The Hindu*, 13 August 1942.
15. *Fortnightly Report*: Second Half of October 1942.
16. *District Calendar of the Civil Disobedience Movement*, Secret, August 1942.
17. *The Hindu*, 13 & 14 August, 1942.
18. *The Hindu*, 13 & 14 August, 1942.
19. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 603.
20. B.S. Baliga, *Madras in the Struggle for Freedom*, Government of Madras, 1957, p. 30.
21. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 603.
22. *The Hindu*, 13 August 1942.
23. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 604.
24. *G.O. 2152, Public Department*, July 1942.
25. G. Rudraiya Choudhuri, *A Political Study*, Bombay, 1975, p. 165.
26. *Fortnightly Report*, Madras, 1921, p. 13.
27. *Fortnightly Report for the Year, 1938*, Government of Madras, 1938.
28. C.Y. Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936-1942*, Oxford, 1944, p. 290.
29. *The Mail*, 18 August, 1942.
30. *The Hindu*, 14, 15, and 16 August 1942.
31. *The Mail*, 10 July, 1942.
32. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 605.
33. B.S. Baliga, *op.cit.*, pp. 30-34.
34. *The Hindu*, 25 August 1942.
35. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 606.
36. *Fortnightly Report*: First Half of September 1942.
37. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 607.

38. *The Hindu*, 6 October 1942.
39. *Fortnightly Report: Second Half of October 1942*.
40. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 608.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Fortnightly Report: Second Half of February 1943*.
44. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 608. They were well-known social worker and freedom fighters of Madras.
45. *Fortnightly Report: Second Half of February 1943*.
46. *The Hindu*, 23 February 1943.
47. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 609.
48. Diary Noting, 23 February 1943, *Dunlop Papers*.
49. Rajmohan Gandhi, *The Rajaji Story: 1937-1972*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1984, p. 101.
50. Saroja Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 614.
51. Sanjay Bhattacharya, *Propaganda and Information in Eastern India, 1939-1945*, 2001, p. 33.
52. S.S. Shashi, *Encyclopedia India: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh*, Ammol Publications, 1966, p. 13.

**QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT IN MADRAS  
PRESIDENCY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE  
TO RAYALASEEMA**

**Vellore. Ramabrahmam**

Professor

Department of History & Archaeology, Yogi Vemana University  
Andhra

**C. Sivakumar**

Ph.D. Research Scholar

Department of History & Archaeology, Yogi Vemana University  
Andhra

**J. Narayana**

Ph.D. Research Scholar

Department of History & Archaeology, Yogi Vemana University  
Andhra

***Abstract***

*The Quit India Movement was the next major milestone after the “Salt Satyagraha” in the history of the Indian independence struggle. It was a civil disobedience movement launched in August 1942 with Gandhiji’s call for immediate independence. It is also known as the “Bharat Chodo Andholan” (or) the August Kranthi. On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942, Gandhi, Azad, Patel, Nehru, Mrs. Sarogini Naidu and other members of the Congress Working Committee, the President and the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee and 20 other local Congress men were arrested. Within 24 hours, the storm had broken in its most virulent forms throughout the length and breadth of India. This time literally from Almora to Cape Comorin and from Sind to Calcutta the country saw the outburst of strikes, hartals and demonstrations which had never been witnessed before. The Rayalaseema referred as Ceded Districts was constituted as an Administrative unit of the Madras Presidency in 1800. There was participation of students, households, farmers*

*and members of all religious sects. Due to the severe famine in Rayalaseema during the Quit India Movement, there was short supply of rice and rations were cut by one third. Finally, the paper highlights the situation, seriousness in the participation of people and leaders of Rayalaseema in the Quit India Movement of the Madras Presidency.*

**Keywords:** *Participation, People, Leaders, Quit India Movement, Rayalaseema.*

The Quit India Movement was the next major milestone after the “Salt Satyagraha” in the history of the Indian independence struggle. It was a civil disobedience movement launched in August 1942 with Gandhiji’s call for immediate independence. It is also known as the “*Bharat Chodo Andholan*” (or) the August “*Kranthi*”.

The All India Congress Committee met at Gowalia Tank Maidan in Bombay on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8th August 1942 and endorsed the resolution of the Working Committee by an overwhelming majority and proposed the starting of a mass, non-violent struggle under the leadership of Gandhiji. Addressing the delegates on the night of 8th August 1942, Gandhiji said: “I want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. Freedom cannot wait for the realization of communal unity. Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort”. It is known that a 12 point programme was drawn up and copies were taken by members present for distribution in their respective provinces<sup>1</sup>.

### **Summary of the AICC’s 12 Point Programme**

1. Country wide *hartal* with meetings in villages and cities. If meetings are banned, ban should be resisted.
2. Free manufacture of salt at various places and resistance to salt laws.
3. Complete “non-violent”, “non-cooperation”, with the administration.

4. Students cannot be passive spectators but must leave their colleges and universities to take the place of arrested leaders and to lead the non-violent struggle to its success.
5. Government servants are asked not to support the alien government in this struggle<sup>2</sup>.
6. Every citizen should consider himself a Congressman and disobey any order which goes against the conscience.
7. Peoples of Indian states must make common cause with the people of India in this struggle.
8. Women have a decisive role and must be prepared for sacrifices and sufferings.
9. Every man and woman must carry a badge bearing the motto "Do or Die".
10. All committees must participate in the struggle.
11. The objective is the ending of foreign rule.
12. "Do or Die".

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942, Gandhi, Azad, Patel, Nehru, Mrs. Sarogini Naidu and other members of the Congress Working Committee, the President and the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee and 20 other local Congress men were arrested<sup>3</sup>.

Within 24 hours, the storm had broken in its most virulent form throughout the length and breadth of India. Literally from Almora to Cape Comorin and from Sind to Calcutta, the country saw the outburst of strikes, *hartals* and demonstrations and the like of which had never been witnessed before<sup>4</sup>.

### **Road map of Rayalaseema**

The Rayalaseema region is considered as one on the basis of topography, socio-economic development and political-historical antecedents. It consists of the districts of Kadapa, Kurnool, Anantapur and Chittoor, located between 120.3' N to 160.15' northern latitudes and 760.55' to 790.55' eastern longitudes with territorial extent of 67, 340 sq. kms and accounts for 42.75 per cent of the total geographical area of the state of Andhra Pradesh<sup>5</sup>.



The region lies at an altitude of 300-700 metres above the sea level. This area is considered as one of the backward regions of the country due to lack of major industries and is known as ‘the stalking ground of famines’<sup>6</sup>.

These four districts form the southern and south-western parts of Andhra Pradesh. The region is bounded by Mahaboobnagar district on the north, Karnataka state on the west, Tamilnadu state on the south and Prakasam and Nellore districts on the east<sup>7</sup>.

### **Ceded districts – constituted as an administrative unit of the Madras Presidency in 1800**

As part of the Subsidiary Alliance system concluded between the Nizam of Hyderabad and the British East India Company on 24 October 1800, the Nizam ceded the areas corresponding to the modern districts of Bellary, Kadapa and Anantapur and parts of Kurnool and Chittoor districts to the Company. The British East India Company named this area as the “Ceded Districts” and constituted it as an administrative unit of the Madras Presidency in 1800. Colonel (later Sir) Thomas Munro was appointed as the Principal Collector to discharge both military and civil duties of this area.

In 1807, the Ceded Districts were divided into two Collectorates with headquarters at Bellary and Kadapa. The area consisting of Adoni, Yemmiganuru and Aluru of the present Kurnool district and all the *taluks*, *mandals* of the present Bellary and Anantapur districts, except Kadiri, formed Bellary district and rest of the area was carved into Kadapa district<sup>8</sup>.

### **Indian National Congress sub-committee**

At the 1887 session, the INC was held at Madras, it was decided to organize provincial Congress committees. The committee formed for the Telugu districts was called Andhra

Provincial Congress committee, and it was headed by Konda Venkatappayya Pantulu, who later on came to have the honorific prefix “*Desabhakta*” (patriot). sub-committees of the Congress were also formed from 1889 onwards in the Presidency<sup>9</sup>. A Congress sub-committee was formed for Rayalaseema in 1917, and Gadicharla Harisarvottama Rao headed it<sup>10</sup>.

### **Students in the Quit India Movement of Rayalaseema**

On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1942, students of the Ceded Districts College, Municipal High School and Training School at Anantapur struck work for one day. In the evening, a large meeting was held. At Gooty, there was half a day strike by some of the students in the London Mission High School. On the same day, there were students’ strikes and processions at Chittoor and Madanapalle. Prosecutions under the Criminal Law Amendment Act were subsequently launched against speakers at the meeting at Chittoor and were sentenced to three months’ imprisonment. On 11<sup>th</sup> August, the students of the District Board High School also went on strike. On 13<sup>th</sup> August, about 600 students abstained from attending schools in Kurnool. On the same day, students of the local High School at Proddatur absented themselves from their classes and conducted a meeting and procession. On 14<sup>th</sup> August, students of Anantapur picketed the Ceded Districts College. About 200 students picketing the College were dispersed by a lathi charge. On the same day, students of the Municipal High School at Hindupur and Dharmavaram went on strike<sup>11</sup>.

### **Muslims in the Quit India Movement of Rayalaseema**

From Anantapur district, Mohammad Saheb was enraged and he enthusiastically participated in the Quit India Movement. As a result, he was arrested at Anantapur on 7th September 1942. On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Freedom Movement, he was awarded *Tamrapatra* (Copper Plaque) in

recognition of his services to the country<sup>12</sup>. Another Muslim freedom fighter named Mahaboob Saheb a native of Togerchedu in Nandyal *Taluk* of Kurnool district participated in the Quit India Movement along with Shamsheer Beig<sup>13</sup>.

From Kurnool district, Mullah Akbar Ali resident of Namakal village of Alur *talug* was inspired by L. Sitarami Reddy, who was a village Congress leader. Then he joined the Congress Party at the age of 18 years. He was interned for eight months from 8-9- 1942 in the Alipuram Camp Jail during the Quit India Movement<sup>14</sup>. Mohammad Rasool Saheb, a native of Kasaram village in the Guntakal *talug* of Anantapur district also took part in the Quit India Movement<sup>15</sup>.

### **Sri Kalahasthi Derailment Case**

The people from Sri Kalahasthi with national fervour inspired through the activities of prominent national leaders took an active part in the Quit India Movement. Pasupulety Subbarama Dhas went to Kovanuruvari rice mill and collected spanners with the help of his friend Mudhaliyar (Junnu Mudhaliyar) on the midnight of 22<sup>nd</sup> August and reached Muchhivelu and called the villagers to derail the train. On 22<sup>nd</sup> August, an empty goods train was derailed about 6 miles north of Sri Kalahasthi between Akkurthi and Sri Kalahasthi on the Katpadi-Gudur line due to the removal of three pairs of rails and also due to the destruction of insulators on the telegraph poles. The damage done to the railways was estimated at Rs.40, 000/-. The police arrested 28 members. In this case Special Magistrate New Sam conducted an enquiry and 23 members were released on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1942<sup>16</sup>.

### **Proddatur general stores looting incident**

As part of the Quit India Movement, at Proddatur, the General Stores and kerosene shops were looted. Nearly Rs.7,000/- worth of activators were looted. In this connection, 30 arrests took place<sup>17</sup>.

### **Famine in Rayalaseema**

During the Quit India Movement, there were drought conditions in 1943 in the Rayalaseema region. The common man's food i.e., millets were in short supply and there was rationing in the supply of millets to the people. In Kurnool, *Jowar* was in short supply. The weavers were not able to weave the clothes because of the short supply of raw material.

In Kurnool, shops were looted twice. On 31st March 1943, 40 members were arrested because of their involvement in the robbery. Another looting took place at Kodumuru village during the weekly shandy. The traders of textiles, rice, cloths sellers suffered heavily. The police restored law and order after these incidents took place<sup>18</sup>. Those who were involved in the looting incident were tried. 28 people were tried and of which 22 were arrested and three months jail sentence was awarded to them<sup>19</sup>.

Crops failed in almost all areas. The war situation led to an increase in the price level and a number of agricultural laborers turned jobless. In addition to all this situation, Government collected war fund and revenue tax from the ryots. In Adoni division, most of the weavers and members of the working class could not find work. They were dying due to the lack of even one-time meal per day. These people submitted a petition to the Collector under the leadership of M. Lakshmana Singh<sup>20</sup>. Famine conditions, in the district had made the working class resort to robbery and plunder<sup>21</sup>.

The Kurnool District Ryot Sangh Secretary G. Rami Reddy recommended Kist remissions in the district and submitted notices to the Government<sup>22</sup>. The District Famine Relief Committee met under the President ship of Nayakanti Sankara Reddy on 22nd March, and passed resolutions for full remissions and postponement of the payment of Kist to the next year<sup>23</sup>. In response to these

pressures from the ryots and the Famine Committee, Government gave remission to 165 villages according to their crop yield. The deducted remission was Rs. 2,16,000/- in the district<sup>24</sup>.

## Conclusion

Unlike the earlier movements which helped to create national consciousness among the Indians against foreign rule, the Quit India Movement was intended to be the last fight for freedom. When compared to the previous organized movements, the participation in the Quit India Movement was made open to everyone in the country without any restrictions. The spontaneous reaction of the people to the clarion call of Gandhiji even by risking their lives resulted in protest meetings and processions throughout the country for the sake of freedom.

## References

1. *The Transfer of Power, Vol. III*, pp. 75-77.
2. *The Hindu*, 29<sup>th</sup> August, 1942.
3. *The Hindu*, 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1942.
4. *The Liberator*, 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1942.
5. *Survey of India- Map of Andhra Pradesh*, 1972; *Andhra Jyothi (Telugu)*, Sunday Special, dated 01-06-2014, p. 1.
6. Chandrasekhar, A, *Census of India, Vol.II* (1961), Andhra Pradesh, Part A. Hyderabad, 1966, p.13.
7. Yenadiraju, P, *Evolution of Indian Nationalism, Rayalaseema, 1858-1920*, Bombay, 1997, pp. 2-4.
8. Rao, P.R, *History and Culture of Andhra Pradesh*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 2011, pp. 173-174.
9. Suntharalingam, R, *Politics and Nationalist Awakening in South India, 1852-1891*, Rawat Publications, 1980, p.278.
10. Veerabhadra Rao, M., *Sree Sarvottama Jeevithamu, (A Biography of Gadicharla Harisarovottama Rao)*, Andhra

- Pradesh Grandhalaya Sanghamu, Vijayawada, 1965, pp. 43-44.
11. DCECDM, August-December, 1942, (Madras, 1943), pp. 6, 7, 30, 39 and 73 (TNSA).
  12. *Letter from Raj Bhavan*, Andhra Pradesh on 12th April 1986 to M. Mohiddin Saheb.
  13. Sarojini Regani, (ed.), *Who is Who of Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh*, Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Vol. II, Hyderabad, p. 349.
  14. Venkata Ramana, G., *Quit India Movement in Rayalseema*, Unpublish thesis submitted to Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, p. 190.
  15. Pension Records of District Collectorate, Anantapur.
  16. *Krishna Patrika*, Dated 24th October 1942, p. 8c.
  17. *Krishna Patrika*, 26th September 1942, p. 9
  18. *Krishna Patrika*, 10 April 1943, p. 6.
  19. *Krishna Patrika*, 1st May 1943, p. 4.
  20. *Andhra Patrika*, 27th February 1942, p. 2.
  21. G.O.No. 388 Public (General) Department, dated 5th February 1943.
  22. *Andhra Patrika*, 21st April 1942, p. 5.
  23. *Andhra Patrika*, 24th March 1942, p. 3.
  24. *Andhra Patrika*, 15th April 1942, p. 2.

