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PREFACE

Indian Association for Asian & Pacific Studies (IAAPS) was born in 1998 and was registered in the year 2000 with a group of Indian social scientists to develop Asia-Pacific Studies by Asians in Asia. The Association is about to complete eighteen long years of academic journey and under the dynamic leadership of our Founder Secretary and presently Treasurer, Professor Lipi Ghosh, has made its mark as one of the major non–profit, non-governmental organization of India, striving to work for Asian and Pacific interactions.

Our President Professor Partha S. Ghosh and Vice-President Professor Purusottam Bhattacharya are the two pillars of IAAPS. In 2015 we lost one of our dynamic Joint Secretary Dr. Rajasri Basu who succumbed to a tragic accident in Ladakh. This is an irreparable loss to our organization and of course a personal loss to many of us. All the members of the Executive Council are devoted to the wellbeing of our organization and we all work as a team.

The Association promotes research and understanding of different regions of Asia and Pacific in its cultural, social, political and economic scenario. It works as a forum for scholars of Asian and Pacific studies to carry out social science oriented studies as well as present their works to the public in forms of lectures, panel discussions, seminars, symposia and conferences. The research undertaken by the members of the Association rests on both primary research topics and policy oriented issues. Thus the organization basically stimulates interdisciplinary research and engages in study of issues such as social and cultural patterns, gender and disadvantaged groups, political developments, economy, trade and

investments, science- technology etc. These essays in the volume are reflections of the kind of research our members are pursuing.

Perspective Asia-Pacific (ISBN no: 978 93 84721 57 2) is the Proceedings volume of the Association which is a compilation of some of the essays presented at the Biennial Conference held two years back. This year the volume contains papers presented at the Biennial Conference held at Tezpur University in 2014. The Keynote speaker in that Conference was Professor Prasenjit Duara of the National University of Singapore and his paper has been included in the Proceedings. The papers included in this volume were presented in different panels namely, 'Historicity of South Asia and Beyond, Geographical and Cultural identities of South Asia and other Asian countries'; 'Major security issues (traditional and nontraditional)'; 'Movement of Population and Demography of South Asia: Contexts of Diaspora and Migration'; 'Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations in South Asia & Beyond: Challenges and Opportunities'; 'Peace and Conflict Studies in South Asia & Beyond'; 'Gender in Society of South Asia' & 'Beyond: Continuity and Changes'; 'Social History of Science and Medicine in South Asia and Beyond'. At every Biennial Conference there is a special panel on researches on the locality. In 2014 the panel was on 'North East India: History, Polity and Contemporary Dimensions'.

It is a pleasure and honour to present *Perspective Asia-Pacific* as an important contribution to the academic world.

November 2016

Suchandra Ghosh, Secretary, IAAPS

&

Sarvani Gooptu, Joint Secretary, IAAPS

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Sailajananda Saikia

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Sustainability and the Crisis of Transcendence: The Long View from Asia

By

Prasenjit Duara*

The rise of China has been accompanied by a palpable need to understand the significance of this ascendance and project a vision of the world that does not reproduce the injustices of the earlier order. Chinese intellectuals and others have turned to resources within the Chinese tradition of the world order. In this paper, I will consider the potential of historical universalisms to furnish this ideal. We need to take them seriously in part because modern universalisms that emerged from specific conditions of the West have not worked out satisfactorily. But I also point to their limits and consider the possibility of a post-Western universalism that works with helpful traditions.¹

First, why universalisms? In my understanding, a cosmopolitan world is now more necessary than ever before in history as the nation and the world are increasingly mismatched. The nation-state system which culminated in the United Nations, itself represented a prior globalization—a cognitive globalization—of norms and methods of institutionalizing power in nation-states to compete for global resources. But I have argued that the globalism of the nation-state system was pre- reflexive or covert; the institutions of the nation-state sought to systematically misrecognize its global provenance and embeddedness in order to claim sovereignty and agency in global competition.

The competitive global order in which the nation-state had to survive and develop required not only a strong identity politics of self-other in relation to the outside (and the internal other), but also the promise of citizenship within. Arguably, the mobilization and sacrifice necessary for global competition was compensated for by the emancipatory rhetoric of citizenship. This relationship was particularly developed in the PRC of the 1950s and 1960s, where the demands made

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upon the populace for strengthening China economically and politically in relation to its enemies was premised upon the promise of socialist utopia.

The powerful forces of economic globalization, particularly since the end of the Cold War have altered this structural relationship between the nation-state and globalization. The rationale of the nation-state is no longer exclusively or overwhelmingly based on the protection of national sovereignty. Indeed, the state has aligned itself more closely with multi- and trans-national interests and the neoliberal economic order has spelt out an agenda of state withdrawal and privatization or corporatization of the provisioning of national public goods. Consequently, the globalism of the national order is no longer as covert as it was. Moreover, the ideology of nationalism has also tended to transmute with these changes. While national leaders can scarcely abandon nationalism, it is less dependent on state direction as much as it is an unreflexive reaction by the populace to the dangers and threats posed by overt globalization to stability, community and the promise of citizenship.

The realignment in much of the world and China today presents in some ways, a still greater mismatch between our globality and national institutions. Not only is there a deeper embeddedness and dependence of the nation on the world, many of the effects of globalization on society are no longer shielded by state institutions as they were previously. National and local institutions of governance and delivery are ambiguously committed to projects of development as they are also diverted by neo-liberal goals of profit maximization. Most significantly perhaps, the profit-maximizing drive of economic globalization has generated environmental degradation across the world that can no longer be addressed only by national policies. Ecological instabilities have effects on global resources such as water and agricultural goods that do not respect national boundaries. National wealth and national problems are generated on a global scale, whereas the institutions of remediation and justice function at national and local levels. In order to address this mismatch, nation states will have not only to co-ordinate but also share sovereignty with regional and global entities.

Thus in my view, the Chinese conceptions of the new world order will need to respond to this fundamental mismatch and develop a cosmopolitan ideal whether from its historical traditions or from new conceptions of universalism. Let me offer a working definition of cosmopolitanism: it is the idea that all humans belong non-exclusively to a single community. Thus while this sense of belonging may be shared with other communities of identity, such as the locality, nation or religion, the cosmopolitan community must be able to share sovereignty with any of these other communities of affinity. In other words, the institutions or representatives of the cosmopolitan community must be able to make sovereign decisions in some (mutually agreed upon) areas of political society.

Historically most imperial cultures were justified by a universal ideal. The Chinese ideal of *tianxia* was perhaps the last of such universal ideals having survived institutionally until the end of the 19th century. Archaic universalisms tend to assume an unprovable Archimedean position located outside the world. Thus, from the perspective of situated knowledge they must reflect a particular *origin* and *utility*. Particular origins however cannot disprove the possibility of universal *scope* and *acceptability*, so their value remains. But so does the problem of historicizing their human and teleological values. Modern universalisms seek to justify their vision as non-particularistic as well as non-transcendent. In the process, however, their effectiveness may have diminished.

Modern Universalism

Modern efforts to locate universalisms in secular ethical tenets —such as Kantian moral universalism, communism or modernization theory—are in apparent retreat, precisely at a time when nationalism has succumbed to capitalist forms of universal commodification. Modern universalisms have not been able to link the goals they advocate successfully with the affective and symbolic force of the lived experience. Whether or not this has to do with the destabilizing effects of accelerating time or alternative ideologies like nationalism are historical questions that I will explore elsewhere. In this context, it is worth investigating how older universalisms sustained their ideals, even if the reality fell far short of the rhetoric.

Let me first turn to the reasoned cosmopolitanism or universalism of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Kant's universalism is based on his moral concept of the Categorical Imperative which holds that "I must act through the maxims which one can at the same time will that they be universal laws." A leading interpreter of Kant's moral philosophy, Onora O'Neill has sought to demonstrate that the moral imperative furnishes the most elemental vindication for reason and human life (as social life). Reason is calculative and instrumental but its fundamental character does not reside in these algorithmic functions. It lies rather in the moral authority that regulates and permits reason to realize its designs. It is only through its moral authority that reason can overcome the disagreements among members in society or manage the paucity of resources. Moreover, reason cannot appeal to an external authority – outside of debate—such as a dictator because then reason's power and abilities will break down.³

In this context, O'Neill emphasizes that the Categorical Imperative does not posit any substantive goals. Its regulatory function is negative.⁴ It only prevents any person or group from claiming a special privilege or harming the interests of others. Thus, it undertakes the standpoint of everyone else—a universal point of view. Significantly, O'Neill seeks to demonstrate that this is not a transcendent

position. She says, "The universal is not Archimedean. Rather the thinker constructs it by shifting his ground to the standpoint of others." To be sure, she recognizes that this is Kant's greatest difficulty because it can produce inconsistency (and irrationality). But she nonetheless remains persuaded that Kant's CI does not deify reason; reason has to respond to the demands of justice in this world. The CI is thus quintessentially an Enlightenment product: it represents neither a particular point of view, nor is it transcendent.

Other interpreters of Kant see the Categorical Imperative in a distinctly religious light. Palmquist begins with the proposition that Kant regards Jesus Christ as the first person ever to view the coming kingdom of God as a radically *moral* kingdom (Confucians!). The kingdom of God in religion is closely related to the "realm of ends"—where humans work together through their mutual obedience to the moral law. That the world's political and religious kingdoms will become the universal kingdom of God is the kernel of rational truth. According to Palmquist, when the goal comes into full view, "the idea of immortality will no longer refer merely to a hope for everlasting life in another world—but to the realization of another way of life in the present world where the moral law is fully regulative in the heart of every human person".6

With my restricted reading of Kant and the Western philosophical tradition, I can scarcely intervene in this debate. Instead, I am interested in seeing to what extent Kant required or utilized such concepts as faith and transcendence to construct the modern universal. Interestingly, we may see this in his conception of history, particularly in the essay "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View". Whereas transcendent religions equate the universal with God, Kant's starting point of inquiry into the history of humans is not God. Rather it is as he says, "this idiotic course of things human" from which the philosophical historian must seek the natural laws and end of history. He avers history "is like the unstable weather, which we likewise cannot determine in advance, but which in large, maintain the growth of plants, the flow of rivers, and other natural events in an unbroken, uniform course'. ⁷

The "unsocial sociability of men" is the antagonism that produces creativity and culture but simultaneously threatens the fabric of society which humans are also bound to enter. The philosopher recognizes that the history of mankind is the realization of Nature's secret plan to bring forth a perfectly constituted state as the only condition in which the capacities of mankind can be fully developed, and further still, a cosmopolitan condition to secure the safety of each state and the civic union of the human race. Thus, "such a justification of Nature—or better, of Providence—is no unimportant reason for choosing a standpoint toward world history."