**‘POSSESSION’ OR ‘COMMODITY’-  
A STUDY OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN  
JHARKHAND**

**Ashwini Barla**

Research Scholar

Department of Historical Studies, Bharthi Women's College, Chennai

***Abstract***

*Jharkhand has today emerged as a major source area for intra-country trafficking in India. Most of the trafficking in Jharkhand is of tribals for domestic labour to metropolitan cities where there is a demand for such work. In cities like Delhi, a number of illegal placement agencies have proliferated. These agencies take advantage of legal loopholes to traffic mostly innocent girls in the name of providing employment but instead are put into extreme conditions of forced labour for example, 12-14 hours of work every day is a routine practice for these girls. Many of those rescued also report physical and sexual abuse. Several cases of sexual slavery have also been reported from the victims rescued in Delhi. Some of the victims were trafficked to Haryana and Punjab for the purposes of bonded labour and forced marriage. Recent news reports also point to the emergence of trafficking of women from Jharkhand for surrogacy, deliver babies who are then sold off.*

**Keywords:** *Child trafficking, Exploitation, Agencies, Initiatives, Labour.*

This paper discusses trafficking of children from Jharkhand, which mostly takes place through well-organized placement agency rackets in Delhi. These placement agencies supply tribal children to the homes of the national Capital Region consisting

of Delhi, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Noida. These agencies mostly target children of age group 11-16 who remain tight lipped even after exploitation. The trafficked victims are kept in congested rooms, fed barely enough for survival till they are placed somewhere. The luckier ones land in a '*Kothi*' as a domestic help. The others are sold in marriage or to a brothel where they suffer never-ending abuse in all forms. These victims of trafficking have to go through series of exploitation starting from the source-traffickers, placement agents and employers. The *Times of India* had reported as to how the death of two girls who were allegedly trafficked from Jharkhand had pushed the Delhi Government to drag its feet on the draft bill on placement agencies<sup>1</sup>.

According to UNODC's (United Nations office on Drugs and Crime) (2013) India Country Assessment Report: Current Status of Victim Service Providers and Criminal Justice Actors on Anti Human Trafficking, red light areas exist in the districts of Dhanbad, Bokaro and Hazaribag. The trafficking affected districts include Garwah, Sahibganj, Dumka, Pakur, West Singhbhum (Chaibasa), Ranchi, Palamu, Hazaribag, Dhanbad, Bokara, Girdih, Kodarma and Lohardaga. Most of the women trafficked from Jharkhand belong to Oraon, Munda, Santhal (including endangered Pahariya) and Gond tribes, out of which the maximum are from Oraon and Munda.

According to the Census of India the number of children between the age group of 5 to 14 years working in Jharkhand is 90,996 in 2011<sup>2</sup>. In such a situation, it would be important to draw attention to missing women and children. In a landmark study of trafficking in India, Sen and Nair (2005) revealed a link between missing women and children and trafficking. Records of the rescued revealed that they had been reported missing in their native places. According to the *Hindustan Times*, a trafficked tribal girl had been found dead under mysterious circumstances<sup>3</sup>. Hence, it becomes pertinent to also look at data on missing children in Jharkhand.



**Data on missing children from districts of Jharkhand accessed through Right to Information Act**

Information of missing children of various districts of Jharkhand collected through RTI Application reveals the following data from 2009-2013:

<b>Districts</b>	<b>No. of missing</b>	<b>No. of traced</b>	<b>FIR registered</b>
Seraikela-Kharsawan	62	55	5
Garhwa	78	55	10
Gumla	77	26	0
Singhbhum	246	115	0
Pakur	30	14	0
Simdega	17	8	10
Godda	12	9	12
Palamu	182	100	82
Dhanbad	543	400	23
Koderma	40	22	1
Ramgarh	118	94	19
Jamtara	22	19	6
Chatra	35	33	1
Sahebganj	84	50	8

From the above data, the total number of missing children was 1546, number of traced were 1000 and among which only 177 children's FIR was registered.

In order to tackle the problem of missing children, the CID, Jharkhand started a missing children helpline with an organisation named *Diya Seva Sansthan* since October 2013. This helpline alone recorded 2298 calls in the year 2014. Out of these, several

cases were registered by them and 79 FIRs were filed with the police. This resulted in the recovery of 112 children.

Following this, better data has been retrieved from CID, Jharkhand for the years 2011-2013.

**Table 3.1.3: Number of missing children in Jharkhand, 2011-2013**

S. No.	District	2011				2012				2013			
		R	T	Ut	FIR	R	T	Ut	FIR	R	T	Ut	FIR
1	Ranchi	35	2	33	0	60	0	60	0	110	24	86	23
2	Lohardaga	14	13	1	14	12	8	4	6	3	2	1	3
3	Gumla	2	0	2	2	16	15	1	1	45	38	7	4
4	Simdega	3	2	1	1	6	6	0	0	5	1	4	4
5	Khunti	7	6	1	0	12	11	1	1	53	20	33	4
6	Chaibasa	34	31	3	2	27	20	7	2	13	8	5	5
7	Saraikela	26	23	3	0	17	17	0	0	15	14	1	1
8	Jamshedpur	26	24	2	2	50	48	2	2	37	32	5	6
9	Palamu	29	26	3	3	16	14	2	2	21	20	1	1
10	Garhwa	13	13	0	-	24	3	21	-	18	3	15	-
11	Latehar	6	6	0	0	11	11	0	2	13	13	0	0
12	Hazaribag	6	6	0	0	37	33	4	4	51	45	6	1
13	Koderma	18	16	2	0	10	7	3	0	22	16	6	0
14	Giridih	44	42	2	0	56	47	9	4	40	36	4	4
15	Chatra	8	5	3	0	15	4	11	0	20	14	6	0
16	Ramgarh	15	11	4	0	14	8	6	0	28	14	14	2
17	Bokaro	41	40	1	1	35	32	3	3	36	32	4	4
18	Dhanbad	79	78	1	1	69	68	1	1	43	43	0	0
19	Dumka	5	5	0	-	2	1	1	-	0	0	0	0
20	Godda	14	14	0	0	15	13	2	2	11	8	3	3
21	Sahebganj	7	5	2	0	32	22	10	1	11	6	5	0
22	Pakur	4	4	0	0	6	6	0	0	9	3	6	1

23	Deogarh	32	32	0	0	42	42	0	0	34	34	0	0
24	Jamtarah	11	6	5	-	16	5	11	-	5	1	4	-
25	Rail Dhanbad	4	0	4	-	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
26	Rail Jamshedpur	3	2	1	0	4	3	1	0	2	1	1	0
Total		486	412	74	26	605	444	161	31	645	428	217	66

R- Number of Children Reported Missing

T- Number of Children Traced

Ut- Number of Children Untraced

FIR- Number of First Information Reports Filed

source: CID, Jharkhand

From the above data, a total no of 1736 children were reported missing of which 452 remained untraced. Attention needs to be given to the fact that only 123 FIRs were filed, which is less than even 10% of the cases. These missing children could be exploited for forced labour, commercial sexual exploitation, adoption rackets, armed conflict, organ trade, or could be used by adults to commit crimes.

### Stratum of exploitation

Tribal women and girls account for most of the trafficking victims and survivors of trafficking. They are mainly exploited for domestic labour, marriage and labourers in brick kilns. Migration of the tribal population from Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh has been taking place since the last three centuries and more. During the period 1950 to 1980, tribal people migrated to the rural areas of Bihar, West Bengal mainly to work as agricultural labour, but from 1980 onwards, they started migrating to bigger cities like Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai (Society for Regional Research and Analysis (2010)). Moreover, migration of single women has also increased. These migrating women and girls are vulnerable to trafficking through placement agencies, whose agents are spread across Jharkhand.

### **Domestic labour through placement agencies**

This is the most common sector where trafficked victims from Jharkhand are exploited. Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru are the most common destinations. A number of placement agencies have come up in Jharkhand and Delhi that supply women and girls as domestic servants. While all this does not sound illegitimate, the situation on the ground is not as straightforward. Intermittently the trafficked women and girls end up working in conditions they may not have agreed to in the beginning. Cases of sexual abuse by the placement agency have been recorded by the police. The agencies do not pay them and ensure that the employers pay the agencies instead of the employed person. Some even experience sexual abuse at the hands of the employers apart from physical abuse. Most of the trafficked are minors and are forced to work 12-14 hours a day. ATSEC (2010) also found that a mere one fourth of the trafficked were in contact with their families. In a case stated by *Hindustan Times* on 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2014 started how traffickers target Jharkhand school girls to sell them in Delhi<sup>4</sup>.

### **Trafficking in the name of ‘bride’**

Apart from the burgeoning business of placement agencies in Delhi, women and girls from Jharkhand are also getting trafficked for marriage to Haryana and Punjab. Given the low sex ratio in these regions, trafficking women and girls from poverty stricken tribal villages of Jharkhand is turning out to be profitable for traffickers.

### ***Minor girl sold for Rs 1 lakh to a man thrice her age for marriage in Punjab***

*15 years old Shanti (name changed) was rescued in a joint rescue operation of Jharkhand Police, Punjab Police and NGO Shakti Vahini in January, 2015 from Karoda village, Sangrur district in Punjab. The girl was allegedly trafficked from her village in Khunti for the purpose of forced marriage and was*

*sold off for Rupees 1 lakh in Karoda village which is the land of the Bhakra Nangal Dam. She was subjected to all kinds of slavery. Police arrested two source traffickers and two destination traffickers in the case. After a registration of an FIR at the AHTU Police Station, Khunti, the police could apprehend the source of traffickers and could learn that the child was sold off to a person in Karnal for rupees 80,000 along with two other girls. Accordingly, Shakti Vahini and Jharkhand Police planned out a rescue operation of the minor girl and after struggling for two days, the team could rescue the child and also arrest two more traffickers who were involved in the case. The girl was sold off by one Mahima and her husband, a native of the same village to one Surrender in Kurukshetra who then further sold her off to one Ranvir Singh @ Nannu aged around 50 years for rupees 1 lakh. Police succeeded in arresting Surrender by letting Pradeep as a decoy customer who was asked to call the former for a deal. In all, eight persons have arrested for human trafficking in this case in Jharkhand.*

### **Nefariousness at brick kilns**

Cases have been reported of trafficking of men and boys to brick kilns in Tripura, Bihar, West Bengal, Haryana and Jharkhand. According to the *Times of India*, Jharkhand *haats* and *melas* are the hotbeds of traffickers. Here the gullible tribal youths are lured with jobs and marriages and are shipped to Delhi and Mumbai<sup>5</sup>.

### **Sexual exploitation**

Although not recorded in high numbers in brothel based prostitution, women and girls from Jharkhand are forced into prostitution in unorganized and movable brothels (UNODC, 2013). Cases intervened by the Anti-Trafficking organizations revealed that the victims of human trafficking are also being exploited sexually by the placement agents and the employer as well in some of the cases. *Hindustan Times* states how a 13

year-old girl from Lohardaga, Jharkhand was forced to act as a surrogate mother and deliver six children by human traffickers<sup>6</sup>.

### **Trafficking in the name of orphanage**

The Godda district of Jharkhand witnessed trafficking of children in the name of orphanage in Kerala for better education. The children in such cases are being sent by creating fake documents in their name and their ultimate fate is uncertain. In a recent case, at least 120 children were trafficked to orphanages in Kerala. The children were among the 466 from West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand taken into protective custody by the Railway Protection Force in Palakkad, soon after they had got off trains *en route* to orphanages in Kozhikode and Malappuram. Many of them were found to be returning to the orphanages after the summer vacation, but others, including the 186 above, were new children being brought by agents with the promise of enrolling them at the Mohammed Abdurahiman Memorial Orphanage at Mukkom in Kozhikode and Anwarul Huda Orphanage at Vettathoor in Malappuram. In Godda district, from where 216 children went this year alone to Mukkom. From three children six years ago, there are now more than 300 between 4-15 years of age from Godda at the Mukkom orphanage. Following a directive by the Deputy Commissioner of police the Godda district administration has tracked down 171 of them<sup>7</sup>.

### **Carpet Industry**

A majority of the children working in the carpet sector, be it in Uttar Pradesh (UP) or in Jharkhand are migrant child labourers from Palamau and Garwa district in Jharkhand. These districts are the prime catchment area for child labourers, especially Garhwa. In any village in the district, there is hardly a home where child labour does not exist. Estimates are that there are 11,000 children in Garhwa alone, who are child labourers within the carpet industry (UNODC, 2013). Apart from these, trafficking for illegal adoption rackets and forced surrogacy have been reported recently<sup>8</sup>.

### **Initiatives taken by the State Government**

The Jharkhand government has, of late, taken a lot of initiatives but most of them remain on paper and are poorly implemented. Though the State Advisory Committee on trafficking was set up, the same has not been functioning. The Jharkhand State has formulated a state action plan to combat human trafficking but this has not been implemented so far. This section briefly touches upon some initiatives<sup>9</sup>.

### **Gumption on child protection systems**

Jharkhand has appointed Child Welfare Committees in all districts. Child protection officers and child protection units have also been created. Though the implementation of the ICPS has been slow since 2010 but in the last two years, the Government has fast tracked it. Training and sensitization of child protection mechanisms continues to be an area of concern. Child welfare committees were also seen to be working without basic infrastructure. There is a need for proper training of CWC members and also to ensure regular sittings of the CWCs.

It is important to discuss some initiatives in detail here. These initiatives mainly deal with prevention of trafficking and rehabilitation of survivors.