Thus while God does not play a directly causal role in the world, the Idea of history posits that its moral 'end' can be achieved if we act in the faith that it can be realized and in an exemplary way. This seems to be a transcendent or quasi-transcendent position that acknowledges the temporal and human condition of the world but locates the equivalent of the Kingdom of God in what we might call a "utopian" end in this world. This is of course a position that would later be developed by Hegel and Marx. Moreover, Kant locates Nature or Providence as a placeholder for God that requires considerable faith and sacrifice. Kant says Nature has willed that man should aim at producing everything that goes beyond animal existence, and "that he should partake of no other happiness or perfection than that which he himself, independently of instinct, has created by his own reason." Nature aims more at man's "rational self-esteem than at his well-being."

I want to identify a syndrome here associated with modern universalism: there is no causal role for God or the transcendent in this system; but there are nonetheless larger moral forces working through history. These forces promise deliverance at the end of history, not by a transcendent salvation but through a deferred utopian salvation of humanity. However this will not happen unless we will and act in the faith that this can be realized. Its realization requires great sacrifice of our animal nature. Note the similarities and differences in this syndrome with the Axial Age conceptions of transcendence.¹⁰

The principal difference with Axial thought is that transcendence now no longer trumps history. Rather transcendence in modern universalism is located at the end of history as a utopian moment that can be realized by willing and acting through history. A second point of comparison lies in the combination of reason and the sacred. Contemporary analysts of Axial Age philosophy have noted the tensions between the sacred and reason in axial thought.¹¹ There were few ethical philosophies of the pre-modern age where the reasoned discussion of the good was not also bounded by the inviolable symbolism of the sacred. But historical sociology also reveals that the sacred bindings of the Truth, *telos* or *dao* can be more or less tight. The limited activism of the Confucian ideal of heaven or *tian* (beyond correlative cosmology of the early period) in this regard makes this one of the more interesting cases for the modern period.

In concluding this section, I believe the above analysis of Kantian universalism and its subsequent iterations through Marxism and modernization theory reveals that reasoned analysis also requires a sacralisation of the *telos*—here the utopia at the end of history. Faith and sacrifice remain necessary for human salvation. But the ambivalence towards sacralisation and the feeble cathexis of the transcendent or utopian telos renders modern universalism a weak force compared to its predecessors.

Tianxia and Tian

In contemporary China, one of the most noted advocates of *tianxia* for a new global orderis Zhao Tingyang. Zhao advocates a global philosophy "through the world" rather than "of the world" which is a perspective that would necessarily represent only the views of a certain part of the world. This work is well-covered in this volume so I will not spend much time elaborating it. In a recent essay, Zhao gives us some insights about how the *tianxia* worldview emerged in the transition from the Shang to the Zhou in the beginning of the first millennium BCE. A limited power that succeeded a much larger empire, the Zhou devised the worldview to control the larger entity by making global politics a priority over the local. As such, it was a strategic act that eventuated in a long-lasting peace governed by a global world-view harmonizing differences in the world.¹²

In Zhao's view, the contemporary extension of the *tianxia* model would involve a world government controlling a larger territory and military force than that controlled by the autonomous sub-states. These sub-states will be independent in most respects, except in their legitimacy and obligations for which they depend on the recognition of world government. Rather than being based on force and self-interest, the cultural empire would use ritual as a means to limit the self and its interests. *Tianxia* is a hierarchical world-view which prioritizes order over freedom, elite governance over democracy and the superior political institution over the lower level.¹³

William Callahan, who has launched a critique of Zhao's conception, suggests that his conception of *tianxia* as a top-down project of bringing order to a chaotic or potentially chaotic world cannot be derived from the thinkers Zhao uses such as Laozi and Zhuangzi. In their conception of utopia, *luan* represents a form of 'de-centered multi-ordering' and not the kind of chaos which requires ordering from above. ¹⁴Additionally, Wang Mingming tells us that the cosmology of *tianxia* cannot be grasped in a singular fashion. Rather it has to be understood in its two different varieties dateable to the periods before and after the Qin unification of 221 BCE.

In the classical pre-Qin period, *tianxia* represented a religious cosmology in which there was no strict demarcation of the human, natural and divine order. There was no outside to this system which encompassed the different kingdoms or *guo*. *Tianxia* was organized according to a hierarchical theory of concentric circles around a cosmic-moral core of closeness to a transcendent Heaven. Instead of a self-other relationship, a reciprocity of ritualized relationships existed within this concentric world. After the imperial unification, Wang argues that *tianxia* cosmology becomes subordinated to the imperial state (*guo*) and the earlier distinction between the Zhou imperial state and the realm of *tianxia* begins to disappear. Imperial *tianxia* was also

deployed to create a Sino-centric order of hierarchy in the empire and superiority in dealing with foreign tributaries and vassals.

Wang Mingming describes the means by which a ritual society was created in the Zhou by the *shi* class in order to build the ideal of *tianxia* or the Great Unity (*datong*). Not only did the rituals prescribe proper conduct and obligations by different classes of people, the emperor himself as the son of heaven was subordinated to Heaven in the name of *tianxia*.¹⁵ In this ritual order, the "other" was not strictly separated from the self and existed in a reciprocal relationship with it. In the period of the centralized imperial state, *tianxia* lost its character of "unity in diversity" and became equated with imperial rule. Access to the transcendent power of Heaven became increasingly monopolized by the imperial centre especially through its elaborate and synchronized system of official sacrifices and rituals in authorized ceremonial centres through the world. Wang declares, "The concept of Heaven and all under Heaven now became manifested in the idealized perfect union between Heaven and Earth and the core role of the Son of Heaven in it." ¹⁶

To be sure, in his later essays, Zhao acknowledges that the post-Qin ideal of *tianxia* became distorted, but his conception continues to offer a top-down method of political ordering as the essence of the *tianxia* system. This formulation of *tianxia* universalism has a number of problems. In the first place, unlike the Kantian *principle*, it is a *substantive* conception of order with a particular role for the state and a hierarchy of social groups that is unlikely to gain universal acceptability. Moreover, do we not presuppose a highly idealized conception of humanity and a literalist reading of rhetoric if we think that ritual order alone will restrain the politically superior to act benevolently? If it did work well in the Zhou, we will need to consider a multiplicity of factors including kinship ties, a differentiated control of resources and a complex balance of power.

With regard to the contemporary utilization of *tianxia*, it seems rather odd to be applying an ancient system quite so mechanically to an entirely changed world. Moreover, since the political system is not based upon democratically elected leaders, we don't know who will represent world government and its vast resources. It is doubtless because of such concerns that Callahan suspects that this formulation of universalism may not represent a post-hegemonic ideal, but a new hegemony for a rising China.

A feature of the *tianxia* order in this discussion that is worth dwelling upon is the method by which this order is secured. In his top-down system, Zhao believes that political leadership must emanate at the highest level --the *tianxia* political institution-- which must then be "transposed" to the lower levels (how the top controls the bottom is not clear) and not vice versa. This is a thus a descending order from "all under heaven" to nation-states to families. At the same time as political order or control descends, an ethical order ascends from families to states

to *tianxia*. Thus this results in a relationship of mutual justification but would presumably also act as the system of mutual checks. ¹⁷

The extent to which the ethical order was able to check political power, needless to say, is a highly contested issue. My own view is that ethical remonstrance in late imperial society did not achieve a great deal politically. Nonetheless, the ethical life was undoubtedly a deeply meaningful and important ideal in Chinese society, and not merely for potential sage kings. The ritual system of imperial *tianxia* played a significant role not only in sustaining rituals in Chinese society but also the ethical ideals embodied in *tian*—if not *tianxia*—which represented their foundation. It returns us to the ways in which the transcendent—in this case, *tian*—may develop a symbolic, affective and motivating force in society.

Methodologies of Transcendence and Methodological Nationalism

Even if the imperial centre appropriated access to the transcendent power of Heaven, the imperial ritual system sustained the heavenly-ordained cosmology as a transcendent framework of reference in the imperial Chinese world. Heaven as a source of transcendent power remained very powerful in projects of self-formation and self-cultivation from such Confucian ideals of righteous service, remonstrance and renunciation to syncretic ideals of spiritual and bodily empowerment and ethical duty. It is in these modes and methods of self-cultivation and their extension to wider levels of community and universe that we might find the historical sources of a new universalism.

Much has been written about Confucianism and the transcendent authority of heaven. The personal quest for sagehood (junzi) and the cultivation of the heavenly endowed nature (tianning zhixing) were the supreme goals of the committed Confucian particularly in late imperial times and best exemplified in the neo-Confucian school of Wang Yangming (heart-mind school or xinxue). One of the most radical thinkers of this school, Li Zhi argued that the individual was endowed by heaven with the child's mind (tongxin) that was intrinsically capable of discerning good from evil and thus had no need to conform to external constraints in moral cultivation.¹⁸

The tradition of Confucian eremitism where the true Confucian sage rejected political power or suffered from having opposed incorrect or immoral policies certainly retained its rhetorical power through the late imperial period, especially when shrines to notable Confucians were created in local society. ¹⁹ Indeed, many adherents of Wang Yangming or Taizhou school of Neo-Confucianism subsequently played an important part in the popular syncretic movements (*sanjiao heyi*) which arguably became a dominant form of religiosity in Republican China. While not at all intrinsically oppositional or political, the syncretic

movement was deeply redemptive and appealed to a notion of transcendence that combined the Buddhist and neo-Confucian doctrine of the mind.

Among the popular societies in the early 20th century was a largely Confucian redemptive society called the Daodehui. I have written extensively about it elsewhere so I will not elaborate on it here except to point out that in the rigorous program of self-cultivation it propagated among its followers, it sought to work out important religio-moral tensions, indeed the tensions between reason and the sacred order.²⁰ Followers narrated their life-stories which typically involved grasping, through entirely rational procedures, the relation between the idea of heavenly endowed destiny-tianning (which may have included having to live with a concubine or a principal wife)-- and the development of the equally heaven-suffused ethical will that they referred to as light. The records of such societies in 20th century China are replete with such exercises that represent what Michel Foucault has called 'games of truth' - the practices by which experience is rendered as truth-which, from my perspective, is the truth of one's culture or one's time. The cultivation of the self links the transcendent reflexively with the experience of the ordinary to generate meaning and resolve for action in and through the world, perhaps especially the local world.

It seems to me, at least as an initial step, we should be thinking about such modes of commitment-through-transcendence when we consider the possibilities of a universalism that may emanate from Chinese historical culture. Admittedly this does not get at how a world political order may be generated, but it may be more useful to understand the methodology of how a commitment to such an order may be generated. One may well ask why we need to turn to archaic forms when there have been other modern modes of generating commitments. Revolutionary self-formation had of course a powerful impact in 20th century China. Apter and Saich have explored this process in some depth and also revealed its limits consequent upon its extreme politicization.²¹ Nationalism is probably the most successful of modern techniques of creating commitment and resolve. But note how it too depends on the old religious values of sacrifice and suffering.

Indeed nationalisms also posit a transcendent point of reference that transcends locality, family and other particularisms for the sake of the Imagined Community. But the nation is a severely limited expression of transcendence precisely because it is based on a tribal self-other distinction. It is exactly what we need to transcend. Moreover, even for this limited form of transcendence, the nation has mobilized a panoply of sacred imagery through which it channels the loyalty and commitment of compatriots.

The problem with nationalism lies not only in that it limits transcendence and sympathy to the national community, but also in that it subordinates or devalues the links between individuals and other expressions of community below and above

the nation.²² A program of shared sovereignty—a new universalism—can gain meaning only if it develops from the ground up, only if it can relate everyday experiences of the good to the universal. The local and the transcendent are mutually vindicating. In the remainder of this talk, I want to propose sustainability as the transcendent goal of our time. I also want to see how the environmental program and movement in China may be able to incorporate such a long-term salvationist agenda by touching upon the discourses and practices that are shaping it.

Sustainability and Transcendence

The greatest obstacles facing the elevation of sustainability to a transcendent level are perhaps the imperative felt by national populace and their leaders to not sacrifice national interests and the untrammelled power of capitalist consumption. Note that the post-Cold War realignment mentioned above has been particularly conducive to these developments. The process of overcoming such resistance is, of course, multipronged, but it will require bodies of committed activists in civil society and state attuned to the urgency of planetary sustainability. Moreover, the methods used by such bodies are and will have to be both rational and symbolic. As we know, environmental organizations across the world from the radical Earth First! to the IPCC, eco-tourism, have been increasingly active. Intellectually and academically, the ground has been laid globally by the spread of the general field known as "Environmental Ethics" over the last thirty years. Movements following E. F Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful*, such as Deep Ecology, Buddhist Economics, Animal Ethics, Ecofeminism, among others have already established the possibility of sacralising nature or at least sacralising wilderness.

Deep Ecology is a philosophical and social movement that seeks to deprivilege humans as the centre of the planet because this has led to untold destruction and mass extinction. The movement advocates a holistic philosophy that takes non-human life as an intrinsic value and seeks a better quality of life grounded by values rather than goods. This holism is particularly sympathetic to Asian and pantheistic wisdom traditions such as Daoism, Buddhism and Native American religions. They also seek to affect policies and undertake activities that will achieve their goals. Roger Gottlieb, a Deep Ecology philosopher has underscored the mystical and transcendent basis of "earth and all its life as an ultimate truth" in the movement against the collective violence towards the environment that is destroying the support systems of human life. ²³

He speaks of a "passionate, spiritually oriented, mystical communion with the earth and its many beings, a recognition of kinship with those beings that no more requires philosophical justification than does the connection we feel with our parents, pets, or lovers. As such, Deep Ecology is a spiritual philosophy; and the deepest experiences that animate its adherents are profoundly mystical." At the same time, Gottlieb wants to balance this mystical core with a less escapist and a more contemporary and rational view of social justice. He concludes thus, "And so, paradoxically, the wisdom of a mystical Deep Ecology can augment the powers and promises of the secular drive for just social transformation."²⁴

Certainly, the natural world in imperial China was not perceived as something that needed to be subdued by will-power or force. Rather, according to Needham, nature represented perhaps the greatest of all living organisms and its governing principles had to be well understood so that human life could live in harmony with it.²⁵ The process of self-formation was inseparable from nature. The indivisibility of nature between inner self and outer nature in a neo-Confucianism highly influenced by Daoism and Buddhism is the condition for the quest of the true nature within that represents the elusive heavenly principles (*tianli*).²⁶From the Daoists to the neo-Confucians (*xinxue*) right up to the adherents of the syncretic Morality Society, the practices of self-cultivation represented a turning back towards one's original nature that was simultaneously a move towards the quiet and pure "nature of heaven-and-earth." It was through this process that practitioners were able to fully develop their original nature while realizing the metaphysical character of the Dao.²⁷

Turning to experiences in modern Asia, however, since we have been obsessed with pursuing the modern goal of controlling and manipulating nature, our recent history has not provided us with many helpful examples. Elsewhere, I have tried to look at Rabindranath Tagore's efforts to invoke what we today call sustainability—but was called "pantheistic philosophy" in the 1920s-- as a transcendent ideal for the world. In his critique of nationalism and instrumental modernity, Tagore sought to realize an alternative cosmopolitanism drawn from Asian traditions and embodied in Visva-Bharati (or the World-in-One-Nest) University at Santiniketan. In the realm of Indian history, he was drawn to alternative popular traditions identified with medieval Bhakti seers and sages such as Kabir, Nanak, and Dadu —the propulsive motor of transcendence-- who broke through barriers of social and religious exclusiveness and brought together communities based on spiritual reform.²⁸

What was unique and worthy of further inquiry in Tagore's effort was his approach to linking locality and local identity with the transcendent *telos*. It was a form of rooted cosmopolitanism that was expressed in the spirit of Santiniketan. While education had to be undertaken in a universal framework of understanding, the local represented the means of this understanding. The educational projects in Santiniketan celebrated different world traditions but students also engaged with their environment and traditions. Tagore invented secular festivals for the celebration of the different seasons in the region and brought together the urban

and the rural during harvest festivals. He started co-operative movements among the tribals and the rural folk seeking to educate them in health, agriculture, savings and other modern ways of survival, while encouraging the maximum preservation of their own local culture.²⁹

I believe we can find similar efforts in the grassroots movements that were begun in republican China by Liang Shuming, Tao Xingzhi, the Mass Education Movement of Jimmy Yan, the folklore movement of Zhou Zuoren and Gu Jiegang, the early work of Fei Xiaotong and others. I have not yet had the opportunity to research their efforts in significant detail, but one area we need to explore is their connective methodology. How was the self to articulate with the local, national and the civilizational transcendent? How was the self to manage the inevitable tensions between the pull of these scales, but especially between the local and transcendent on the one hand and the national on the other? Moreover, what were the ways in which different civilizational traditions expected to interact to form the alternative global one?³⁰

In today's China we have some remarkable developments in the environmental movement. According to Guobin Yang, the recently mushrooming Chinese environmental NGOs use web platforms for groups to self-organize and twitter for flash mobilization. These civic forms are reaching a threshold where their voices are beginning to be heard by governments and even at a global level. Among all developing countries, the Chinese government's efforts in environmental education are probably the greatest. In 2007, President Hu Jintao coined the idea of Ecological Civilization through which he sought to replace economic construction as the core of development with sustainable development that must incorporate a balanced relationship between man and nature. Together with many developed countries, in 2003, China mandated environmental education in the public schools of the nation. It has encouraged many local governments and groups to produce texts and programs for school children.

Yet, there are many obstacles to the development of environmental education as a transformative force in society. The courses tend to be formalistic and the seriousness of the enterprise may be undermined by the non-inclusion of environmental education in the core official examinations. More generally, children as much as adults are relatively and increasingly alienated from the natural environment in their everyday activities. They cannot yet see how conserving the environment can contribute to their future careers. It is not producing a transformed self.

From an academic and research perspective, Zhang Yulin reveals the sorry neglect of environmental problems in the study of rural China. For instance, of the 747 articles carried by the flagship journal *Observations of Chinese Villages* 中国 • 村 • 察 between 1994 and 2007, only 11 dealt with environmental issues.

Zhang also laments that the great leader of Chinese rural studies, Fei Xiaotong, who sounded the clarion call for rural recovery early in his 1930s studies of the intimate relations of the Chinese peasant and the soil (xiangtu Zhongguo), neglected or ignored the environmental effects of rural industrialization until very late in his life. Zhang believes it is the drive to increase rural production at all costs and the nexus of interests pushing commercial technologies of intensive agriculture that is responsible for much of the degradation of the environment as well as the rural self-governing and co-operative institutions. This drive may have also influenced the academic neglect of these issues.³¹

In more recent years, it is the new rural reconstruction movement (xin xiangcun jianshe yundong) led by figures like Wen Tiejun, Cao Jingqing and Li Changping that has been more gradually successful in developing co-operative, protective and integrated movements which do not focus only on economic or technical solutions for rural society. Moreover, these leaders have clearly linked their movement to the wider global problems of sustainability, but they also see themselves as inheritors of a century-long quest to revive the values of human relations and relations with nature that were hallmarks of Chinese rural society and culture.³²

Over the last twenty years, environmental NGOs or ENGOs as well as informal groups and movements have mushroomed across the country. Indeed, Guobin Yang and Craig Calhoun have dubbed this activism as the "green public sphere" in China. According to the government affiliated (GONGO) All China Environmental Federation, in 2008, there were 2768 ENGOs (employing 224,000 staff) which rose to almost 8000 in 2013. There are many thousands of others which are not formally registered as ENGOs. Their role has been enhanced by recognition at higher levels of government for the environmental services they can render such as enhancing environmental consciousness among the public and mobilizing for projects like reforestation. More importantly, they are able to serve as watchdogs to expose the violation or non-implementation of environmental laws. Of course, as civic organizations in the PRC, they occupy a vulnerable status and most organizations are careful not to oppose state policies, but serve rather in a vital 'supplementary' role as pressure groups, guardians and enablers for the victimized. 34