### **Inhumane torture: State Government extends support**

*Rosy (name changed), a resident of Sahibganj, Jharkhand was employed as a domestic maid in Delhi since four years from the day she was rescued in a joint intervention of Delhi police, Delhi Commission for Women and Shakti Vahini. At the time of rescue, the girl was found in a terrible condition with both her ears swollen, her body bearing deep gashes and several injuries and also a deeply injured scalp. According to the medical report, she was being physically abused by her owner causing multiple injuries by hitting her with sticks, brooms, knives and hot pans.*

*She had to undergo plastic surgery in the Safdar Jung hospital, Delhi. After all the legal procedure, she was restored to her family in Jharkhand. The Government of Jharkhand admitted the girl in a residential school-cum-rehabilitation facility in Khutti under a central government sponsored Mahila Samakhya Project with a motive to provide a better life to the child. In an interview, the girl also put forth her desire to return back to Delhi as a teacher to provide education to children. The case is now under trail in a Delhi court.*

### Initiatives by Jharkhand state to combat human trafficking

S. No	Initiative	Presence in number of District	Names of Districts (if not in all district)
1	Anti-Human Trafficking Units (Police)	Eight	Dumka, Khunti, Simdega, Gumla, West Singhbhum/ Chaibasa, Ranchi, Lohardaga, Palamu
2	Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)	All 24	-
3	District Child Protection Units (DCPU) under ICPS	All 24	-
4	Childline	Five	Ranchi, Chaibasa/ West Singhbhum, Dhanbad, Deogarh, Pakur
5	Jharkhand Mahila Samakhya Society	Eleven	Garhwa, Chatra, Giridih, Godda, Sahebganj, Pakur, Ranchi, Khunti, West Singhbhum, Saraikela Kharsawan, East Singhbhum
6	Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU)	All 24	-



7	Shelter Homes	Under ICPS- 10	Hazaribag, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Gumla, Simdega, Ranchi, Deogarh, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum, Dumka
		Specialized Adoption Agencies- 3	Bokaro, Ranchi Khunti
		Homes for children with Special Needs- Shelter Homes run by NGOs- 7	Bokaro, Dhanbad, Hazaribag (Govt.) Jamtara, Ramgarh, Chaibasa (NGOs) Jamshedpur, Hazaribag, Jamtara, Khunti, Simdega, Koderma, Palamu
		Swadhar Homes-1	Bokaro
8	<i>Mahila Thana</i> (All Women Police Station)	All 24	-

### 2017 report on child trafficking

Sr. no	Districts	MB	MG	RB	RG	No Evidence
1	Ranchi	06	01	01	00	05
2	Khunti	14	08	11	07	04
3	Gumla	07	34	02	21	18
4	Simdega	16	31	14	28	05
5	Lohardaga	01	00	01	00	00
6	East Singhbhum	09	07	01	23	14
7	West Singhbhum	02	27	02	00	04
8	Saraikela	01	00	01	02	00
9	Palamu	11	08	08	00	09
10	Garhwa	01	00	00	02	01
11	Hazaribagh	02	09	00	00	11
12	Ramgadh	03	01	03	00	01
13	Koderma	03	01	03	01	00
14	Giridih	01	02	00	01	02

15	Bokaro	07	10	06	08	03
16	Devgarh	03	01	02	01	01
17	Sahebganj	03	01	01	01	02
18	Pakud	02	00	00	00	02
19	Rail Dhanbad	03	03	03	01	02
20	Rail Jamshedpur	12	04	09	02	05
21	Total	107	148	09	96	91

MB- Missing Boys      MG- Missing Girls      RB- Recovered Boys  
RB- Recovered Girls

According to the table above, total of 255 minors were missing from Jharkhand. Among them 107 were boys and 148 were girls. In various police stations, FIRs have been filed regarding missing children. According to the survey, police have recovered 164 missing children and 91 children are still missing and no evidence has been found. Among them 39 are boys and 52 are girls. It has been assumed that maximum number of children had been a victims of human trafficking<sup>10</sup>.

## Conclusion

Given the magnitude of trafficking of mainly women and girls through placement agencies and also the freedom with which these agencies operate, there is an urgent need for the state of Jharkhand to pass a law to regulate these agencies. At present, they are taking full advantage of this legal lacunae. The Delhi Government passed an order on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 recognizing this urgency for the regulation of placement agencies in Delhi. It requires a domestic worker to be above the age of 18 years. All placement agencies are to register with the Labour Department under the Delhi Shops and Establishment Act, 1954 and then also apply for a license to run a placement agency. It also has provisions for opening bank accounts for domestic workers and giving them control of the accounts where their salaries will be deposited.

As there is lack of education, employment and a vulnerable population to trafficking, safe migration practices need to be stressed to prevent trafficking. Apart from a law for regulating placement agencies, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 needs to be implemented to protect workers from any exploitation from contractors and employers and ensure regular payment of at least minimum wages. Apart from this, migrating workers need to be made aware of their rights before migrating like the wages they should be demanding. They need to be provided with helpline contacts in case of any need. Police and helpline providers need to be circumspect at transit points like railway stations and bus stops, where traffickers lure potential victims.

Awareness campaigns can only put the spotlight on the negative effects of migration. The awareness campaigns should rather make the target population aware of the legal mechanisms in case they find themselves in trouble. They should be catered with helpline numbers. They and their families should be made aware of the need for maintaining contacts.

## References

1. *The Times of India*, “Delhi govt drags its feet on draft bill on placement agencies”, New Delhi, April 29, 2013.
2. <http://labour.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Divisions/childlabour/Census-2001%262011.pdf> Accessed on 11th February, 2015.
3. *Hindustan Times*, “Trafficked tribal girl found dead under mysterious circumstances”, New Delhi, July 10, 2013.
4. *Hindustan Times*, “Traffickers target Jharkhand school girls to sell them in Delhi”, Ranchi, August 28, 2014.
5. *Times of India*, “Jharkhand haats, melas hotbeds of traffickers”, Ranchi, July 21, 2014.
6. *Hindustan Times*, “Girls forced to conceive, deliver babies for sale”, Lohardaga, February 25, 2015.

7. Philip Shalu and Deepu Sebastian Edward, (2014, June 9), "Kerala to send children back, but in Jharkhand, fee options", *Indian Express*, Thiruvanthapuram/ Godda. Retrieved from <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/kerala-to-send-children-back-but-in-jharkhand-few-options/> on 23rd March, 2015.
8. *Hindustan Times*, "Girls forced to conceive, deliver babies for sale", Lohardaga, February 25, 2015.
9. Dr. Dinesh Laroia and Sh.Vinod Kumar Tikoo, "*Report on visit to Gumla and Ranchi, Jharkhand*", National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, New Delhi, 2012.
10. Prabhat Khabar, "*No evidence found for 91 missing minors, among which 39 where boys and 52 where girls*", Ranchi, May 10, 2018.

## **WATER PROJECTS IN CHENNAI – A STUDY OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE DRAVIDIAN POLITICAL PARTIES**

**Archana Soman**

Assistant Professor

Department of History and TTM, Ethiraj College for Women, Chennai

### ***Abstract***

*Water management is a concept that is gaining global attention in recent times. With Chennai city suffering from a multitude of water related problems including shortage and contamination of this resource, this article attempts to shed light on the three major water projects that were augmented by the Government of Tamil Nadu, when the two Dravidian political parties, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) were in power. Accordingly, the History of the Veeranam scheme, the Krishna Water scheme and the New Veeranam scheme and their impact have been discussed.*

**Keywords:** *Water Management, Water Shortage, Water Projects, Chennai City, Veeranam Scheme, Krishna Water Scheme, New Veeranam Scheme.*

Water Management is a concept that existed in India since time immemorial. There is plenty of evidence of lakes and tanks in Tamil Nadu that still stands as a testimony to the practice of water harnessing for irrigation. Most of the old temple tanks fed by harvested rain water or tapped underground springs have helped in recharging the drinking water wells. The *Eris* (lakes or tanks) have traditionally play an important role in water management and flood management in the region<sup>1</sup>.

Chennai city, formerly known as Madras was a fishing village during the period of the arrival of the English East India Company. It was between 1639 and the middle of the nineteenth century that the region grew rapidly in population and thus was transformed into the capital city and a popular commercial centre of the British. Since time immemorial, the people of Madras relied on wells, ponds and tanks for water and this was carried in pots or raised by *picotahs*. The system, however, was modified as people started transporting water through bamboo stalks that served as canals and in due course, became the precursor to pipes.

Water scarcity in Madras became acute due to repeated failure of the monsoons, which resulted in drying up of the natural resources and forced people to look for substitutes. The scarcity of the resource was felt by the British, right from their arrival in the region. Thus, having realised the importance of water storage and supply, they introduced schemes including Captain Baker's 'Seven Wells Government Water Works in 1772<sup>2</sup>. While the Municipal water supply to the city (housed at Kilpauk) first decided to draw water from river Kortalar and its tributaries in 1866<sup>3</sup>, the Cholavaram and Red Hills tanks were put to use for storage and supply. The need for a systematic approach in water supply and in ensuring distribution of clean water resulted in the introduction of schemes like James Fraser's 'Regulated Supply' of 1872<sup>4</sup> and J.W. Madeley's 'Treated Water Supply' system of 1914<sup>5</sup>.

Despite taking several measures, the increase in population necessitated further improvement of water supply to the city, thus leading to the launch of the Poondi reservoir scheme in 1944<sup>6</sup>, and as a result of which the Poondi reservoir came into prominence in the post Independence history of water supply management in Chennai. The Congress ministry that was in power from 1947 – 1967 had faced the initial struggles of extending the water supply in the city<sup>7</sup>.

In spite of facing the initial handicaps of finance, this phase witnessed a large scale extension of supply to the newly added

areas, including the provision of a separate Trunk Main for south Madras, construction of the second underground conduit from the Red Hills to Kilpauk, and redesigning the city distribution system, in order to reach out to the tail ends of the city, and to ensure equitable supply to all<sup>8</sup>.

While the Corporation of Madras had achieved considerably in addressing the water shortage of the city, the Madras Metropolitan Development Plan, in 1966 had advised certain long term measures to bridge the supply gap of another 135 mgd<sup>9</sup>, like the augmentation of water from the river Kaveri<sup>10</sup>. This scheme was, however, implemented during the rule of the Dravidian political parties.

### **Major water projects for Chennai city**

Madras State had witnessed the growth of two Dravidian political parties, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) that rose to power since 1967. Ever since, they had carried forward and executed the schemes of the Congress Government, thus resorting to tap water from far away sources. The most prominent among the schemes that were introduced by the Dravidian political parties are discussed below.

### **Veeranam scheme**

The absence of perennial and potable resources, coupled with the failure of the monsoon in Chennai city had forced the DMK Government to augment Kaveri water from Veeranam tank for supply to Madras city. This project was inaugurated on 30-10-1967 by Sri. C.N. Annadurai, the Chief Minister of Madras State<sup>11</sup> and was executed by the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Sewerage Board (TWAD)<sup>12</sup> and the Public Works Department (PWD)<sup>13</sup>.

In the Order No. Ms. 2488, Public (TWAD), dated 26-11-1968, the Government had sanctioned Rs. 21.30 crores towards investigation and installation of the project. Tenders for a water treatment plant, pumping plant, manufacture and laying of conveying main, and supply of steel and valves were received from 11-09-1969 to 10-01-1970<sup>14</sup>, and a Special Investigation Division was also set up on 20-01-1970<sup>15</sup>. Lands were thereafter acquired in Chingleput district and special staff were recruited for laying pipelines for the Veeranam scheme<sup>16</sup>.

Despite the contract for the establishment of a 40 mgd treatment plant at Vadakuthu being awarded for a sum of Rs. 52,71,000 to Thiruvallur Asia Engineering Co., the scheme was revised and re-launched in the year 1970, after Sri. M. Karunanidhi became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu<sup>17</sup>. As per the revision, the route for the Veeranam scheme was changed, in order to save a distance of 20 km from the source and also to save the time required for the completion of the project.

Since pipes of the required size were not manufactured in India, the Government had entered into a contract with the Australian based Rocla Ltd., for a quotation amounting to Rs. 1 crore less than the estimates of the Indian Hume Pipe Company. The scheme involved a foreign exchange component of Rs. 1.58 crore,<sup>18</sup> and in that connection, the Department of Finance was requested to release Rs. 1.6 crore even before the exact amount of the tender was received. Out of a sum of Rs. 6.2 crores allotted towards the scheme for the year 1970-1971, the expenditure on procurement of pipes alone amounted to Rs. 4 crores<sup>19</sup>.

As per the plans of the scheme, raw water was to be pumped from the lake to the treatment plant near Vadakuthu, which was at a distance of 21.56 km, from where the clear water was to be pumped to the Southern Head Works in Chennai city, covering a distance of 201 km. As on 12-10-1971, work was completed only in 8 out of the 23 channels proposed for the Veeranam tank.



Therefore, the project was further revised for a cost of Rs. 27.80 crores, as against the original sanction of Rs. 21.30 crores, with a foreign exchange component of Rs. 436 lakhs, while the actual expenditure for the year 1972-1973 was Rs. 2.59 crores<sup>20</sup>.

The Government's sanction for Veeranam project for the year 1973-1974 was Rs. 400 lakhs, against the requested sanction of Rs. 900 lakhs, and the estimate for further revision in the scheme was Rs. 30 crores, while the actual expenditure for the year was Rs. 509.73 lakhs<sup>21</sup>. Owing to the surplus availability of water in the Veeranam tank, the TWAD Board had planned to lay another pipeline to draw an additional quantity of 40 mgd of water to Madras city. During the discussion of the Annual Plan for the year 1974-1975, the TWAD Board had requested the pending sanction of Rs. 100 lakhs, while the actual expenditure for the year was Rs. 521.850 lakhs<sup>22</sup>.

The reasons for shortfall were attributed to the delay in release of foreign exchange and in procurement of pipes and materials. It was identified in the Audit report that there were a lot of misclassifications in the accounts of the Veeranam project, submitted by the TWAD Board, since it was booked along with the reports of the Ground Water Division of the Public Works Department (PWD). The issue was, however, clarified by Sri. A S. Thirunavukarasan, Deputy Chief Engineer of the Ground Water Division, PWD, who stated that against the total expenditure of Rs. 145.88 lakhs, only a sum of Rs. 3.96 lakhs was the expenditure of the Ground Water Division, while the remaining sum was related to the Veeranam project<sup>23</sup>.