The profile of activists and activities of the ENGOs suggests an orientation that transcends consumerist and materialist approaches to life, at least among the youth for the time being. Bao Maohong notes that eighty percent of the staff of the registered ENGOs is under thirty and although over half of them have college degrees, they are motivated by their mission rather than their rather paltry, if any, salaries. Greenspeak tends to promote a new moral-spiritual/religious vision and practices and promotes volunteerism and civil participation in opposition to materialist and consumerist practices. The All China Environmental Federation

notes that 70% of the public surveyed by it recognized and supported the activities of the ENGOs.³⁵

The urgency to change environmental behaviour has encouraged some important experiments in environmental education among grass-roots environmental NGOs especially in Yunnan, a province so rich in bio-diversity that it is called the "cradle of NGOs." Robert Erfid's study of NGOs working in the Naxi region of Lijiang and particularly Lashihai shows how some of these small, shoestring budget NGOs committed to environmental education have sought, not merely to tailor environmental learning to local circumstances, but also to engage children in a practical, hands-on education with the environment. For instance, the Yunnan Eco-Network (YEN) and its Director, Chen Yongsong work with schoolage youth to protect their local environment by having them visit forests, learn about and weed invasive plants, clear trash and create school gardens, etc.

Erfid emphasizes how environmental stewardship and sustainable behaviour not only have to be learnt practically but education must also cultivate the motivation to engage in sustainable behaviour. The literature on this kind of motivation emphasizes personal understanding of nature—the process of self-formation-rooted in experiences of the non-human world. Historically the Naxi Dongba religion revered nature. Water and forests were sacralised and this permitted the people to manage these communal resources sustainably. Village regulations were set in stone stele and backed by threats of divine and communal punishment for activities such as unnecessary deforestation and overharvesting wild game. Some of these NGOs have clearly learnt the lesson about the importance of cultivating identification with the environment. They have turned to education about the locality—and not the environment in the abstract—through materials, xiangtu jiaocai based on specific cultural and ecological characteristics of a place or region in order to foster a sense of roots and a "spiritual home" for the youth.³⁶

What we see happening in the corners of China is perhaps not very different from what is happening across many other parts of the world. It is a sign that sustainability is an emergent ideal, a new type of transcendence and sacrality with the capacity to motivate and mobilize persons and groups. But even if it is a strong emergent ideal, it does not possess the institutional power or coherence to be able to share sovereign power in the near future. What it is capable of effecting at the moment is a more hidden or subterranean cultural process, a process referred to above as "the games of truth": whereby the individual is disposed to convert his or her personal experience into the Truth and to read the Truth into their personal experience. This is a process that may well be indexed by such ordinary cultural events, as the popularity of the film Avatar, which help to cathect the protection of nature with symbolic and aesthetic affect.

Conclusion

I have tried to suggest that historical universalisms may be usable for modern universalism in two ways. The wholesale adoption of archaic orders or their unmodified principles is unacceptably idealist and ahistorical. But some of their substantive goals, for instance, of restoring the indivisibility of self and nature could well serve as correctives to our condition. Second we have much to learn from historical methodologies of reflexive linkages between the self and the transcendent in late imperial China. These lessons could make up for deficiencies in modern universalisms.

Modern universalisms have tended to lack confidence in investing the transcendent or utopian truths they propose with sacred authority. Their hesitation doubtless has good reasons that we may see from the rampaging power of extreme nationalisms such as Nazism built on sacralised emotions and aesthetics of hate triumphant over reason. Yet no movement of radical social change has succeeded without a compelling symbology and affective power. The principal question facing analysts of all forms of transcendent authority has to do with the interaction of the sacred and reason.

The question has been tackled by several recent thinkers including Jurgen Habermas and Paul Ricoeur, but they of course deal almost entirely with the Abrahamic traditions and their legacies. Thus Ricoeur wants to restore God as a *figure* of hope, particularly in its preverbal manifestation before it belongs to the revealed word or Proclamation (eg in Genesis I). ³⁷ Thus I see Ricoeur as arguing that the rational is itself dependent upon but also necessary for the symbolism of the sacred. The burden upon contemporary interpreters and philosophers of religion is to rationally explicate such figures of hope as a response to the avowal of radical evil. (2.4) For Habermas, it is the persuasive force of communicative action that has to mediate the binding norms of ritual or sacred obligation (eg to the US Constitution), which, of course, presupposes democracy.

In our own brief discussion of *tian*, we may find other ways and means of relating sacred authority to rational ends. Whether it is the lay women of the Morality Society or the Confucian sage, *tian* is viewed as the highest moral judge and the source of the moral mission for humans. Yet heaven is not anthropomorphic like God and failure to follow its path does not result in punishment immediately or in the afterlife. Sor Hoon Tan suggests that the question of efficacy of *tian* in Confucian thought is ambiguous and has yielded several contradictory positions. ³⁸ While staying with the insight of ambiguity and non-deterministic nature of Heaven's prescriptions, I believe we should also explore the role of the techniques and practices of self-cultivation in sustaining the ethical authority of Heaven. As

transcendence, heaven was tapped as a figureless figure of hope for a variety of ethical and empowering personal projects that validated this very transcendence.

Although to be sure Heaven's will was policed by the imperial state, the ambiguity of interpreting Heaven's personal message and the absence of an authoritative clergy also subjected this message to rational deliberation and empirical persuasion. By the Republican period, even the three sacred followings (sangang) for women could be interpreted with relative flexibility. Indeed, one might say that the flexibility for self-empowerment undergirded its symbolic power. If tian could have such staying power for self-formation in the Republic, might not it repossess it today? The profile of the dedicated ENGO activist may not be entirely different from a Confucian seeker of earlier times. If she or he could access the moral authority possessed by tian for personal empowerment and ethical commitment, China and the world may be the better for it. At any rate, contemporary universalist movements could well take a leaf from the methodology by which late imperial Chinese techniques of the self were empowered by the universal.

As for the tasks before us, there is not much mystery remaining to them. The machineries of national governments need to be persuaded to devote as much time and importance to planetary sustainability in their educational and pedagogic projects as they do on national history and national identity-building. This, in my view, is the challenge for the transcendence prophets of our time.

Notes

¹ A longer and expanded version (that includes India and other parts of Asia) of this paper can be found as Chapter 1 of my book, *The Crisis of Global Modernity: Asian Traditions and a Sustainable Future* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2015).

²Contemporary theorists have sought to distinguish cosmopolitanism from universalism because the latter is believed to presuppose a religious, particularly Christian, conception of common belonging of all as creations of God. Cosmopolitanism is regarded as less impositional (or universal from a particular perspective) because it is based on *practices* of common living and belonging in the world. Yet, cosmopolitanism is also founded on a certain conception of universalism that denies other expressions of universalism. In a way, Kant's tendency to not differentiate the two sharply reflects the reality of their interpenetration. See Daniel Chernilo, "Cosmopolitanism and the Question of Universalism" in, G. Delanty (ed.) *Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies* Routledge, Oxon and NYC, 2012, 47-59. See also Carolina Moulin Aguiar, "Cosmopolitanism" in *Globalization and Autonomy*, CAPES Foundation

http://www.globalautonomy.ca/global1/glossary_pop.jsp?id=CO.0074 accessed Feb 9, 2014

³ Onora O'Neill Constructions of Reason: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy Cambridge Univ Press, Cambridge UK, 1989. 13-23

- ⁴Note that this is the negative image of the positive Christian doctrine: Do unto others as you would do unto yourself; ie, 'don't do anything that you would not want to happen to you or others'.
- ⁵ Ibid., 26
- ⁶ Stephen Palmquist, ""The Kingdom of God is at Hand!" (Did Kant really say that?)", History of Philosophy Quarterly 11:4 (October 1994), pp.421-437. p 434.
- ⁷ Immanuel Kant "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" in On History edited with an Introduction by Lewis White Beck, The Library of Liberal Arts, Indianapolis, 1963. 11
- ⁸ Ibid., emphasis added, 25.
- ⁹ Ibid., p 14
- ¹⁰ Axial civilization characterize those that arose in Eurasia around the 6th c BC where a split developed between transcendence and mundane. The goals of these civilizations were embedded in a divine transcendent realm (*tian* in China) discontinuous with the human world. While no humans –including the state—could fully realize its goals or will in this world, humans were expected to aspire towards their realization. Axial civilizations represented a new type of reflexivity that gave expression to a vision of the world that could be different from the here and the now. As the vision became institutionalized, the transcendent realm became a new ontological basis for universal ethics in these religions. This included new ways of organizing society and demands for self-sacrifice
- ¹¹ According to Habermas, each Axial philosophy including what Weber described as the "intellectual religions of the East", found its origins in both religion and philosophy. Each system of thought sought to take a synoptic view of the world as a whole from a transcendent point of view and to distinguish the flood of phenomena from the underlying essences. Moreover, reflection on the place of the individual gave rise to a new awareness of historical contingency and the responsibility of the acting subject. SeeJurgen Habermas *Time of Transitions* edited and trans by Ciaran Cronin and Max Pensky, Polity Press Camb, UK 2006. 18.
- ¹² Zhao Tingyang, "A Political World Philosophy in terms of All-under-heaven (Tian-xia)" Diogenes 2009 56:5 p 5-18; see pp 6-8. See also his "Rethinking Empire from a Chinese Concept 'All-under-Heaven' (Tian-xia)" in *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture* Vol. 12, No. 1, January 2006, pp. 29 41.
- ¹³ Ibid, 2009, pp 11-18.
- ¹⁴ William A. Callahan, 'Chinese Visions of World Order: Post-hegemonic or a New Hegemony?', *International Studies Review* 10 (2008): 749-61. For the critique see 753-756.
- ¹⁵Wang Mingming "All under heaven" (tianxia): Cosmological perspectives and political ontologies in pre-modern China' *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2(1): 337-383; pp 343-347

According to Sor Hoon Tan, with the Zhou revolution Heaven or *tian* became more than the highest religious authority that it had been in the Shang; it developed a strong moral ideal and became the new basis of political legitimacy. See Tan, "Secular Religiosity in Chinese Politics: A Confucian Perspective," in *State and Secularism*, eds. C.L. Ten and Michael S.K Heng. Singapore: World Scientific, 2010.116.

- 16 Ibid, 351-354.
- ¹⁷ Zhao Tingyang "Rethinking Empire from a Chinese Concept" in Social Identities; p 33.
- ¹⁸ Youngmin Kim, "Political Unity in Neo-Confucianism: The Debate between Wang Yangming and Zhan Ruoshui" Philosophy East and West, Volume 62, Number 2, April 2012, pp. 246-263
- ¹⁹ Ronald G Dimberg, The Sage and Society: The Life and Thought of Ho Hsin- yin. Monographs of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, no. 1. Honolulu: The University of Hawaii. 1974
- ²⁰ See Prasenjit Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern Rowman and Littlefield, 2004; chapter 4.
- ²¹ David E Apter and Tony Saich, Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA; 1994. See also Ann Anagnost, "National Past-times: Narrative, Representation, and Power in Modern China", Duke University Press, 1997.
- ²² Approaches that unconsciously adopt the nation-state's claims in history or in contemporary space adopt what has been dubbed methodological nationalism.
- ²³Roger S. Gottlieb, "The Transcendence of Justice and the Justice of Transcendence:
- Mysticism, Deep Ecology, and Political Life" Journal of the American Academy of Religion Vol. 67, No. 1 (Mar., 1999), pp. 149-166; 155
- ²⁴ Ibid., 165
- ²⁵ Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization in China Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1956,vol 2, 242-244, 281, Needham also finds parallels with Indian thought of the 'organism of the universe' (281 fn c) and to the ideas of Whitehead (454); see also vol 3, (1959) pp 152-153; 163-165, 196
- ²⁶ Zhu Renqiu, "The formation, development and evolution of Neo-Confucianism. With a focus on the doctrine of "stilling the nature" in the Song period" Frontiers of Philosophy in China 2009, 4(3): 322–342; 335.
- ²⁷ Xiang Shiling, "A study on the theory of "returning to the original" and "recovering nature" in Chinese philosophy" Frontiers of Philosophy in China 2008, 3(4): 502–519; passim.
- ²⁸ See Uma Das Gupta (ed.), Tagore: Selected Writings on Education and Nationalism (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 172. For more extensive discussion of Tagore, see chapter 7 in this book.
- ²⁹ Nabaneeta Dev Sen, 'Crisis in Civilization, and a Poet's Alternatives: Education as one alternative weapon', paper presented at 'Tagore's Philosophy of Education': A conference dedicated to the memory of Amita Sen, Kolkata, 29-30 March 2006
- ³⁰ An Yanming "Liang Shuming: Eastern and Western Cultures and Confucianism" in Chun-Ying Cheng and Nicholas Bunnin ed, Contemporary Chinese Philosophy, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 2002. (147-163) 151-155.
- ³¹ Zhang Yulin "Tiandi yibian'yu Zhongguo nongcun yanjiu" ('Upheaval on heaven and earth' and research on Chinese villages) in Zhongguo yanjiu 2009 Spring, pp 1-17. For his earlier views, see Fei Xiaotong, "Xiangtu bense." In Xiangtu Zhongguo. Shanghai: Guanchashe, 1947. Pp 1-7.

- 32 Alexander Day, "The End of the Peasant? New Rural Reconstruction in China" boundary 2 35:2 (2008) pp 49-73; see esp. 55-62
- ³³Yang Guobin and Graig Calhoun, "Media, Civil Society and the Rise of a Green Public Sphere in China" *China Information* 2007.21, pp. 211-34
- ³⁴ Bao Maohong, "Environmental NGOs in Transforming China" NATURE+ CULTURE Volume 4, Number 1, 2009, pp 1-16. 'China's ENGOs increase by almost 8000' People's Daily (English Edition) March 5, 2013
- ³⁵ Ibid, 3-8.
- ³⁶ Rob Efird: "Learning by Heart: An Anthropological Perspective on Environmental Learning in Lijiang" Chapter Draft for Kopnina and Oiumet, eds. Environmental Anthropology Today (New York: Routledge, 2011); see also Robert Erfid, "Learning the Land beneath Our Feet: NGO "Local Learning Materials" and Environmental Education in Yunnan Province." Unpublished essay.
- ³⁷ Ricoeur reads Genesis I in the Old Testament as a non-anthropocentric ordering of all life-forms into a cosmic biosphere that precedes and envelops the salvation-history account. He argues that the Bible is a palimpsest of various modes of discourse. Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrrative and the Imagination* Translated by David Pellauer, edited by Mark I. Wallace, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1995, 77; see also "Part III, The Bible and Genre: The Polyphony of Biblical Discourses" 129-180.
- ³⁸The ambiguity of tian's efficacy is partly a result of its non-anthropomorphic character, being unable to love or punish and is thus similar to religions with an empty transcendence.

Historicity of South Asia & Beyond

Situating South-East Asia in the Articles of the First Five Years of the Journal of Greater India Society (1934-1939): A Historiographical Approach

By

Debarati Ganguly*

Greater India Society was established on 14th October,1926 under the patronage of a Calcutta based group of eminent scholars including members like Kalidas Nag, Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, B.R.Chatterjee, Himanshu Bhusan Sarkar, Nilakanta Sastri, B.C. Chhabra etc. The background of this event was provided by the nascent nationalist feeling of the twentieth century which emphasized that India not only excelled in various aspects within her geographical limits, but also extended her civilizing influences towards the far off lands like South-East Asian countries. This nationalist approach also carried with it the message that India's peaceful interactions with her neighbouring countries and consequent cultural colonization of the indigenous people where her influence reached and was welcomed by the locals, was much more humane and morale than the imperialist and aggressive approach of the western nations towards the colonizing process. The society's formation offered an organizational form to the process of extending such nationalist thinking and its major weapon was a journal published by the society in 8 volumes from 1934-59, with an interruption from 1947-54.

The notable scholars who were engaged with the Greater India Society, contributed in the journal with their extensive research and thoughtful writing. The editors were U.N.Ghoshal, Kalidas Nag and Nalinaksha Dutt. The aims and objectives of the society which were stated on the cover of the journal clearly

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reflected its nationalist approach. They are- to organize the study of Indian culture in Greater India (i.e. Serindia, India Minor, Indo- China and Insulindia), as well as in China, Korea, Japan and other countries of Asia.; to arrange for the publication of the results of researches into the history of India's spiritual and cultural relations with the outside world; to create an interest in the history of Greater India and connected problems among the students in the schools, colleges and universities of India by instituting a systematic study of those subjects and to take proper steps to stimulate the same; to popularize the knowledge of Greater India by organizing mass meetings, lantern lectures, exhibitions and conferences. Undoubtedly, the society, through its research and publications, tried to instill a sense of pride among Indians about their past heritage. Along with this, the members were also aware of the recently emerging notion of pan Asian humanism. It was the result of the post war disillusionment arising out of the west's aggressive role in the world war before which west was regarded as the symbol of righteousness. Now an alternative theory of internationalism was taking place centering Asia which stressed on a bond between Asian countries through peaceful cultural interactions. In this context, China and India became the topic of discussions among the scholars as each shared a sense of its central role in civilizing wider Asia by extending influences through interactions. As in China, Dai Jitao and his society and journal New Asia propagated Sun Yat Sen's idea of Great Asianism and China's role in it, Indian scholars, especially the Bengali intellectuals engaged with the Greater India Society and the journal, were convinced of India's role of civilizing Central and South-East Asia and in this regard, they were greatly inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's vision of an Indo-Asian humanism.

It is a well known fact that Tagore was an ardent critique of narrow patriotic nationalism that ultimately led to aggression, as it was reflected from the policies of the western states. On the contrary, he propagated a broader and inclusive humanism that reflected in his vision of oneness of Asian humanism. Asia is one, bound through the peaceful exchanges and assimilation, irrespective of geographical barriers. Tagore's lectures given in China, Japan etc and writings of the scholars like Okakura Tenshin, Sylvan Levi, who were invited to Visvavarati at Santiniketan, focusing on India's pivotal role in spreading the legacy of peaceful international approach increased enthusiasm among the members of the society.²² The publication of Tagore's oversea journey to the lands of South-East Asia in which he claimed that the socio-cultural and religious influences of India over the indigenous people was so great that he discovered a soul of India there3, was appreciated by the scholars of the society in their related research, thus creating the symbol of Greater India, an extended India beyond her limitation. In this regard the forward written by Tagore in the first issue of the journal must be mentioned. He wrote 'To know my country in truth one has to travel to that age when she realized

her soul, and thus transcended her physical boundaries; when she revealed her being in a radiant magnanimity which illumined the eastern horizon making her recognized as their own by those in alien shores who were awakened into a great surprise of life; and not now when she has withdrawn herself within a narrower barrier of obscurity, into a miserly pride of exclusiveness, into a poverty of mind that durably revolves round itself in an unmeaning repetition of a past that has lost its light and has no message to the pilgrims of the future.'4

In the essays published in the first five years of the journal (1934-39), reflections of these nationalist sentiments can be seen easily. To establish their theory on the factual references, the writers took help from the research undertaken by the French and Dutch indologists. Also the role played by the École française d'Extrême-Orient and the Dutch-East Indies' Oudheidkundige (Archaeological service) in the conservation of South-East Asia's architectural heritage, attracted their attention to the influence of India. The study of inscriptions and local languages of Java and Bali put their faith on a firm basis about the influence of Sanskrit. The scholars also went through critical analysis of Indian inscriptions and textual references. With the help of these sources, the contributors of the journal tried to prove that India was the source of culture and civilization in South-East Asia. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar in his article named 'Malaya' speculated India as the homeland of Malaysian people⁵⁵. According to him, there was a pre historic migration of Austronesian tribes from India to Malaysia and Malaya-Malava people were one of them66. There is no doubt that Majumdar's opinion was inspired by the speculations of Western scholars like Przyluski, Levi and Jules Bloch, about the possibility of a linguistic link between the Austronesian languages of Mainland South-East Asia, including Munda and Santhali languages of North-West India in a wider Austric language group. This view was welcomed by the Greater India Society's scholars. Dr.B.C.Chhabra, in an attempt to trace the location of the Kunjarakunjadesa, mentioned in the famous Changal inscription of Java, concluded, "...the modern peak Agastyamalai (southern part of Annamalai) is the ancient Kunjaraparvata, that the country on its slopes...is identical with the...Kunjarakunjadesa, and that the people of that territory might have gone to Java by the 7th and 8th centuries A.D.".7