The greatest drawback of the scheme was that, the work on manufacturing and laying of pre-stressed concrete pipes from Veeranam tank to Madras city was awarded in November 1970 to M/s. Sathyanarayana Bros. (P) Ltd. at a contract value of Rs. 16.56 crore. It was, in fact, the largest contract awarded till then in the post Independence period. As per the terms of the contract,

the Government had paid 75 percent value of the equipments that were brought to the site by the contractor against the CITI Bank guarantee. However, an outstanding amount of Rs. 2,22,33,805 had to be recovered by the TWAD Board from the contractors. Therefore, a case was filed against the contractors and the CITI Bank in the High Court of Madras in C.S. No. 176 of 1978, and this was pronounced dismissed by the Judge<sup>24</sup> and the scheme was abruptly dropped thereafter, allegedly due to the leaks developed in the pipes.

During Mrs. Indira Gandhi's tenure as the Prime Minister of India, the Sarkaria Commission was appointed to investigate the allegations of Mr. M.G. Ramachandran, who had stated that regular norms were not followed while accepting the tender of M/s. Sathyanarayana Bros.,<sup>25</sup> to which Mr. K.R. Purushotham, Managing Director of Sathyanarayana Bros. justified that the partially laid pipes were strictly tested at their factory to withstand pressure, and that, checking of the pipeline leaks could be done only on completion of the project. After a prolonged investigation, the Sarkaria Commission's report and the report of the Technical Committee of the Government of Tamil Nadu pointed out that the project could not be brought to a successful conclusion<sup>26</sup>. The concrete pipes that were laid can be seen even today alongside the road between Vadalur and Chennai<sup>27</sup>. Thus, with the official dropping of the scheme, the next focus of the Government of Tamil Nadu was to bring Krishna river water from the neighbouring State of Andhra Pradesh.

### **Krishna water scheme**

Madras city had experienced several droughts, among which, the drought of 1975 was very severe to the extent that the city had to maintain the entire summer season with a mere daily supply of 90 mld<sup>28</sup> extracted from the ground. However, the reduction in the ground water table had forced the Government of Tamil Nadu to import water from the river Krishna, which is

the second largest river in peninsular India. Although conveyance from a far away source was very expensive, the Government was left with no other choice.

The annual flow of the river Krishna was assessed at 2060 TMC, and the feasibility of transporting its water to Madras city was considered even as early as in the 1940s. It was in April 1962, that the Gulhati Commission, after its inspection, had organised a joint meeting for the representatives from Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, and came up with the proposal to spare 15 TMC of water to Madras city, at a rate of 5 TMC each, by the three riparian States<sup>29</sup>. However, due to the difference in views, the Government of India had constituted the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal in 1973, and thus passed orders for the sharing of water to Tamil Nadu.

An agreement was therefore reached between the four States in April 1976. Preliminary project reports were prepared by the Government of Tamil Nadu, following which, an agreement was made by the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal on 28-10-1977, and thus allowing Tamil Nadu to draw 15 TMC of water from Srisailem reservoir to the Pennar, and thence from Pennar to Poondi<sup>30</sup>. The Andhra Pradesh State was instructed to provide the necessary storage and the Government of Tamil Nadu under the AIADMK regime had to bear the expenses for water conveyance, maintenance and operational services. It was also instructed that the channel should not be used for irrigation purposes, and a Liaison Committee was formed to study the feasibility of the scheme, to prepare schedules for the work and to monitor its progress<sup>31</sup>.

Of the 15 TMC of water promised for Chennai city, 12 TMC was fixed to be the supply in a year in two spells, while the remaining 3 TMC was considered as let off against loss in evaporation during transmission. Water had to pass through the Kandaluru reservoir, the 'Zero Point' near Uthukottai, which was the entry point into Tamil Nadu and then into the Poondi reservoir for supply to Chennai city. A canal was therefore constructed

between Kandaleru and Poondi reservoirs. After years of work, the Kandaleru – Poondi canal was launched by Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India in 1983<sup>32</sup>. Thus, on 18-04-1983, the Government of Tamil Nadu had formally entered into an agreement with the Andhra Pradesh Government<sup>33</sup> and had sanctioned Rs. 30.15 crores towards the first spell of the scheme, and the money was handed over to Smt. Indira Gandhi by Sri. M.G. Ramachandran, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, in the presence of Sri. N.T. Rama Rao, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, and thereafter, the project components in Andhra Pradesh came to be called the ‘Telugu Ganga Project’<sup>34</sup>.

A sum of Rs. 167.53 lakhs was sanctioned for the project in the Seventh Five Year Plan for the works to be done between 1989 – 1990, following which, assistance was sought from the World Bank. Although the agreement for a supply of 400 mld was signed on 27-01-1995 by Dr. J. Jayalalithaa and Sri. N.T. Rama Rao, the corresponding Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, the actual receipt of water to Chennai city was realised only in 1996. Since then, Tamil Nadu had received only a quantity of less than 2.812 TMC till the year 2000, as against the promised quantity of 12 TMC. Between the years 2000 – 2010, the maximum quantity supplied was 7.016 TMC during the year 2009 – 2010, while the highest quantity of supply ever recorded was 8.056 TMC in the year 2011 – 2012, and the supply was totally nil during the year 2015 – 2016<sup>35</sup>. This, in spite of having paid a total sum of Rs. 712 crores, and as of 2017, the scheme has been far from satisfactory as it seldom catered to the demands of the city. The assured quantity of water could never be realised due to illegal tapping of water for irrigation along the Kandaleru – Poondi canal region, and the Krishna Water Tribunal also failed to address the issue.

In the mean time, an important feat was achieved in 1978 with the passing of the Madras Water Supply and Sewerage Act, according to which the Madras Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (MMWSSB) was established in 1978, exclusively

to attend to the growing water needs of Madras city, and to plan for the development of water supply and sewerage services in the Metropolitan area<sup>36</sup>. The Board had introduced the system of organised supply through its Zonal Distribution Network, with 15 zones having its own mains. The Kilpauk pumping station has a treatment capacity of 270 mld from where treated water is distributed to different parts of the city. Chembarambakkam lake was also put into use for the city in the year 2000 and the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) improvised the supply through the installation of two desalination plants of 100 mld capacity at Minjur and in Nemmeli<sup>37</sup>.

### **New Veeranam scheme**

In the year 1993, the Government of Tamil Nadu under the AIADMK regime had decided to revive the Veeranam scheme and therefore, with the administrative approval accorded by G.O. Ms. No. 197, Municipal Administration and Water Supply, dated 11-08-1993, the Veeranam scheme II was launched with the aim of drawing 192 mld of raw water from the Veeranam tank in south Arcot district, which had to be transmitted through a steel transmission main after treatment.

With an outlay of 4.04 crores towards installation and an annual maintenance cost of Rs. 9.30 crores, assistance was sought from the World Bank, which studied the feasibility and sanctioned of Rs. 1638 crores<sup>38</sup>. The PWD was given the responsibility of improving the Veeranam tank, while the work of transmission, with pumping and treatment activities was to be taken care by the TWAD Board, and the MMWSSB was allotted the duty of distribution after the treatment work.

The work related to the design and engineering of transmission main, treatment plant and pumping station was awarded by the TWAD Board to M/s. Shah Technical Consultants at Mumbai, in association with the UK based M/s. ACER

Consultants at a cost of Rs. 1,67,88,921, and the World Bank team had visited Madras from 11<sup>th</sup> July to 13<sup>th</sup> July, 1995 to review the status of the work, following which, they sanctioned the loan from 18-02-1996. The World Bank had suggested certain improvements to be made to the project, including measures like conservation programme through detection of leaks, repair and replacement, and introduction of meter system in the domestic supply<sup>39</sup>. In the mean time, the DMK Party won the polls of May 1996, following which, the consultants had requested for extension of time for the preparation of final design and for the evaluation of bids and drawings. Thus, the TWAD Board, with the permission of the World Bank had terminated the transmission compound of the project on 28-08-1996<sup>40</sup>, and through the orders obtained from the Government on 25-10-1996, they had settled the claims of the consultants for work done until then. Thereafter, the World Bank had also refused the sanction of funds for this project.

The year 2001 had witnessed the re-emergence of AIADMK Party to power in Tamil Nadu and the Veeranam project was revised and re-named as the 'New Veeranam Project' by Dr. J. Jayalalithaa, who was the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Speedy execution of the project was aimed thereafter, and the work of increasing the capacity of Veeranam tank, installation of treatment plant at Vadakuthu near Neyveli, establishment of pressure tanks, laying of underground and elevated steel pipes and other infrastructural work was completed between February 2003 and October 2004<sup>41</sup>. However, when the work was completed, there was a severe drought that had completely dried up Veeranam tank, thus failing to supply water to Chennai city.

In order to find alternate means, the CMWSSB was entrusted the work of digging 45 deep bore wells near Neyveli and to pump 2 mld of water from each of them through steel pipes to Chennai city. Thus, bore wells of 250 m depth were dug and 75 mld of water drawn using 85 bhp (break horsepower) pumps and later supplied to Chennai city<sup>42</sup>. The supply had gradually increased to 90 mld,

and from 13-10-2004 onwards, Veeranam lake had commenced a supply of 180 mld to the Porur Distribution Station<sup>43</sup>. This supply from Veeranam dwindled only whenever the lake went dry, and in such times, the bore wells in Neyveli have acted as substitutes, predominantly in the years 2012 and 2013. Two new sources from Paravanar and the mines of Neyveli Lignite Corporation were added to the Veeranam project in 2013 to ensure a continuous supply<sup>44</sup>.

On evaluating the New Veeranam scheme, one could understand that there were very little complaints, such as the leakage in the pipeline and this was also immediately addressed and rectified by the CMWSSB in April 2016. The notable feature of the scheme was that it was realised in a matter of three years due to the hard work and dedicated service of the staff, who were engaged in the execution of the project<sup>45</sup>. The scheme had proved the efficiency of the Tamil Nadu Government under the AIADMK party that was successful in carrying out the biggest dream project of Chennai city.

Apart from having launched the three major projects of Veeranam I, Krishna Water project and the New Veeranam scheme, the Government of Tamil Nadu has never ceased in exploring new sources of water supply to Chennai city. As a result, efforts were made to tap water through the two desalination plants that contributes 16% of water supply to the city, besides tapping underground water from Panjetty and Tamaraipakkam, and making it mandatory to harvest rain water in the city<sup>46</sup>. The popular 'Ammu Drinking Water' scheme that provided pure mineral water at a subsidised rate of Rs. 10 per litre of bottle was launched by Dr. J. Jayalithaa in 2013<sup>47</sup> and since 2015, extended the services of providing 20 litre cans of free drinking water on a smart card system through the outlets meant for it<sup>48</sup>. Quarries in Sikkarayapuram were brought into use and recycling of sewage for reuse has also been implemented, along with the commissioning of a third desalination plant and putting minor lakes into use. In

the drought year of 2019, the city also witnessed the transportation of water through trains from Jolarpet<sup>49</sup>.

Thus, the commissioning and realising of various long term measures in water supply, with heavy investments were witnessed during the period of the Dravidian political parties in power. Of them, the ongoing schemes of Krishna water and New Veeranam have satisfied the city's supply to a limited extent. Therefore, the important factors for effective water management in Chennai include proper planning, coupled with a participatory approach, raising awareness among people on the need for conservation of water, apart from strict enforcement of laws by the Government.

## References

1. *Yojana*, Vol. 60, July 2016, p.39.
2. Krishnaswami, V.D., *The problem of water in Madras, the Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1939, p.284.
3. Rao Sahib C.S. Srinivasachari, *History of the City of Madras, written for the Tercentenary Celebration Committee*, P. Varadachari and Co., Madras, 1939 p. 297.
4. Muthiah, S., *Madras Rediscovered – A Historical guide to looking around, supplemented with tales of 'Once upon a city'*, East West Books India Ltd., Madras, 1981, pp. 295-296.
5. G.O. No. 15 M, Local and Municipal Department, 03-01-1908, pp. 6-9.
6. G.O. Ms. No. 1422, Public Works Department (Confdl.) 12-07-1940, p.19. ; G.O. Ms. No. 131, Education and Public Health, 16-01-1948, p.63.
7. *Kurukshetra*, Vol. 58, No. 7, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, May 2010, p.7.
8. G.O. Ms. No. 2030, Health, 25-06-1952, p.10.
9. mgd – million gallons a day.
10. *Madras Metropolitan Development Plan*, Government of



- Madras, 1967, pp. 17-21.
11. G.O. Ms. No. 2204, Public Works Department, 23-10-1967, pp. 13-15.
  12. G.O. Ms. No. 535, Public Works Department, 27-03-1973, p.17.
  13. *Tamil Arasu*, Vol. I, No. 9, Government of Tamil Nadu, 05-11-1970, p.12.
  14. G.O. Ms. No. 366, Public (TWAD), 24-02-1970, p.1.
  15. G.O. Ms. No. 2143, Public (TWAD), 19-09-1970, p.1. ; G.O. Ms. No. 107, Public (TWAD), 20-01-1970, p.9.
  16. G.O. Ms. No. 1022, Public Works Department, 29-04-1971, p.13.
  17. G.O. Ms. No. 242, Public Works Department, 17-02-1975, p.1.
  18. G.O. Ms. No. 234, Municipal Administration and Water Supply, 09-03-1990, pp.41-43.
  19. G.O. Ms. No. 2168, Public (TWAD), 22-09-1970, p.49.
  20. *Tamil Nadu State Administration Report*, 1972 – 1973, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1975, p.440.
  21. *Tamil Nadu State Administration Report*, 1973 – 1974, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1976, p. 345.
  22. *Tamil Nadu State Administration Report*, 1974 – 1975, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, pp. 377.
  23. G.O. Ms. No. 676, Public Works Department, 08-05-1975, pp.35-47.
  24. G.O. Ms. No. 234, *op.cit.*, pp. 35-39.
  25. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 10-06-2001, p.4.
  26. *Ibid.*,
  27. *Frontline*, 21-05-2004, p.98.
  28. mld – million litres a day.
  29. G.O. Ms. No. 1027, Vol. II, Public Works Department, 23-08-1978, p. 528.
  30. *Historical development and achievement of Krishna Water Supply project works*, Water Resources Organisation, PWD, Chennai region, Government of Tamil Nadu, March 2002, p.26.

31. G.O. Ms. No. 1482, Public Works Department, 17-11-1978, p.37.
32. Padma, P.Y., *Poondi Reservoir – A Study*, Unpublished M.Phil. Dissertation, University of Madras, Chennai, August 2010.
33. G.O. Ms. No. 283, Municipal Administration and Water Supply, 04-03-1986, p.25.
34. *Historical development and achievement of Krishna Water Supply project works*, op.cit., p.28.
35. *Ibid.*,
36. *Madras Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board – Administration Report, 1990 – 1991*, Personal and Administration Department, Chintadripwt, Madras, p.6.
37. *A Handbook of Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board*, Chennai, p. 58.
38. G.O. Ms. No. 94, Municipal Administration and Water Supply, 03-04-1996, p. 749.
39. *Ibid.*,
40. G.O. Ms. No. 143, Municipal Administration and Water Supply, 30-05-1997, pp. 1-5, 119-123.
41. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 15-12-2004.
42. *Ibid.*,
43. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 23-11-2004.
44. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 17-08-2013.
45. Interview with N.N. Vijayarajan, Executive Engineer, Regional Office – I, Chennai region, CMWSSB, Chennai, 19-05-2017.
46. *The Hindu*, Down Town, Chennai, 21-04-2017, p.3.
47. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 22-06-2013, p.6.
48. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 18-06-2016, p.2.
49. *The Hindu*, Chennai, 26-12-2019.