The contribution of notable historian Himanshu Bhusan Sarkar among the members regarding their effort to establish that India acted as the source of Cultural aspects of South-East Asia, cannot be overlooked. His writings published in the journal within the time under purview, represented his well known view that the language and literature of South-East Asia was bearing a deep impact of India, especially East India. According to him, the name of the famous architecture of Java, Borobudur, was the corrupted form of 'bara vajra' and it showed Java-Bengal cultural exchanges during the Pala-Sailendra period as in popular Bengali dialect

'vadar' or 'budur' was possibly a corrupted form of 'vajra'8. Also Sarkar had opined that the architecture of Borobudur "...bears the stamp of Bengali influence"9. Although he accepted that there were some variations in Borobudur that could not be found in Bengal and attributed it to the "creative genius of Javanese artists", but also pointed out a possibility that they might have trained at Nalanda¹⁰. Influence of the Bengali grammar 'Candravyakarana' written by the Buddhist scholar Candragomin, as evident from a copper plate, also attested by him as an impact of Bengal¹¹. Another celebrated scholar Manomohan Ghosh analysed the Old-Javanese version of Ramayana Kakawin and concluded that it was a poetical translation and 'partial adaptation of the famous Bhattikavya'12. Although Ghosh had not made it clear what he meant by 'adaptation'. As he had differentiated it from 'translation', it was not clear from his writings whether there was inclusion of indigenous features like stories or characters that were assimilated with the model version. These examples show that the scholars were not ready to accept that the indigenous elements might have a role to play to create an assimilated environment as their writings drew picture of a culture that spoke of only Indian influences, an 'Indianized' culture in a different land.

Writings about art and architecture of South-East Asia also show this particular emphasis of the scholars on the contributions of India. That this aspect is not altogether wrong is proved from the latter researches. But it cannot be ignored that the Greater India scholars, to some extent, had over emphasized the factor. Although in the first half of the 20th century, when the researches and archaeological finds did not achieve a standard like today, Greater India scholars' effort to prove their point through the analyzation of the bronze or stone statues found from South-East Asia as well as sculptures and temple structures and making a comparative discussion with the Indian artefacts obviously show their expertise as historians. But the familiar pattern of the nationalist writing of ignoring the indigenous elements is also prominent in their writings. It is true that the topics of their writings centred on the art objects of South-East Asia, but they did not try to explain these objects' from the point of view of their own local features. On the contrary, they brought about a comparative analysis with the Indian artefacts focussing that they were bearing the similar artistic characteristics and styles like the South-East Asian products and thus tried to prove the latter's Indian source and inspiration. Devaprasad Ghosh in his articles dealing with the art of Srivijaya, had expressed his views that this art showed the influences of various periods of North and South Indian history¹³. South Indian source of Sumatran art had been emphasised in Nilakanta Sastri's writing on the basis of analyzation of structural features of a Sumatran bronze image of a woman which, as according to him, was directly brought from South India^{14.} O.C. Gangoly had argued that the influence of Indian art on the same of Borneo could be seen in the various images discovered

from there like standing Mahakala, seated Ganesha, broken head of Brahma etc15. Moreover, the two types of Nandi images, i.e. nandis with head erect and nandis with drooping heads, were the reminiscent, according to him, of the nandis of the Mid-Chola period and the later times showing degenerative types respectively¹⁶. Although Gangoly had argued that Borneo might receive the Indian influence through java as the two types of nandi images had been found in Java¹⁷, but he did not think of the possibility if Java acted as a carrier, then some local structural features might have included. Even when any Indian parallel artefact similar to the South-East Asian product was not available to the historians, they tried to establish the latter's Indian source through the use of various other means. Here the work by Jitendra Nath Banerjea¹⁸ can be cited as an example. In the absence of any direct Indian parallel to a four armed female figure discovered from Kediri, he took help from the iconographic text Rupamandana to prove that this image combined various iconographic features of the three particular varieties of Gauri, i.e. parvati, Sri and Totala¹⁹. In addition to it, he also tried to find various iconographic similarities between this South-East Asian figure and images and sculptures discovered from different places of India²⁰. In fact, Banerjea had stated that the Indonesian reliefs could not be identified without the help of their Indian prototypes and iconographical texts²¹. So the indigenous features of the South-East Asian sculptures and architectures were not recognized by the Indian scholars under consideration, by which such products could claim an identity of their own. Instead they had been judged from the point of view of Indian influence alone.

Another particular aspect can be raised from the writings dealing with India-South-East Asia relationship in the field of art. As it is mentioned earlier that in their search to prove Indian influence in South-East Asian countries, the scholars of the society were mostly inspired by the works done by the European historians. But, unfortunately, in their writings they could not show a balanced approach to the uses of these foreign sources. The scholars mainly showed preferences to those works in which they found support for their arguments. Although they had not altogether ignored the works of those historians who did not adhere to their views, but it is also cannot be denied that here the authors had mainly tried to point out the errors of such works. Devaprasad Ghosh did not agree with the views of Dr. Vogel that the combine artistic form of kirtimukhara and makara of the Srivijayan art were not the evolutionary contribution of indigenous artists²². He had tried to prove with examples that this characteristic was present in Indian art from a long time ago²³. Similarly Ghosh had negated the view of V.S.Callenfalls that Borobudur was not built according to Indian style²⁴. According to Devaprasad, this architecture had resemblances with the temple pattern of Mahasthan and paharpur of Bengal²⁵. To describe the bronze image of woman from Sumatra, N.K. Sastri had followed the view of Dr. F.D.K. Bosch that the style of the image offered its South Indian origin²⁶. But Sastri had also opposed Bosch when the latter had created the hypothesis that after 10th century there was the development of a Buddhist art in Sumatra under the fresh stream of influence from South India and it was different from the Hindu-Javanese art²⁷. But Sastri was not convinced of such possibility of any independent Buddhist art school in Sumatra. Instead, he had argued that the bronze image was carried from South India and tried to establish his view firmly with the help of the evidences of the development of bronze casting in South India before 10th century A.D²⁸. So the approach of the Indian scholars under discussion to the use of the informations provided by the European writers was not totally unbiased. Here the process of making choices was inspired in a large way by their particular opinion regarding Indian influence. Whenever such sources had indicated towards the presence of the indigenous elements, the eminent scholars of the society, as evident from their writings in the first five issues of the journal, were not ready to appreciate.

The scholars had not restricted their discussion to the cultural side only, political aspects also were not ignored. During the selected time period of the journal, three important articles about the political history of the Sailendra empire were written by R.C.Majumdar²⁹. A noticeable feature of these writings were the use of different types of sources like descriptions of Arab and Chinese travellers and statements provided by the royal Chinese annals as well as indigenous inscriptions like Ligor, Kelurak etc. Also he went through the Chola inscriptions to reconstruct the history of relationship between the Sailendras and the Cholas. Such use of the diverse type of materials as well as familiarity with the foreign scholars and use and compare them with the other sources undoubtedly attest to the efficiency of Majumdar as a historian. By using the sources, Majumdar had represented a general political history of the Sailendras- its political expansion, relation with the Cholas and continuation of the existence of the empire till 15th century A.D. But another aspect of his writing can also not be averted. Here he had represented the Sailendra empire, following the familiar model of large, centralized empire of India that could offer political integrity, religious peace and cultural developments³⁰.

In conclusion it can be said that the members of the society, with their writings published in the society's journal from 1934-39, have tried to make people aware of the glorious chapter of India's past heritage, i.e. her relations with South-East Asia and the consequent influence on the latter. Their efforts were in many ways related to the theory that looked India as the centre of Asian culture and civilization. Although they had judged the whole factor from an Indianized perspective and emphasized on the point that the South-East Asian countries became the cultural colonies of India as they accepted India's cultural superiority. As profound scholars of history, they went through various types of sources, but were mainly interested in those facts that showed diffusions of Indian culture. Hinduism

was represented as the main driving force behind this civilizing mission of India and the influence of Sanskrit, puranas, epics, architectural norms etc were highlighted with the help of inscriptions, literature, art, religious norms etc of those far off lands. Even these writers had tried to stretch back the date of the contacts with India as far back as possible³¹. Such aspects, no doubt reflect, the overtly nationalistic bias of their writing. But we cannot ignore the nationalistic milieu when they were recording the tale of relationship between India and South-East Asian nations. We might not agree with the Indianizing aspect, but we also cannot overlook the presence of Indian influence in those countries as evident from the present day researches. Limitations and contradictions are normal parts of historical productions, especially for those written at such an early time when this part of Indian history was not so discussed and highlighted. Thus the writers and their writings under purview should be judged according to the context as they are a part of a larger nationalist historiography. Inspite of various limitations, the articles have been regarded as one of the important sources for the later researches in the concerned field. The contributions of The Greater India Society and its journal are path breaking in the study of Indian internationalism.

Notes

- ¹ The 'Aims and Objects' of Greater India Society are mentioned on the cover of their journal.
- ² Kwa Chong-Guan,(2013) 'Visions of South-East Asia as Greater India' in Early South-East Asia Viewed from India, An Anthology of Articles from The Journal of the Greater India Society, Institute of South -East Asian Studies, Singapore, p.xix
- ³ Suniti Chattopadhyay (2012), Rabindra Sangam e Dvipomoy Bharat,Book Company Limited, Kolkata, January. Also see, Tagore, Rabindranath, Java Jatrir Patro, Bishvabharati, Falgun, 1392.
- ⁴ Rabindranath Tagore , 'Foreword', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.1, New Delhi, 1987, p.11
- ⁵ Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, 'The Malay', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1.
- 6 ibid
- ⁷ B.C. Chhabra, 'Kunjarakunjadesa of The Changal Inscription', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.2, p.177.
- 8 Himanshu Bhusan Sarkar, Two Notes on The Cultural Contact between Java and Bengal', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.I, p.52-53.
- ⁹ Ibid p.53
- 10 Ibid p.53
- ¹¹ Himanshu Bhusan Sarkar, Literary and Epigraphic Notes; 'A Sanskrit Grammar of Bengal in Java', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.108-110.

- ¹² Manomohan Ghosh,, 'On the Source of the Old-Javanese Ramayana Kakawin', Jouurnal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, p.117.
- ¹³ Devaprasad Ghosh, 'Early Art of Srivijaya', Journal of The Greater India society, Vol.1, No.1, Delhi, 1987, pp.31-38. Also see, 'Sources of The Art of Srivijaya', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.50-56.
- ¹⁴ K.A.Nilakanta Sastri,, 'A South Indian Portrait Bronze from Sumatra', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.104-107.
- ¹⁵ O.C. Gangoly 'On Some Hindu Relics in Borneo', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.97-103.
- 16 ibid
- 17 ibid
- ¹⁸ Jitendra Nath Banerjea,, 'On the Identification of a Few Indonesian Sculptures', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.IV, New Delhi, 1987, pp.137-147.
- 19 ibid
- 20 ibid
- ²¹ Ibid 138
- ²² Devaprasad Ghosh,, 'Migration of Indian Decorative motifs', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.II, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.38-39
- 23 ibic
- ²⁴ Devaprasad Ghosh,, 'Early Art of Srivijaya', Journal of The Greater India society Vol.1, No.1, Delhi, 1987, pp.37-38
- ²⁵ ibid
- ²⁶ K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, 'A South Indian Portrait Bronze from Sumatra', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.III, No.1, , New Delhi, 1987, pp.104-107
- ²⁷ Ibid
- 28 ibid
- ²⁹ Ramesh Chandra Majumdar,, "The Sailendra Empire (up to the end of the 10th century A.D.)', Journal of The Greater India society Vol.1, No.1, Delhi, 1987, pp.11-27.; Also, 'The Struggle between the Sailendras and the Cholas', Journal of The Greater India society Vol.1, No.2, PP.71-91.; And 'Decline and Fall of the Sailendra empire', Journal of The Greater India Society, Vol.II, No.1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.12-24.
- ³⁰ Ramesh Chandra Majumdar,, 'The Sailendra Empire(up to the end of the 10th century A.D.)', Journal of The Greater India society Vol.1, No.1, Delhi,1987, p.15.
- ³¹ Ramesh Chandra Majumdar had tried to "push back the first phase of colonization in the Far-East" in his article "The Malay"; O.C.Gangoly had argued in his 'On Some Hindu Relics in Borneo', that contacts with Borneo started from the age of Puranas as the mention of the 'Barhinadvipa' in the puranas was the evidence of this fact. More or less it is appear from the writings that the scholars were in the support of the view that the contact with India had started from a much early date, even from the pre-Christian times

Combating the Challenging Climate: British Household in Tropical India

By

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The territorial expansion of the British rule in India resulted in an increased interest in the Indian environment and its effects on the health and livelihood of Europeans. Contemporary physicians, historians, naturalists and others contemplated about the ability of the Europeans to settle in their newly conquered land. The tropical climate proved to be a fundamental detriment to the permanent establishment of English rule in the Indian subcontinent. The Europeans consciously believed in the uniqueness of the Indian environment and its maladies and their necessity to adjust to this new situation in order to continue the colonial rule. Belief in the distinctiveness of the tropical disease environment raised the fundamental question of whether or not it was possible for Europeans to acclimatise their bodies to their new surroundings. Most medical men believed that there was nothing inevitable about sickness in the tropics, and that much could be done to prevent it. Indeed this was the basic assumption underlying all colonial medical texts from 1770 to 1858.

The question of acclimatisation was vital for the long term presence of the British rule in India. It was based on the overwhelming belief in the notion that different climates produced different constitutions. Climate, as argued by Elizabeth Collingham, became a significant explanatory tool in the European encounter with the Orient, used to elucidate differences between Occidentals and Orientals.¹ From the mid 18th century onwards, climate in colonialist's vision began to be seen as the reason for scientific and economic advancements of Europe and degeneration and stagnation of the East. India and other tropical countries became synonymous with lethargy, effeminacy and decay. Temperate climate, on the other hand, were believed to breed strong independent types, full of manly vigour.²

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European constitution was vulnerable in the tropical climate of India, and it was an easy prey to the deadly diseases found in the tropics. Life in the tropical climate of India was never easy, particularly before the advent of electricity. The danger of disease and death always lurked behind the luxury and abundance of the Indian colonial empire. For the Europeans Indian climate was broadly divided into three basic seasons namely, 'Cold weather, Hot weather and the Rains.'3 The heat of India was dreaded by the English. The extremity of the heat often proved fatal for the unfamiliar British colonial rulers. As Reginald Savory Recollected, "The wind drops, the sun gets sharper, the shadows go black and you know you're in five months of utter physical discomfort. Mentally you have to battle against this heat. Physically you try and shut it out."4

In their effort to cope up with the climatic challenges, the Western mindset was brewing the fact that the 'native' skin and health seemed more durable under the same challenge. This idea echoed a level of common conviction that 'natives' were more habituated to the heat than a European ever could be. It was claimed that the skin of the European was inferior to that of the subject population while facing the rays of the sun. Thus the skin of an ordinary Indian boatman, as described by James Johnson, was better suited to combat the scorching sun. "... Nature has previously done a great deal, towards the security of the dandy, by forming the colour, and in some respects the texture, of his skin, in such a manner, that the extreme vessels on the surface are neither so violently stimulated by the heat, nor so easily struck torpid by sudden transitions to cold. Certain it is, that the action of the perspiratory vessels, too is different from that of the same vessels in Europeans-at least they secrete a very different kind of fluid; being more of an oily and tenacious nature than the sweat of the latter."5 A subtle we-they syndrome of the colonial imperialist pretext began to surface from this conviction of distinctly different composition of the two bodies. This reinforced the racial and physiological difference between the rulers and the ruled.

By the 1820s and 1830s, it was proven by the Anglo-Indian physicians that the Indian climate was not suitable to the European constitution and longer residence in the colonies made them weaker and more susceptible to different ailments. Thus as Elizabeth Collingham Pointed out that the Anglo-Indians themselves became 'exotic within the exotic space of India.' And advice was given in the household and medical compendiums to follow the indigenous customs so far combating the heat was concerned. These manuals and guidebooks were being written by former tropical physicians but also by government and military officials, even by missionaries as well. They specifically targeted those who contemplated traveling or living in any of the Britain's tropical colonies. Some were written specifically for colonial officials, missionaries, the memsahibs and even the casual

travellers. The manuals contained advice on tropical health and hygiene, tropical clothing, care for children under tropical climate, tropical diseases and their cures.

The Sun was seen as the greatest threat and protection from it, was imperative for maintenance of health. The apparent hatred towards the 'native' customs and practices was somehow compromised in the question of enduring the unfriendly climate. For protection from the scorching sun, the physician authors of the household and medical manuals openly advised in adopting Indian customs and clothing. To quote James Johnson, "...we observe both Hindoo and Mahomedan guarding most cautiously against solar heat, as well as cold. The turban and cummerbund meet our eye at every step:-the former, to defend the head from the direct rays of a powerful sun; the latter apparently for the purpose of preserving the important viscera of the abdomen from deleterious impressions of cold." 7 How far the purpose of the waist belt had a hygienic perspective remains an issue of much debate. But an even more interesting fact is that this cummerbund or waist-belt gradually evolved into the 'cholera belt'. This belt according to the Anglo-Indian Surgeons was an excellent way of controlling excessive perspiration from an overheated stomach leading to irregular bowel movements resulting in Cholera. The cholera belt was rather popular, so much so that it was even prescribed in France and Britain during cholera epidemics. 8

But there were definitely some more pragmatic adaptations as well which really showed improvisation in the native ways for same purposes. For example, as far as protection for the head was concerned, the famous 'sola topi' eventually evolved from imitating the Indian headgear or Pugri. Murray's Handbook for Travellers in India, Burma and Ceylon, while giving advice to possible tourists in the tropical colonies, noted that "a cloth cap might suffice for the cool months but even in cold weather the midday sun in India is dangerous, and it is therefore advisable to wear a cork or pith helmet, which ... is indispensable in real hot weather".9 The fear of Sunstroke was omnipresent among the English and thus protection from sun rays directly affecting the head was imperative. The topi eventually became a ubiquitous symbol of Anglo-Indian life. The wearing of topi asserted British identity in the colony. The topi protected them from the sun and at the same time upheld their Brtitishness in the eyes of the subject population. In the words of Francis A. de Caro and Rosan A. Jordan "The sun perhaps became the embodiment of all those forces against which one had to struggle in order to serve in India and which sought to destroy Anglo-India. Hence it is not surprising that the community symbol should be one designed to protect one against a force that seemed to sum up all the forces ranged against him". 10

Another adaptation that the English embraced in their colonial exile was the practice of taking daily baths; a practice unthinkable in the cold and moist climate of Britain, where this practice would have proved suicidal at that time. In fact daily Baths which checked heavy sweating, were prescribed by Company surgeons as a precaution against tropical diseases. ¹¹ Johnson in particular argued that the British should learn from the Indian practice of bathing everyday and adopt this custom in their daily lives. ¹² And from 1830s onwards bathrooms became a regular feature of the English bungalows in India, while the custom of attached bath began to develop in England not until than the late 19th Century. ¹³ In fact it has been claimed that the use of shampoo was uncommon in Europe, and the idea was transmitted from India. Colesworthy Grant argued that hair washing was ". . . an operation to which I suspect more importance is not attached in any part of the world, than in this country." ¹⁴ Even Fanny Parks gave a recipe for shampoo, involving besan, lime and egg yolk. All this proves the importance of bathing and cleanliness among Indians. ¹⁵ Thus the English was learning from the same Indians whom they claimed to be impure and unhygienic.