## INCULTURATION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH – AT THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MADRAS – MYLAPORE

**Cinthia Jude**

Assistant Professor

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

### ***Abstract***

*India is a country, rich in heritage which had been hospitable to people of different religions and communities resulting in a plethora of customs and traditions. Though India has been several times mentioned as a developing country, it had been a host, to a mixture of events and incidents. India had been declared a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic after its independence in 1947. Indian portrays a diverse culture involving great places and great people. India is primarily a Hindu nation, but with the advent of the Turks, Mughals, and the Europeans from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries, Islam and Christianity spread and strongly settled in the Indian soil. This paper is on the Inculturation of the Catholic Church at the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore and it tries to focus on how the Church imbibes the Indian traditional and cultural practices in the conduct of the church traditions. First, the meaning and the working of the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore has been explained followed by the significance of Christianity in Madras, Santhome and Mylapore, after which the Indian traditions that have been adapted at the Churches have been discussed. This research article focuses on the Inculturation of Catholic Churches under the administrative set up of the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore, which is the governing body of the Churches in the area.*

**Keywords:** Archdiocese, Inculturation, Catholic, Christian, Church, Indianisation, Tradition, Culture.

## **Introduction**

India is a country, rich in heritage which had been hospitable to people of different religions and communities resulting in a plethora of customs and traditions. Though India has been several times mentioned as a developing country, it had been a host, to a mixture of events and incidents. India had been declared a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic after its independence in 1947. Earlier to it or later than that, India had never given up its traditions and culture. India's history has been a combination of progress in a systematic process<sup>1</sup>. Indian portrays a diverse culture involving great places and great people. India is primarily a Hindu nation, but with the advent of the Turks, Mughals, and the Europeans from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries, Islam and Christianity spread and settled in the Indian soil. As the title of this paper is connected to the Catholic church in Madras, it becomes inevitable to speak of Christianity to have a better understanding of the subject at hand.

Christianity in India is where Christian spirituality became indispensable for life and growth of the Christians in India<sup>2</sup>. This paper is on the inculturation of the Catholic church at the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore and it tries to focus on how the church imbibes Indian traditional and cultural practices in the conduct of church traditions.

## **Madras and Christianity**

Madras has been accepted as the first city of south India and capital of Tamil Nadu. It has been acclaimed to be the historical land of ancient culture. The places surrounding Fort St. George were called as Madras, the north of Madras was called Black Town. Towards the south of Madras were located the two small towns of Santhome and Mylapore. Madras was basically a trading settlement that transformed to be the chief port of India by the end of the seventeenth century<sup>3</sup>. Christianity had already taken deep roots in Madras. Of the three traditions, that justify

that Christianity was brought to India by St. Thomas, the Malabar, Hindu and the Mylapore tradition, the Mylapore tradition is proved by the fact that Mylapore had been in connection with St Thomas. Mylapore was also called Mahluph. Mar Solomon, a historian says that Mylapore had been referred to as Mahluph and has been pointed out as the resting place of St Thomas<sup>4</sup>. Thus, the Mylapore tradition points out the St. Thomas' lineage with Mylapore. This is a major source of history for the Mylapore tradition as dealt by Mar Solomon and clarifying the relationship of St. Thomas and Christianity.

The history of the Catholic religion and the churches also reflected the growth and development of the city of Madras. The historical and cultural importance of the neighbourhood of Madras had been a continuous one. When Francis Day, the British agent acquired the strip of land where Fort St. George is located at present, there were many Catholics and churches in the neighbouring Portuguese settlement of Santhome<sup>5</sup>. The residents were Catholics and were of Portuguese origin.

### **Santhome**

An Italian precious stones merchant who visited India for trade in the sixteenth century wrote that San Thomé was a fair city and he described Mylapore as being an Indian city surrounded by its own mud wall. Mylapore has been called the Black Town of San Thomé. In later days, the two towns were merged<sup>6</sup>. When the Portuguese reached south India in 1522, they built a seaport and named it São Tomé, after St. Thomas, the Apostle. The area then passed into the hands of the Dutch, who settled at Pulicat, towards the north of the city in the year 1612. Both the Europeans strived to increase their colonial inhabitation and they grew tremendously in population reaching over 10,000 persons in the initial years. The Portuguese and the Dutch also occupied places in Santhome and Mylapore. Whereas, when the British came, they remained noticeably outnumbered by the local Indian population<sup>7</sup>. Thus, Santhome and Mylapore are inter – connected and linked with each other.

## **Archdiocese of Madras - Mylapore**

The Archdiocese is the administrative body that manages all the Catholic churches in Madras – Mylapore, which is within Chennai excluding Chengalpet. The office of the Archdiocese is located at Santhome<sup>8</sup>. Santhome and Mylapore in Madras had been very receptive to the growth of Catholicism. The Catholic church in India especially Tamil Nadu, had been under the worldwide Roman Catholic Church shepherded by the Pope and the Curia (Spiritual Office) in Rome<sup>9</sup>.

A Diocese is a group of churches that are administered under a spiritual and pastoral organizational structure. Archdiocese demarcates the territorial jurisdiction of the churches that form the Diocese. The functions of the member of the churches are managed by the Archdiocese. In order to systematize the working, Statutes (rules), have been framed by the Archdiocese. The genesis and transformation of the Archdiocese of Madras- Mylapore is quite an interesting one, the crux of which has been presented to enable a better understanding of the role of the Archdiocese in promoting Christianity and the inculturation of the Catholic Christian religion.

The Santhome cathedral ever since its inception had been the pivot of the Archdiocese of Madras Mylapore and it has been one of the oldest churches in Chennai. The Old Diocese of Mylapore was established on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1606 by the Portuguese priests of Santhomé. It had a humble beginning and co-ordinated activities of the various churches within its jurisdiction. It grew to become the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Madras in 1886. After which, it was altered to become the new Archdiocese of Madras and Mylapore in 1928. After independence, it came to be called the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore in 1952, which included Chengelpet. Then the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore was bifurcated excluding Chengelpet in 2002<sup>10</sup>. The contributions of the Archdiocese of Madras - Mylapore in the fields of education, health, social, and legal aspects had been tremendous.

The basic responsibility of the Archdiocese is to ensure the peaceful co-existence of the Catholic Christian people in India. In response to the saying that goes 'be a Roman when in Rome', the Pope in the II Vatican Council had decided and declared to all the churches across the globe to incorporate inculturation. The II Vatican Council was an Ecumenical Council held at Vatican City from October 11, 1962, until December 8, 1965 by Pope John XXIII. Inculturation is one of the most significant theological concepts of the Roman Catholic Church initiated at the II Vatican Council<sup>11</sup>. The Archdiocese has imbibed this concept of inculturation and has Indianised several practices at the church to blend with Indian culture. The Archdioceses all over the country permits and advocates inculturation. The Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore also adopted and administered several traditional Indian practices in its religious activities and deliberations.

### **Inculturation of the Catholic Church**

The Inculturation of the Catholic church under the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore has adapted certain cultural aspects of the country to bring about oneness in the tradition of the country despite religious differences. The Archdiocese of Madras - Mylapore has been a pioneer organization, which has been designated with the responsibility of guiding the Catholic Christians within the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese in the path of faith. The Canon Law has been adapted as the Constitution of the Catholic church, and followed by the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore. The Statutes of the Archdiocese of Madras - Mylapore serve as guidelines for efficient administration of the Archdiocese. It has a preamble which enables the codification of traditions, customs and practices of the churches of Madras – Mylapore<sup>12</sup>. Inculturation has resulted in the extensive growth of the Catholic population making the statistics go high in numbers under the Diocese in different capacities. These special features had created a great impact of the Catholic church in south India, especially Tamil Nadu, leading to a massive increase in the number of followers since 1606 till 2002.

## **Steps to promote inculturation at the Archdiocese of Madras - Mylapore**

The Archdiocese administers through the Pastoral Center, several Councils, associations and movements. This has enabled a closer relationship with the common people. The Holy See (Pope's Office) has authorised the Archdiocese to localize the ceremonies and the rituals in order to enhance the participation of the laity (common man / spiritual members of the Church)<sup>13</sup>. The various Indian traditional practices followed in the churches within the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese has been listed below.

The *Poorana Kumbha Aarathi* is an Indian tradition of honouring and welcoming a guest or an important person. The *Kumbha* was usually a metal pot with a mouth, suitable enough to hold a coconut. According to Hindu religion, it is a symbol of profusion and a "source of life". At times, the pot was also filled with water and topped with a diadem of mango leaves around its neck<sup>14</sup>. This ritual was incorporated in the Catholic church to welcome the chief celebrant or a special invitee to a special and solemn feast mass during festivities. This *Poorana Kumbha Aarathi* was administered by a girl or a woman, who waved the metal pot in circular motions in a clockwise direction. After the completion of a circle, the person who is performing the *aarti* also waves it in the anti - clock wise direction. The phenomenon behind the rotation of the *aarti* represents the daily routine revolving God. This was done to honour the guest and also to reflect the tradition and culture of India.

The *Deepa*, (light), *Thooba* (frankincense) and the *Pushpa* (flowers) *Aarathi* were performed during the elevation, that is during the main segment of the Eucharistic celebration, the mass. Three girls or women are involved in this *aarathi*. While this *aarathi* is performed, the choir sings accordingly to ignite spirituality. This *Tri aarathi* is not a regular feature of everyday mass. This is usually performed only during special occasions.



The *Kuthuvillaku* is a traditional brass or silver lamp with five or seven pointers with designs based on the size and height. The lighting of the *kuthuvilakku* serves as a symbol of igniting light and removing darkness<sup>15</sup>. It had been an age old traditional Hindu custom followed in the Indian sub – continent, which has been aptly adopted by the Indian Catholic church and the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore, in accordance to incorporate the concept of localization of religion. The *kuthuvillaku* was lit during times of festivities and during the celebration of the sacrament of matrimony that is the wedding mass. During the wedding mass the couple were asked to light the *kuthuvilakku* as a symbolic representation of the beginning a new life. Apart for this, the *kuthuvillakku* is lit at the beginning of a significant celebration, a convention, conference or any auspicious beginning of an event at the church. This tradition has become an inevitable event these days.

### **Celebration of Indian festivals**

The Catholic church celebrates a majority of the Indian festivals in the church premises. The Archdiocese of Madras Mylapore also motivates the members of the church and the Parish priests to involve themselves in celebrating Indian festivities with a Catholic Christian perspective. During the season of *Pongal* or *Makara Sankarathi*, which is celebrated as the harvest festival throughout the country. This is celebrated in the churches under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore with pomp and show. On the day of *Pongal*, *kolam* competitions are organised among the members of the church. The entire church is decorated with mango leaves, coconut leaves and sugar cane. All members of the church are informed earlier to come dressed to church on the *Pongal* day in *Pattu sarees*, *pattu pavaadai*, *dhothi* and shirt. The details of the *Pongal* celebrations are given along with the Christmas and New Year programme schedule and are circulated among the members of the church in the first week of December itself. A warm welcome with flowers, *kulkand* and sandal paste at the entrance of the church is arranged. After the

holy mass is celebrated, *Pongal* is cooked in the premises of the church with the offerings of rice, lentils and jaggery received as offerings at the mass. The sugarcane offered during the mass was distributed to the members of the church. Folk dances, traditional games such as *Uri Aditthal* are conducted during the *Pongal* celebration. It usually begins at 5:30 in the morning and goes on until 9 am<sup>16</sup>.

*Diwali* is celebrated as the festival of light in the entire Indian sub – continent. The churches in the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore celebrate *Diwali* by lighting lamps and bursting crackers. Though not much noise is made, the festival of lights transforms the church in to a place, where light is ignited and evil is warded off. *Ayudha pooja* and *Saraswathi Pooja* are also Indian festivities where people thank the Goddesses for the weapons / vehicles and books, which are decorated and arranged during *pooja*. To blend in with this festivity, the members of the church are asked to bring their vehicles and children to bring their books to church where special blessing and prayers are conducted for safety and wellbeing<sup>17</sup>. The rich customs and the age-old traditions of Indian society that are followed as part of church ceremonies have been permitted by the Holy See in order to quench the traditional thirst of the people and to enable inculturation.

### **Indiscriminative services**

The various social activities that are practiced by the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore through the various churches under its jurisdiction has enabled it to be popular among all people, indiscriminative of caste, religion, creed, or gender. The commendable service to the society through its health care facilities has kept the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore on par with others. The spiritual activities and social activities of the members of the church are carefully managed through hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, educational institutions and other organisations under the patronage of the Archdiocese. While these organisations and institutions provide different kinds of service to the society, they do not discriminate anybody on any grounds.

Nobody is denied services at any of these institutions because they are not Christians. The members of the church are thus fulfilling the mission of Jesus Christ and the mission of the Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore.

## Conclusion

The Archdiocese of Madras - Mylapore is doing its best in imbibing Indian culture and executing inculturation to the maximum level in all the churches under its jurisdiction. It should be clearly understood that without the concept of culture and the resultant relative freedom, the society will not survive. Culture is important in the society and its future. Hence, it remains the responsibility of each individual to preserve culture as well as to continue to involve in its creation. It should be understood that the vital variances that distinguish one human from the other are not biological, but cultural. The Catholic church wants its members to live in peace and harmony and by imbibing the culture of the locals is the best way to cope up with the transforming world. In India, there are different religions, multiple languages, a rainbow of complexions, yet united in culture and heritage. The ancient and popular traditions may be considered as the guideposts directing Indians through each of their subconscious thoughts and minds. The inculturation of the Catholic churches has enabled the members of the church to appreciate and follow the cultural and traditional practices of India.

## References

1. Robert Wuthnow, (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion: 2-Volume set*, Routledge, London, 1998, p. 148.
2. Joe Mannath (Ed), *Christianity – General Introduction and History*, Chennai, 2004, p. 78.
3. Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras, 1640 – 1800 , Volume I , Traced from the East India Company's Records Preserved at the Fort St. George and the Indian Office and from other sources*, London, 1913, p. 300.

4. Wallis Budge, E. A., *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, (Ed.), Clarendon Press, 1884, Oxford, Vol. I., Chapter x/vii, p. 105.
5. David Abram, Rough Guides (Firm), Nick Edwards, *A Rough Guide to South India*, USA, 2003, p. 2003.
6. Radhika Seshan, *Trade and Politics on the Coromandel Coast: Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century*, Chennai, 2012, p. 89.
7. Sathianathier. R, *A Political and Cultural History of India, Medieval India, Volume II*, Madras, 1985, p. 241.
8. Kristin C. Bloomer, *Possessed by the Virgin: Hinduism, Roman Catholicism, and Marian Possession in South India*, New York, 2018, p. 120.
9. Andrea L. Stanton, (ed.), *Cultural Sociology of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa: An Encyclopedia*, California, 2012, p. 181.
10. <http://directory.ucanews.com/dioceses/india-madras-mylapore/22>
11. [www.creighton.edu/vaticanii/](http://www.creighton.edu/vaticanii/) historical background of vaticanii
12. Unpublished thesis of Cinthia .J, titled, *Archdiocese of Madras – Mylapore – A Study*, Chennai, 2015, p. 178.
13. *Inside the Vatican* - Volume 6, Vatican, 1998, p. 23.
14. Hiro G. Badlani, *Hinduism: Path of the Ancient Wisdom*, New York, 2008, p. 143.
15. Swamini Vimalananda, *In Indian Culture: Why Do We...*, Mumbai, 2004, p. 67.
16. Interview with J. Jude Michael Raj, Former Youth Association Secretary, Our Lady of Guidance Church on 15.01.2020, at 10.00 am.
17. *Ibid.*,

## PERSONIFICATION OF THE NATIONS

**P. Sumabala**

Assistant Professor

Department of Historical Studies

Quaid-E-Millath Government College for Women, Chennai

### ***Abstract***

*Personification of a nation is an anthropomorphism of a nation or its people. Anthropomorphism, or personification, is attribution of human form or other characteristics to anything other than a human being. Examples include depicting deities with human form and ascribing human emotions or motives to forces of nature, such as hurricanes or earthquakes. Any attribution of human characteristics (or characteristics assumed to belong only to humans) to animals, non-living things, phenomena, material states, objects or Abstract concepts, such as organizations, governments, spirits or deities is called anthropomorphism. Several countries of the world personified their nations in literature, painting, and sculpture and also on coins. This paper studies the personification of different nations with special reference to India.*

**Keywords:** *Personification, Nation, Britannia, Zealandia, Columbia, Italia Turrita, Marianne, Germania, Uncle Sam, John Bull, Bharat Mata.*

Personification of a nation is an anthropomorphism of a nation or its people. Anthropomorphism, or personification, is the attribution of human form or other characteristics to anything other than a human being. Examples include depicting deities with human form and ascribing human emotions or motives to forces of nature, such as hurricanes or earthquakes. Any attribution of human characteristics (or characteristics assumed to belong only to

humans) to animals, non-living things, phenomena, material states, objects or abstract concepts, such as organizations, governments, spirits or deities is called anthropomorphism. Several countries of the world personified their nations in literature, painting, sculpture and also on coins. This paper studies the personification of different nations with special reference to India.

Human figures used to represent particular countries, their citizens, or ideas of the national character. Personification is contentious in that it aims to represent a diverse society with a single person, often representing a simple idea. Accordingly, we sometimes see divergent or even conflicting personifications<sup>1</sup>.

Many personifications in Europe and areas once colonized by them connect the nation to noble ideas and values through the use of Latin-derived names and the use of robes, poses, and other elements of classic statues and paintings to adorn a female figure. For instance, the United Kingdom's Britannia (an emblem that first emerged when Britain was still ruled by Rome) is a goddess-like figure wearing a Roman-style helmet that has, over time, come to represent the nation and the idea of liberty. The first writer to use a form of the name was the Greek explorer and geographer Pytheas in the 4th century BC. Pytheas referred to *Prettanike* or *Brettaniai*, a group of islands off the coast of north-western Europe. Over time, Albion specifically came to be known as Britannia, and the name for the group was subsequently dropped<sup>2</sup>. That island was first invaded by Julius Caesar in 55 BC, and the Roman conquest of the island began in AD 43, leading to the establishment of the Roman province known as Britannia.

Britannia appeared on coins issued under Hadrian (Roman Emperor from 117 CE to 138 CE), as a more regal-looking female figure. Britannia was soon personified as a goddess, looking fairly similar to the Roman goddess Minerva. Early portraits of the goddess depict Britannia as a beautiful young woman, wearing the helmet of a centurion, and wrapped in a white garment. She is usually shown seated on a rock, holding a spear, and with a spiked shield propped beside her. Sometimes she holds a standard and

leans on the shield. On another range of coinage, she is seated on a globe above waves: Britain at the edge of the (known) world. Similar coin types were also issued under Antoninus Pius.

During the Renaissance, Britannia came to be viewed as the personification of Britain, in imagery that was developed during the reign of Elizabeth I (1533-1603). During the reign of Charles II (1630-1685), Britannia made her first appearance on English coins on a farthing (coin worth one quarter of a penny) of 1672. With the constitutional unification of England with Scotland in 1707 and then with Ireland in 1800, Britannia became an increasingly important symbol and a strong rallying point among Britons.

British power, which depended on a liberal political system and the supremacy of the navy, lent these attributes to the image of Britannia. By the time of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), Britannia had been renewed. Still depicted as a young woman with brown or golden hair, she kept her Corinthian helmet and her white robes, but now she held Poseidon's three-pronged trident and often sat or stood before the ocean and tall masted ships representing British naval power. She also usually held or stood beside a Greek hoplite shield, which sported the British Union Flag; also at her feet was often the British Lion, an animal found on the arms of England, Scotland and the Prince of Wales.

While the classic image of Britannia seated on a shield first appeared on Roman bronze coins of the 1st century AD struck under Hadrian, Britannia's first appearance on British coinage was on the farthing in 1672, though earlier pattern versions had appeared in 1665, followed by the half penny later the same year. The figure of Britannia was said to have been modeled on Frances Teresa Stuart, the future Duchess of Richmond, who was famous at the time for refusing to become the mistress of Charles II (1630-1685). Britannia then appeared on the British half penny coin throughout the rest of the 17th century and thereafter until 1936. The half pennies issued during the reign of Queen Anne (1665-1714) have Britannia closely resembling the queen herself<sup>3</sup>. Britannia is also featured on the high value Great Britain's definitive

postage stamps issued during the reign of George V (1865-1936) known as 'seahorses' and is depicted on the £10 stamp first issued in 1993. A figure of Britannia appeared on the "white fiver" (a five pound note printed in black and white) from 1855 for more than a century, until 1957. From 1928, "Britannia Series A" ten shilling and one pound notes were printed with a seated Britannia bearing both a spear and an olive branch<sup>4</sup>. Britannia became a very potent and a more common figure in times of war, and represented British liberties and democracy.

New Zealanders adopted a similar personification of their country in Zealandia, Britannia's daughter, who appeared on postage stamps at the turn of the 20th century and still features in the New Zealand Coat of Arms. Zealandia also appeared on posters, cartoons, war memorials, and New Zealand government publications during the first half of the 20th century. Zealandia was a commonly used symbol of the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition, which was held in Wellington in 1939 and 1940. Three large Zealandia statues exist in New Zealand towns or cities; one is in Waimate, and other is in Palmerston, and one more in Symonds Street, Auckland. The first two (in stone) are Second Boer War memorials and the latter one (in bronze) is a New Zealand War memorial. Some smaller statues exist in museums and also in private hands.

The U.S. has a similar figure, Columbia. Columbia is a historical and poetic name used for the United States of America and is also the name of its female personification. It has inspired the names of many persons, places, objects, institutions, and companies; e.g., Columbia University, the District of Columbia (the national capital), and the Columbia River. Columbia was largely displaced as the female symbol of the U.S. by the Statue of Liberty around 1920. Columbia is a New Latin toponym, combining *Columb*, based on the surname of the explorer Christopher Columbus and an ending *ia*, common in Latin names of countries (e.g. Britannia for Britain). The meaning is therefore "Land of Columbus." The name Columbia for "America" first appeared in 1738 in the weekly publication of the debates of the



British Parliament in Edward Cave's *The Gentleman's Magazine*<sup>5</sup>. The name appears to have been coined by Samuel Johnson, thought to have been the author of an introductory essay (in which "Columbia" already appears). The name continued to appear in *The Gentleman's Magazine* until December 1746. Publication of Parliamentary debates was technically illegal, so the debates were issued under the thin disguise of *Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliputians*, and fictitious names were used for most individuals and place names found in the record. Most of these were transparent anagrams or similar distortions of the real names; some were taken directly from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; and a few others were classical or neoclassical in style. Such were Ierne for Ireland, Iberia for Spain, Noveborac for New York (from Eboracum, the Roman name for York), and Columbia for America—at the time used in the sense of "European colonies in the New World". In many cases, these nations were personified as pseudo-classical goddesses named with these Latin names. The use of "Columbia" was, in effect, the closest, which the Americans, located in a continent unknown to and unnamed by the Romans, could come to emulating this custom. By the time of the Revolution, the name Columbia had lost the comic overtone of its "Lilliputian" origins and had become established as an alternative or poetic name for America.

No serious consideration was given to using the name Columbia as an official name for the independent United States, but with independence, the name became popular and was given to many counties, townships, and towns, as well as to other institutions. Columbia College which later became Columbia University, town of Columbia (there are at least nineteen towns with this name, District of Columbia, Columbia river, space craft Columbia etc. can be cited as examples. The more frequent usage of the name Columbia reflected a rising American neoclassicism, exemplified in the tendency to use Roman terms and symbols. The selection of the eagle as the national bird, the use of the term Senate to describe the upper house of Congress, and the naming of Capitol Hill and the Capitol building were all conscious evocations of Roman precedents. The adjective Columbian has been used to

mean “of or from the United States of America” and occasionally proposed as an alternative word for “American”.

As a quasi-mythical figure, Columbia first appears in the poetry of African-American Phillis Wheatley starting in 1776 during the revolutionary war. Especially in the 19th century, Columbia would be visualized as a goddess-like female national personification of the United States, comparable to the British Britannia, the Italian Italia Turrita and the French Marianne, often seen in political cartoons of the 19th-early 20th century. This personification was sometimes called “Lady Columbia” or “Miss Columbia”.

The image of the personified Columbia was never fixed, but she was most often presented as a woman between youth and middle age, wearing classically draped garments decorated with the stars and stripes; a popular version gave her a red-and-white striped dress and a blue blouse, shawl, or sash spangled with white stars. Her headdress varied; sometimes it included feathers reminiscent of a Native American headdress, sometimes it was a laurel wreath, but most often it was a cap of liberty.

Italia Turrita is the national personification or allegory of Italy, characterized by a mural crown (hence turrita or “with towers” in Italian) typical of Italian civic heraldry of medieval communal origin. In broader terms, the crown symbolizes its mostly urban history. She often holds in her hands a bunch of corn ears (a symbol of fertility and reference to the agrarian economy); during the fascist era, she held a bundle of the lictors. The representation of Italia turrita was proposed under the emperor Trajan, who wanted it to be sculpted on the Trajan’s Arch erected in Benevento in 114-117, and also on one of the two Pluteos called anaglypha, four years later. Afterwards, from 130 AD on, under the emperors Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Septimius Severus and Caracalla, Roman coins reproduced the allegorical representation of Italy as a dressed and towered woman who sometimes carries a cornucopia. The towered crown is the symbol of *Civitas romana*, therefore, the allegory shows the

sovereignty of the Italian peninsula as a land of free cities and of Roman citizens to whom a proper right has been granted: the *Ius Italicum*. Over her head, a five-pointed star is usually seen shining radiant; an ancient secular symbol of Italy purported to protect the nation, known as Stella d'Italia or Star of Italy. Iconographic of the Risorgimento, it was used as the crest of the armorial bearings of the Kingdom of Italy from 1870 to 1890 and is the dominant element in the modern day coat of arms adopted at the birth of the Italian Republic in 1948<sup>6</sup>.

Marianne is a national emblem of France, an allegory of Liberty and Reason, and a portrayal of the Goddess of Liberty. Marianne is displayed in many places in France and holds a place of honour in town halls and law courts. She symbolizes the “Triumph of the Republic”, a bronze sculpture overlooking the Place de la Nation in Paris. Her profile stands out on the official government logo of the country, is engraved on French euro coins and appears on French postage stamps; it also was featured on the former franc currency. Marianne is one of the most prominent symbols of the French Republic, and is officially used on most government documents. Marianne is a significant republican symbol, as opposed to monarchy, and an icon of freedom and democracy against all forms of dictatorship.

Although the image of Marianne did not garner significant attention until 1792, the origins of this “goddess of Liberty” date back to 1775, when Jean-Michel Moreau painted her as a young woman dressed in Roman style clothing with a Phrygian cap atop a pike held in one hand that years later would become a national symbol across France. Marianne made her first major appearance in the French spotlight on a medal in July 1789, celebrating the storming of the Bastille and other early events of the Revolution. It was not until September 1792 when the new Republic sought a new image to represent the State that her popularity began to expand. Marianne, the female allegory of Liberty, was chosen to represent the new regime of the French Republic, while remaining to symbolize liberty at the same time<sup>7</sup>.

Although the initial figure of Marianne from 1792 stood in a relatively conservative pose, the revolutionaries were quick to abandon that figure when it no longer suited them. By 1793, the conservative figure of Marianne had been replaced by a more violent image; that of a woman, bare-breasted and fierce of visage, often leading men into battle<sup>8</sup>. At the time of the French Revolution, as the common people were fighting for their rights, it seemed fitting to name the Republic after the most common of French women's names : Marie (Mary) and Anne. The account made of their exploits by the Revolutionaries often contained a reference to a certain Marianne (or Marie-Anne) wearing a Phrygian cap. This pretty girl of legend inspired the revolutionaries, and looked after those wounded in the many battles across the country.

Germania is the personification of the German nation or the Germans as a whole, most commonly associated with the Romantic Era and the Revolutions of 1848, though the figure was later used by Imperial Germany. Germania is usually shown as a robust woman with long, flowing, reddish-blonde hair and wearing armour. She often wields the "*Reichsschwert*" (imperial sword), and possesses a mediaeval-style shield that sometimes bears the image of a black eagle on a gold field. Additionally, she is sometimes shown as carrying or wearing the Imperial Crown of the Holy Roman Empire. In pre-1871 images, the banner she holds is the black-red-gold flag of modern Germany, but in post-1871 depictions, it is the black-white-red flag of the German Empire. Her attributes are Broken chains - Being freed; Breastplate with eagle-Symbol of the German empire or strength; Crown of oak leaves - Heroism; Sword-Symbol of power; Hemp branch around the sword -Willingness to make peace; Black, red and gold tricolour - Flag of the liberal-nationalists in 1848 (banned by dukes of the German states) and Rays of the rising sun - Beginning of a new era.

More popular characterizations also emerge, often representing the national character, not through goddess-like imagery but as an average citizen. For instance, much more familiar in the U.S. than Columbia is Uncle Sam. He differs

from many other national personifications in that he does not represent the U.S. citizenry or the idea of the nation in general; he specifically represents the U.S. *government* and is best known for wanting “you” to join the military, buy war bonds, and such. A popular U.S. symbol, Uncle Sam is usually associated with a cartoon figure having long white hair and chins whiskers and dressed in swallow-tailed coat, vest, tall hat, and striped trousers. His appearance is derived from two earlier symbolic figures in American folklore—Brother Jonathan and Yankee Doodle.

The origin of the term Uncle Sam, though disputed, is usually associated with a businessman from Troy, N.Y., Samuel Wilson, known affectionately as “Uncle Sam” Wilson. The barrels of beef that he supplied the army during the War of 1812 were stamped “U.S.” to indicate government property. This identification is said to have led to the widespread use of the nickname Uncle Sam for the United States; and a resolution passed by Congress in 1961 recognized Wilson as the namesake of the national symbol<sup>9</sup>.

Uncle Sam and his predecessor Brother Jonathan were used interchangeably to represent the United States by U.S. cartoonists from the early 1830s to 1861. Cartoonists of the British humour magazine *Punch* helped evolve the modern figure by their drawings of both Brother Jonathan and Uncle Sam as lean, whiskered gentlemen wearing top hats and striped pants. Probably the first U.S. political cartoonist to crystallize the figure of Uncle Sam was Thomas Nast, beginning in the early 1870s. One of the most familiar treatments in the 20th century was shown in James Montgomery Flagg’s World War I recruiting poster, also used in World War II, for which the caption read, “I Want You for US Army Nearest Recruiting Station.”

John Bull, in literature and political caricature, is a conventional personification of England or of English character. Bull was invented by the Scottish mathematician and physician John Arbuthnot as a character in an extended allegory that appeared in a series of five pamphlets in 1712 and later in the same year

published collectively as *The History of John Bull*; he appeared as an honest clothier, bringing action with his linen-draper friend Nicholas Frog (Holland) against Lewis Baboon (Louis XIV) for interfering with trade. The wide circulation of the satire fixed Bull as a popular personification in 18th-century political writings. John Bull's widest recognition came in the middle and late 19th century, especially through the influential cartoons portraying him in the periodical *Punch*. The most familiar and frequent representation was that developed by *Punch* cartoonists John Leech and Sir John Tenniel: the jovial and honest farmer figure, solid and foursquare, sometimes in Union Jack waistcoat and with bulldog at heel. John Bull had by now become so universally familiar that the name frequently appeared in book, play, and periodical titles and pictorially as a brand name or trademark for manufactured goods. He is usually depicted as a stout, middle-aged, country dwelling, jolly, matter-of-fact man.

Bull is usually portrayed as a stout, portly man in a tailcoat with light-coloured breeches and a top hat which by its shallow crown indicates its middle-class identity. During the Georgian period, his waistcoat is red and/or his tailcoat is royal blue which, together with his buff or white breeches, can thus refer to a greater or lesser extent to the 'blue and buff' scheme, used by supporters of Whig politics which is part of what John Arbuthnot wished to deride when he invented the character. By the twentieth century, however, his waistcoat nearly always depicts a Union Flag, and his coat is generally dark blue (but otherwise still echoing the fashions of the Regency period). He also wears a low topper (sometimes called a John Bull topper) on his head and is often accompanied by a bulldog. John Bull has been used in a variety of different ad campaigns over the years, and is a common sight in British editorial cartoons of the 19th and early 20th centuries<sup>10</sup>.

*Bhārat Mātā*, Mother India or *Bhāratāmbā* is the national personification of India as a mother goddess. She is usually depicted as a woman clad in a saffron sari holding the Indian

national flag, and sometimes accompanied by a lion. It was during the country's independence movement in the late 19th century that the *Bhāratmātā* image came into the limelight. A play by Kiran Chandra Bannerjee, *Bhārat Mātā*, was first performed in 1873. Bankim Chandra Chatterji's 1882 novel *Anandamath* introduced the hymn "*Vande Mātaram*" (Hail to thee Mother), which soon became the song of the emerging freedom movement in India<sup>11</sup>.

There was an insistence from Bipin Chandra Pal for further elaboration of its meaning especially through focusing on the idealist terminology idealization in line with the philosophical traditions prevailing in the Hindu faith for devotion and practices they follow. The ancient spiritual essence which it presented was a true mesmerizing of universal thinking in the context of Hinduism and developing nationalism spirit<sup>12</sup>.

Portrayal of *Bhārat Mātā* as mother goddess by Abanindranath Tagore (now at Rabindra Bharati Society) became a historic milestone. He depicted the goddess with four arms and clad into saffron robes having a book, sheaves of rice, white cloth and a garland. This image which helped crystallize the nationalist iconography of India, was made against the background of the Partition of Bengal (1905) that had enflamed nationalist passions. It offered a visual representation for Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's nationalist poem *Bande Mataram*. The ethereal female figure of the nation bears in her four hands the objects of nationalist aspiration, food, clothing, secular learning and spiritual knowledge which denote *Anna*, *Vastra*, *Shiksha* and *Diksha*. This painting portrays *Bharatmata* standing on green earth and blue sky behind her; feet with four lotuses, four arms and white halo<sup>13</sup>.

The *Bhārat Mātā* conception began in the pre-partition era and hence its arena is not limited to specific portion only. The impact of nationalism spread to wider areas in entire India.

As India has been personified as a goddess, it infers devotion and patriotism amongst the citizens. The depiction of India as a Hindu goddess implies that it is not just the patriotic but also

the religious duty of all Indians to participate in the nationalist struggle to defend the nation<sup>14</sup>. This inspired people of India to participate in the freedom struggle with great nationalistic spirit. The whole of India reverberated with the slogans “*Bharat Mata ki Jai*” (“Victory for Mother India”) and “*Vande Mataram*”. Plays were enacted to protect *Bharat Mata* from the clutches of foreign power. Several poetic works and songs were composed in all Indian languages to venerate Bharat Mata.

Subrahmanya Bharati, the famous Tamil poet composed patriotic songs on *Bharata mata* and he refers to a vision of the complete form of Bharata Devi -Mother India saying that the clarity of the heart endowed upon him by Sister Nivedita. Bharati dedicated his national poems later to Sister Nivedita, whom he considered his guru. Bharati visualizes Mother India as *Mother Shakti*. His experience of *Mother Shakti* is fascinating. The completeness of this vision had earned for his national poems the reputed title, “*Desopanishat*”, comparing the poems with the Upanishadic wisdom of ancient India<sup>15</sup>.

Though it is said that the concept of the personification of nation of India is of recent origin and borrowed from European countries, the concept of personification of land or earth is not new to India. She was venerated as goddess Bhudevi in ancient Indian literature. She was made the consort of Vishnu. She was depicted in several sculptural and iconic representations. Therefore, the concept of personification of mother earth lent the idea of personification of the nation and it can be presumed that it is not a novel notion.

It is interesting to note that a few temples were constructed for *Bharat mata* at Varanasi, Haridwar and Daulatabad. Sculptural representations can also be seen at Kanyakumari and Yanam.

The entry of the *Bharat mata* icon into the domain of religious practice goes back to the 1930s. In 1936, a *Bharat Mata* temple was built in Benaras by Shiv Prashad Gupta and was



inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. The temple contains no image of any god or goddess. It has only a map of India set in marble relief. Mahatma Gandhi said, "I hope this temple, which will serve as a cosmopolitan platform for people of all religions, castes and creeds including Harijans, will go a great way in promoting religious unity, peace and love in the country<sup>16</sup>." In the Mahatma's speech we see a concern for the universal mother, not restricted to the mother that is India but the mother that is the earth.

A little under fifty years later, Swami Satyamitranand Giri founded a *Bharat Mata* temple in Haridwar. The consecration of this temple took place on 15 May 1983, followed six months later by an *ekta mata yajna*, a sacrifice for unity, involving a six-week, all-India tour of the image of the goddess. Unlike its Benaras precursor, this temple contains an anthropomorphic statue of its deity. Here, *Bharat Mata* holds a milk urn in one hand and sheaves of grain in the other, and is accordingly described in the temple guide book as "signifying the white and green revolution that India needs for progress and prosperity." The length of this eight storey temple is 180 feet which the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi inaugurated in 1983. The top floors of temple were dedicated to mythological legends, freedom fighters and religious deities. The guide book also tells us that, "The temple serves to promote the devotional attitude towards *Bharat Mata*, something that historians and mythological story tellers may have missed<sup>17</sup>."

While these temples were considered as a process of institutionalization of a particular form of nationalism, the *Bharat Mata* temple at Daulatabad fort was constructed to suppress and shun away communal riots. This historical event took place in 1948 on the morrow of the police action by the Government of India during the takeover of the Nizam's Hyderabad. There had been a great deal of local pressure for the restitution of the temple. Leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as well as Shri Kanhaiyalal Munshi were also aware that it was a Jain mandir which had been forcibly converted into a masjid by Alauddin Khilji. However, to avoid giving a religious or a communal colour to the *shuddhi* or

reconversion, the idol installed in the *sanctum sanctorum* was that of *Bharat Mata*. It is therefore now known as the *Bharat Mata* temple, although for 700 years it had been called Jami masjid. The reminiscence of earlier temple architecture and Arabic inscriptions can still be seen here.

The depiction of *Bharat mata* in later years underwent a lot of transformation. She was depicted as wearing a tricolor saree and holding the national flag. Her portrayal by M.F.Hussain in his paintings created a lot of controversy. “The famous cartoonist Shankar, in a clever satire on the Boticelli Venus, depicted Nehru as an elderly and avuncular cherub, drawing a cover over the nude form of the nation. The cartoon, with all its wit, can hardly be termed asexual and this goes against all stereotypical treatments of the nation symbol. Such cartoons provide a counterfoil to images of *Bharat Mata*, whose symbolic value depends heavily upon the religious vocabulary and practices of this country. Heterogeneous representations of nation similarly demand a search for non-modular and fragmentary forms of the ways in which the nation has been produced, circulated and consumed”<sup>18</sup>.

## References

1. <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/>; Gwen Sharp, *National Personifications*, Sociological Images.
2. Snyder, Christopher (2003). *The Britons*, Blackwell Publishing, p.12.
3. Tony Clayton, *Coins of England and Great Britain* (‘Coins of the UK’).
4. B S Sharples, *A Short History of English Bank Notes*, 2009.
5. *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, Vol. 8, June 1738, p. 285.
6. Wikipedia.
7. *Ibid*.
8. Hunt, Lynn (1984). *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p.93.

9. Schauffler, Robert Haven (1912) *Flag day; its history*, p. 145.
10. Anglo Mania: “*Tradition and Transgression in British Fashion*,” Metropolitan Museum of Art (2006), exhibition brochure, p.2.
11. Kinsley, David. *Hindu Goddesses: Vision of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Traditions*, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, pp. 181-182.
12. Manu Goswami *Producing India*, Orient Black Swan, 2004, p.263.
13. Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: the global restructuring of an empire*, Zubaan, 2006, p.3
14. Kalyani Devaki Menon, *Everyday Nationalism: Women of the Hindu Right in India: The Ethnography of Political Violence*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, p. 89f.
15. S.Vijaya Bharati, *C.Subramania Bharati*, <http://www.mahakavibharathiyar.info/vijayabharathi>
16. Mc Kean, Lise. “*Bharat Mata: Mother India and Her Militant Matriots*”, in *Devi : Goddesses of India*, edited by John S.Hawley and Donna M.Wulff, Motilala Banarasidass Publishers, Delhi, 1998(1996), p. 263.
17. Sadan Jha, *The Life and Times of Bharat Mata Nationalism as Invented Religion*, [www.manushi-india.org](http://www.manushi-india.org)
18. Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire*, and Ramaswami, Sumathi. “*Visualising India’s Geo-Body: Globes, Maps, Bodyscapes*”, Sumathi Ramaswami (ed.), *Contributions to Indian Sociology, New Series, vol.36, nos.1&2*, January-August 2002, pp:151-190.

## Book Review - 1

### ***COW CARE IN HINDU ANIMAL ETHICS***

**Kenneth R. Valpey**

Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom: Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies in 2020.

The work describes dairy animals, with a lot of dedication. Animal rights have become an important topic of concern among intellectuals and thinking people across the globe.

During the last couple of decades, there has been a growing awareness not only in the developed world but also in the developing countries about the cruel treatment being meted out to animals over the centuries. Animals have been cruelly exploited for their labour, meat and skins. They have been kept in inhuman conditions, whipped and beaten and made to work for long hours with minimum food. This unsatisfactory state of affairs has continued ever since the dawn of civilisation.

However, in the twentieth century came the realisation that animals and birds and other flora and fauna which inhabit the planet have an equal right to life and liberty as human beings. This gave rise to animal rights movements in many countries, including India. We in India have always revered nature and animals. The Vedas have always spoken about the beauties of nature and man's place in it. Thus animals must regain their rightful place in the scheme of things.

This book has devoted five chapters to the care of the cow and its place in the Hindu ethos. The author has analysed the importance of the cow in Hindu religion and culture. The author

describes the cow family as belonging to the bovine type. He compares divinity and the bovine and combines them to call it 'bovinity'. The protection of animals is objectified and valued in terms of benefits to human health, culture, deity and ecology. The author, Kenneth R. Valpey, explains to us the beliefs and habits of cows as animals and as beings with their own rights in this country.

The author presents four key characters within the ambit of protection that began in the nineteenth century. These are Swami Dayananda, a Hindu monk who composed a very persuasive pamphlet in 1882; the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi; B.R. Ambedkar, the father of the constitution of India; and the founder of the ISCKON religious sect Srila Prabhupada. In addition to cow protection, Hindu identity politics involved growing national movements towards independence from British rule; so this movement reaches well into modern state governance and extended to modern society eventually. Valpey examines this aspect and concludes that human civilisations and cow protection are interlinked.

However, the process of defining Hinduism can lead to objectification or rather to misplaced objectification, by which the author recognises the misunderstanding or failure of what are Hindu philosophical traditions as objective metaphysical truth. Hindu consciousness indicates personhood as the fundamental category and, in contrast, Hindu and cow as secondary. In Hindu tradition, the cow is not only considered as the mother but also a refuge for all Hindu gods and goddesses. The cow gives the feeling of motherhood and bull describes *dharma*. The cow is a grand subject where spirituality, rituals, aesthetic birth, death, life and finally economy all come into play. Also, the author emphasises the voices of brahmanical Hinduism which was priesthood throughout the ages. Then he has critically analysed the modern face of rituals and compares it to ancient times. Controversy in the modern world for some Hindus has revolved around whether

or not to extend to animals their rights, especially cows that had been immolated in ancient sacrificial rites. As modernisation and globalisation extend their reach throughout India, Hindus want to preserve cow sanctity and build shelters and facilities for them. Valpey then explains how the cow can be given a secured way of life.

In the concluding chapter, the author includes the importance and need to find the way forward towards the long term well-being of animals, both human and nonhuman, together as sentient beings. The author has also listed some important quotations about the relationship between humans and cows from Sanskrit literature. Thus he has explained the deep interdependence of humans and cows with a devotional spirit of *bhakti*.

To summarise, this book will go a long way in explaining the Hindu relationship with the cow both in terms of religion (*bhakti*) and culture. The Hindus have always venerated the cow as a mother and given it the due respect that it deserves. Hindus have always given a special place to birds and animals in both religious and secular literature. In practice too, Hindus have always looked after the animals and under their care, especially cows. The practice of establishing *goshalas* has been followed in this country for many centuries past. However, the practice of extracting milk from cows using the latest technology leaves much to be desired. There is a need to create awareness among the general populace about cow care and their protection.

In the context of the latest medical evidence, it is proved beyond doubt that a vegetarian diet is far healthier and adduces to a longer and healthier lifespan. Therefore, we need to promote the use of dairy products instead of meat products, says the author. In the long run, this will lead to a healthier populace. This will also reduce the incidence of communal clashes on the issue of cow protection. It would do well to remember a quotation from the Gita which says: “A learned Brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a

dog, or a ‘dog-eater’—a wise person sees [them all] with equal vision” (Gita 5.18). The economic benefits of cow protection far outweigh the costs of killing them. There is, therefore, a need to promote cow protection in society considering its economic, political and social benefits to Indian society.

**M. Amirthalingam**

Research Officer (retd.)

C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre

Chennai

**Book Review - 2**

***THE POLAKS AND MAHATMA GANDHI:  
A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP***

**Prabha Ravi Shankar,**

Promilla & Co Publishers, in association with Bibliophile South Asia,  
New Delhi and Chicago, 2020.

This book is about Henry and Millie Polak, their close association with Mahatma Gandhi and their active participation in the Indian struggle for human rights in South Africa. How did they contribute to Gandhi's Satyagraha Campaign?

Were they simply blind admirers of Gandhi or were they independent in thought and judgement? When they returned to England, how did they continue to be involved in Indian affairs?

What kind of a relationship did they have with Gandhi, especially after the latter became the chief leader of the Indian National Congress with a unique political ideology of his own? What was their contribution to the Indian National Movement?

Answers to these and similar questions have been attempted by Dr. Prabha Ravi Shankar in what is perhaps the first detailed study of the Polaks and their association with Gandhi.

The first chapter in the book is on Henry Polak's "Early Life and Career". It brings out Polak's exposure to various intellectual ideas then prevalent in Europe.

The second chapter on Millie Polak brings out her personality as a good wife, an intellectual critic of Gandhi and her contribution to women's welfare in South Africa.



The third chapter on “The Polaks and their activities in South Africa, 1904-1909” brings out not only the closeness between the Polaks and Gandhi but also their work in several of Gandhi’s projects like the Phoenix Settlement.

The fourth chapter on “Henry Polak’s visits to India” brings out his sincerity to the cause of Indians in South Africa. His tours in India and his speeches in the various sessions of the Indian National Congress are a testimony to his extraordinary work for the cause.

The fifth chapter on “The Polaks and the Passive Resistance Movement” gives details about the causes for the Movement and the work of people like Gokhale in bringing it to a proper conclusion.

The sixth chapter on “The Polaks and the Passive Resistance Movement” brings out clearly as to how Gandhi had groomed the Polaks to look after the movement before he left for India in 1914. Moreover, it gives several details about the Passive Resistance Movement.

The seventh chapter on “Henry Polak as Editor of India” captures vividly the differences between the Moderates and the Extremists in the Congress. It also shows how Polak was forced to resign as Editor, when he sided with the Moderates.

The eighth chapter on “Polak’s work for the Indian cause in England” gives details of his writings for the cause in several publications and describes his tours to several countries where he lectured on India’s problems.

The ninth chapter on “Strain in Henry Polak’s Relationship with Gandhi” brings out clearly as to how these old friends had disagreed politically on several issues like the conduct of the Rowlatt Satyagraha, the Non-Cooperation Movement, and the

Quit India Movement. But they always maintained good personal relations.

The tenth chapter on “The Polaks on Gandhi - The Man”, describes the intimate relationship and understanding between Gandhi and the Polaks, who had lived together in South Africa. Furthermore, it analyzes the fact that the Polaks had understood the greatness of Gandhi as a man and leader by close observation and experience.

The eleventh chapter on “Appraisal” not only brings out the greatness of Henry Polak but also gives details of the life-long friendship between him and Gandhi.

On the whole, this book by Dr. Prabha Ravi Shankar is path breaking to say the least. It is undoubtedly well researched and is extremely readable. Moreover, it is based on a wealth of primary sources. In short, Dr. Prabha has spared no effort in reaching high standards of scholarship in this book.

**G.J. Sudhakar**

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

### Book Review - 3

#### ***INDUS SCRIPT, RGVEDA, SUSA CONNECTIONS***

**S. Kalyanaraman**

Available on Kindle

In India, the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization brought about a breakthrough in the writing of its history. But scholars are still not able to come to a single point of conclusion about this great civilization because of the non-decipherment of the Indus script.

The Indus script (also known as the Harappan script) is a corpus of symbols produced by the Indus Valley civilization. Most inscriptions containing these symbols are extremely short, making it difficult to judge whether or not these symbols constituted a script used to record a language, or even symbolise a writing system. In spite of many attempts, the 'script' has not yet been deciphered, but efforts are going on. There is no known bilingual inscription to help decipher the script, and the script shows no significant changes over time. However, some of the syntax (if that is what it may be termed) varies depending upon the location.

The first publication of a seal with Harappan symbols dates back to 1875 CE, in a drawing by Alexander Cunningham. Since then, over 4,000 inscribed objects have been discovered, some as far afield as Mesopotamia, as a consequence of ancient Indus-Mesopotamian relations. In the early 1970s, Iravatham Mahadevan published a corpus and concordance of Indus inscriptions listing 3,700 seals and 417 distinct signs in specific patterns. He also found that the average inscription contained five symbols and that the longest inscription contained only 26 symbols.

Over the years, many scholars have tried to correlate this script with the known ancient Indian script, Brāhmī. But again no clear understanding has been arrived at about it among scholars. Some scholars, such as G.R. Hunter, S. R. Rao, John Newberry and Krishna Rao have argued that the Brāhmī script has some connection with the Indus system. F. Raymond Allchin has cautiously supported the possibility of the Brahmi script being influenced by the Indus script. Another possibility for continuity of the Indus tradition is in the megalithic culture graffiti symbols of southern and central India (and Sri Lanka), which probably do not constitute a linguistic script, but may have some overlap with the Indus symbol inventory. Linguists such as Iravatham Mahadevan, Kamil Zvelebil and Asko Parpola have argued that the script had a relation to a Dravidian language.

On this topic, Kalyanaraman continues to write many articles and books on it and its nature. He sees these symbols as having been produced by the artisans, who created the writing system, who were emphatically conveying words and expressions of his native language, Meluhha, to communicate a message to their trade companions.

In his recent publication on “*Indus Script, Rgveda, Susa Connections*” he again connects various ancient world civilizations and its scripts. This book is a continuation of his earlier publications on the Indus script. In order to understand his methods of decipherment of Indus hieroglyphs, a reader has to be well acquainted with his previous publications since he has not given any introduction or overview about the Indus script and his method of decipherment of the symbols. In his earlier publication on “*Indus Script Cipher*” he claims that he has deciphered the Indus script using the rebus method used by Champollion to read the ancient phonetic hieroglyphs of India. Further, he states that “the decrypted Indus script reveals that artisans – lapidaries, masons, carpenters, miners and smiths – of the civilization had worked with

stones, wood, ivory, shell, minerals, metals and alloys of metals, and created the Indus writing system to record the characteristics of artefacts produced by them and their techniques used”.

We have to read his latest publication keeping the above said points in mind. He presents his views and understanding under nine sections in this book. 1. Guilds of Sarasvati civilization artisans (Harappan steatite seal), 2. A guild-master's daybook seal from Kish and identical seal impressions from Kish and Mohenjodaro of temple warehouse scribe, goldsmith, 3. Archaeological evidence for trade with Susa, functions of Elam, Mesopotamian seals with Indus Script hieroglyphs, inscriptions, 4. Extended Sarasvati civilization in the Persian Gulf, 3<sup>rd</sup> m. BCE with three Indus script seals documenting metalwork, 5. Archaeology finds the role of *kusida* 'money-lender' in Indus script & cuneiform writing, 6. Entemana silver vase hieroglyphs, wicker cap of Gudea and overflowing water pot are Indus script hypertexts, metalwork catalogues, 7. Standard device of Indus script is the pictorial *Rgveda yajna*, which signifies *potr* 'purifier' *kūdār* turner's fire-altar workshop, 8. Decipherment of Indus script trefoil unravels metaphor as 'metals wealth accumulation', 9. *Itihāsa*, Indus script hieroglyphs of *Rgveda Potr*, 'purifier priest' and *Traidhatavi* (*ishti*) traced to Poddār 'assayer of metals' are the sections.

In the first section, he writes, "This monograph presents a contribution to unravel the economic and cultural foundations in the history of an ancient civilization from c. 7<sup>th</sup> m. BCE; and the *lingua franca* of the civilization". Here, he discusses how the symbols were used to write the wealth accounting ledgers of the Sarasvati civilization (Indus-Sarasvati) by the artisan guilds with an example. He has further divided the section in to part A and B to explain how he has deciphered the example seal. He denotes that the Unicorn seal communicates the message to other artisans about a account. In part A, he speaks about how he came to understand the decipherment of the field symbol. In part B, he explains the

decipherment of text message (from right to left), because he believes it as a mirror image, in segments of hieroglyph clusters.

In section two, he tries to correlate an ancient seal found at Kish, Iraq during an excavation with the Indus script hieroglyph. Here again, he explains how the Kish hieroglyph symbol resembles the Indus seal in various ways and tries to establish the same message or meaning in the *tatra yukti* method which enunciates a principle called *Vākyāśeṣa*.

In section three, the author interprets a Shu-ilishu cylinder seal with Indus script hieroglyphs, Akkadian cuneiform inscription confirms Meluhha trade in copper and tin. He gives lot of references related to the ancient maritime tin route from the ancient Far East to the ancient Near East, based on an archaeo-metallurgical provenance study of tin bronze artefacts of Mesopotamia.

In section four, the author expresses his ideas to prove the extent of (Indus) Sarasvati civilization in the present Persian Gulf in 3<sup>rd</sup> m. BCE with a few seals found in Failaka and Dilmun. The author believes that the seals that are found here have Indus script inscriptions and which speak about the metals and metal implements.

In section five, the author speaks about a bilingual seal found at Ur and discusses about the Indus script and Cuneiform writing. He further quotes discussions made on these theories by various scholars. In this chapter, he tries to establish that the Sumerian accounting tablets signify *sanga kushim* read rebus in Meluhha substrate *saṅg* 'caravan', *kusi* 'money-lender'. To support his theory, he refers and quotes from the *Rgveda* and other literary sources.

In section six, the author discusses the hieroglyphs on a vase of Entemana and Dudu plaque and analyses that how they indicate contact with the Indus script tradition signifying Meluhha

metalwork wealth categories using hieroglyphs. In this chapter, he analyses various archaeological materials like the bronze head of an Akkanian ruler from Nineveh and a diorite statue of Gudea from Sumer, a chlorite vase from southern Mesopotamia, a statue of Entemana, a cone of Entemana made by the prince of Lagash, etc. While discussing each item, Kalyanaraman tries to establish how it describes wealth accumulation or speaks about metallurgy and its relationship with the Indus script hieroglyphs.

In section seven, the author describes that the standard device of the Indus script is the pictorial *Rgveda yajna*. He claims that the standard device normally shown in front of a spiny-horned young bull and posits the Meluhha rebus readings of hieroglyph components as signifiers of *potr* 'purifier'. He says that, "I submit that the Indus script is a continuum of the *Rgveda* tradition evidenced on the silver cup with *Rtvij* priests". He explains various parts of the standard device with examples.

In section eight, the author explains how the Indus script is embellished on *tārpya*, *Rgveda* garment of a Mohenjo-daro priest with trefoils, which unravel the *Rgveda* metaphor of *traidhātavī*. He further asserts that the Indus script as deciphered relates to wealth accounting ledger and is a continuum of the *Rgveda* tradition of creation of wealth, through 'yajna' metaphor for 'wealth of a nation'. To substantiate his theory, the author gives various archaeological evidences from materials and scripts. He gives a detailed description about various *yajna* practices including *Asvamedha* and the role of the priest from the *Rgveda Brahmanas*. To emphasise the importance of trefoil hieroglyph, the author analyses various similar archaeological materials found in Indian and other ancient civilizations.

In section nine, the author focuses on how his earlier concepts are interlinked with each other. He correlates the Indus script hieroglyphs with the *Rgveds Potr* 'purifier priest' and *Traidhatavi* 'yajna worshipping and investiture of priest with three

mineral ore beads'. He further says that, 'This monograph posits that dotted circles and trefoils are *Rgveda gāthā*, 'narratives', Indus script hieroglyphs related to the 'smelter of iron, copper, silver, gold'. These metaphors constitute the written cipher text renderings of metaphors described in the *Rgveda*'. In this chapter, he has also referred to many previous works of the scholars and archaeological materials which he has already discussed.

Overall, the work seems to be a compilation of individual monographs prepared and scrutinized over a long span of time. It reflects the interest and scholarship of the author in this field of research. However, the book does not have any introduction, conclusion and bibliography or reference. There has been a lot of data replication in each section that requires proper editing. A general reader would find it difficult to understand the concept as the author jumps from one section to the other without any connection. Moreover, there is no proper method of referencing followed by the author. Almost, all the sections have so many web links that are difficult for a common reader to find and read. It may be useful to kindle readers, since this edition is available in it.

**G. Balaji**

Assistant Professor  
C.P.R. Institute of Indological Research  
Chennai