The rulers therefore had to have invented ways which would help them to survive the wrath of the Indian heat. Lofty Bungalows were built within shady compounds with trees and the rooms had numerous huge windows and doors with very thick walls and high ceilings surrounded by covered verandas. "The second great desideratum of a tropical house is free ventilation, to secure at least one, and preferably two, sides of each room in free communication with the outer air by means of doors or windows, and some at least of these should extend to the floor level or near it."16 Many sahibs, particularly the bachelors used to sleep outside in the open. "...We never slept indoors in the hot weather. We always slept outside on the lawn under a mosquito net, with a little table by our sides with a thermos flask or something with cold water in it..." ¹⁷ Colesworthy Grant wrote about a person who used to sleep on the floor of the terrace without even the bed. 18 Heat thus created such discomforts among the Europeans for which comfort and fear of mosquitoes were both easily undermined. While for those who stayed and slept indoors coolness was maintained by the tatties made from Khus Khus grass, which hanged over all open windows and doors of the house. The tatties were kept wet by the bhistees, or water carriers, who used to sprinkle water on those, continuously from outside. Another universal feature associated with British life in the Tropics, before the onset of electricity was the hand pulled Punkahs. "The first sight of a pankha is a novelty to a griffin. It is a monstrous fan, a wooden frame covered with cloth, some ten, twenty, thirty, or more feet long, suspended from the ceiling of a room, and moved to and fro by a man outside by means of a rope and pullies, and a hole in the wall through which the rope passes; the invention is a native one; they are the greatest luxuries,..."19 In fact the high ceilings of the English bungalows were built consciously so as to accommodate the hanging punkahs. Besides the punkah, thermantidote was an ingenious device which kept away the heat. Fanny Parks mentioned both The Punkah and the Thermantidote, "The weather is becoming very hot; we are making our house look cool and comfortable, colouring it with French grey, and hanging pankhas in preparation for the hot winds. We hope to feel cool by the aid of a thermantidote, for which we are building a terrace and verandah."²⁰ It could be assumed that thermantidote was similar to modern day aircoolers. Parks further elaborated the functioning of the thermantidote in detail and affirmed the relief the 'ugly looking' machine brought to her.²¹

Before the onset of electricity and the refrigerators, ice was country made, through a complex, elaborate and laborious process. It was only done during the winter, particularly in Allahabad and Calcutta. ²². Once ice was formed it remained there trapped to be used only on the onset of the very hot months, namely from April or May onwards. It was therefore not surprising that consumption of ice was rationed and could be used only for limited time period. "...We had ice this year until the 20th of August. Each subscriber's allowance is twelve ser (24 lbs.) every other day." ²³

For keeping them cool, the Colonial rulers were, dependent on Indian servants. The punkah pullers were an integral part of the elaborate colonial household. While the Abdar was entrusted with the job of cooling the water, wines, beer and other table delicacies, which depended more on their refreshing coolness than flavour. The Abdar was the walking refrigerator of those days and went with his master to every dinner party for cooling the master's wine, using saltpetre in a container for the bottle.

The English efforts to adapt to the Indian climate put them in a vulnerable position. Their claim of being superior to Indian subjects was challenged at every level. Their racial arrogance was undermined when it came to face the scorching summer heat. The Company surgeons themselves declared that Indians were more suited to bear the heat of the climate. It was from the 'heathen', the English learnt the art of everyday bathing, which was definitely a priority if one wanted to maintain their health in Indian summer. Even for their personal comfort the English were at the mercy of the indigenous servants. The Europeans were advised against leading a morally loose life and maintaining a strict discipline in consumption of alcohol, food, sleep and daily habits. "...Many cases of sunstroke have been intimately connected with exposure to the sun after drinking alcohol. All alcoholic drinks should be shunned until the sun goes down. Young people going to the tropics will enjoy far better health and be better workers if abstainers. It is wiser to follow the customs of the natives of the country, who as a rule drink tea, coffee, water, or sherbet."24 Thus the European was highly sensitive to tropical climate and had to follow certain protective mechanisms most of which were borrowed from the 'savage' indigenous ideas and custom.

Climate proved a stubborn and perpetual obstacle in establishing the British superiority over India. Their effort of creating a familiar world was at loggerheads

with the climactic threat of India. The harsh climate was forcing them to accept and acknowledge indigenous practices, which they, otherwise abhorred. Here hill stations came as a much sought after escapade for it provided the much needed freedom, not only from the heat but to a world and to a climate to which their temperate constitution was more accustomed to. Initially a number of hill stations were developed as sanatorium for the ailing British troops, but gradually these mountain abodes became second home for the British during the unbearable summer heat. They provided an alternative to British climate, accessible and enjoyable within their colonial perimeters. The Himalayas in its full bounty and grandeur provided endless scope to develop as many hill stations as required by the Raj. Thus, came up the first two major hill stations, Mussoorie, and Simla by the middle of the 1830s which was closely followed by Darjeeling in 1850s that provided respite for the sahibs serving in Northern and Eastern India. But the absence of Himalayas did not prevent the Raj to find some lesser alternatives, once they could realize the benefit of these hill stations. Thus, Ootacamund in Madras and Mahabaleswar in Bombay came up to provide retreat from the common Indian climatic condition. In the hill stations grew a typical British culture which resembled more with the life in the Metro pole England.

In the process of their environmental adjustment, the English life style had to undergo adaptation and changes, accept and some of the indigenous practices and toe the line of oriental knowledge system which they so looked down upon. This reveals a different image of the invincible ruling class, naïve and vulnerable at the face of an unknown climate. But, in spite of that, the lure of wealth and position seemed more effective, which is why they could take up this challenge at their stride, sometimes at the cost of life. Hence, the creations of guidelines for the future generations to hold back the colonial fortress; be that against the permanent threat of the scorching sun.

Notes:

¹ Elizabeth Collingham (2001) *Imperial bodies: the physical experience of the Raj 1800-1947*, Polity press, United Kingdom, p 25.

² James Wallace (1824) A voyage to India, T and G. Underwood, London, pp. 115-116.

³ Charles Allen(2010) Plain Tales from the Raj, Abacus, Great Britain, reprint, p.143.

⁴ Allen (2010), p. 143.

 $^{^5}$ James Johnson (1827) The influence of tropical climates on European Constitution, Thomas & George Underwood, London, p. 522 .

⁶ Collingham (2001), p 80.

⁷ Johnson (1827), p 522.

⁸ Collingham (2001), p 88.

- ⁹ Murray(1901) Murray's Handbook for Travellers in India, Burma and Ceylon, Thacker, Spink & Co, Calcutta, 4th edition, p xviii.
- ¹⁰ Francis A. de Caro and Rosan A. Jordan,(1984) The Wrong Topi: Personal Narratives, Ritual, and the Sun Helmet as a Symbol, in *Western Folklore*, Vol. 43, No. 4 October, p 246.
- ¹¹ Collingham (2001), p 44.
- ¹² Johnson (1827), p 445.
- ¹³ Collingham (2001), p 46.
- ¹⁴ Charles Colesworthy Grant(1862) *Anglo-Indian domestic life*, Calcutta, Thacker, Spink & Co, p 82.
- ¹⁵ Fanny Parks (1850) Wanderings of a Pilgrim in search of picturesque, Pelham Richardson, London, Vol II, p 501, (No. XIV. Take seven gelas (seed of mimosa scandens), break and put the kernels into a chhattak of water for a night; pound them, arid strain through muslin; add the juice of four or five limes, and the yolks of two or three eggs; wash the hair with the mixture.)
- ¹⁶ G.M.Giles (1905) climate and health in hot countries and the outline of tropical climatology, William Wood & Co, New York, p 6.
- ¹⁷ Allen (2010), p 143.
- 18 Grant (1862), p 22.
- ¹⁹ Parks (1850), Vol I, p 25.
- ²⁰ Parks(1850) Vol I, p 199.
- ²¹ Parks(1850) Vol I, p 199. For a better understanding of the workings of Thermoantidote see, Amitav Ghosh,(2008) *Sea of Poppies*, Viking, New Delhi, p 253, "...Known as a Thermantidote, the device was a winnowing machine that had been fitted with a propeller and a thick mat of fragrant Khus-Khus. The men who had once pulled the ropes of the overhead punkahs were now employed in operating the Thermantidote: while one wetted the machine's rush screen the other turned the propeller by means of a handle, forcing a constant stream of air through the dampened mat. Thus,by means of evaporation, the machine was supposed to create a wonderfully cooling breeze."
- ²² Parks (1850) Vol I, pp. 77-81.
- ²³ Parks (1850) Vol I, p 81.
- ²⁴ W. J. Simpson(1916) *The Maintenance of Health in the Tropics*, John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, ltd., Oxford street, United Kingdom, p 27.

Geographical and Cultural Identities in South Asia & Other Asian Countries

Bollywood and Beyond: The Cultural Image of India in Soviet and Post-Soviet Tajikistan

By

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Tajikistan is the smallest and the most obscure state of Post-Soviet Central Asia. Even after her independent existence for more than two decades, common Indians are hardly aware of her presence, at a close distance. However, India and Tajikistan, share cultural links since time immemorial, much before either of the states got their modern name and geographical contour. But, if seen in retrospect, in contemporary Tajikistan much of the image of India is the creation and contribution of some legendary Bollywood films. It was the Soviet era that allowed this new avenue to reorient an image of India for common Soviet citizens. Although based on fantasy, revealing only a partial glimpse of India, these films had been and still are the most active platform for keeping the cultural image of India alive in the popular understanding of the Soviet and post-Soviet lands. Tajikistan has her own history of capturing Bollywood, absorbing the spirit and the values conveyed along with the aesthetics and music, internalizing the ethos, and reflecting them in their own world of creativity.

However, to look back through the passage of time, the link between India and Tajikistan was part of a multiple layer interaction between India and Central Asia over different historic epochs. The saga of silk route did not only bring commercial connectivity but also created enormous scope for cultural contact between South and Central Asia in the antiquity. And this cultural interaction only accelerated with the advent of the Arab-Persian and Turko- Mongol regimes .Along with warfare techniques, commercial ventures and advent of Islam, they also brought substantive cultural traits that India could absorb, internalize and preserve. Starting from the language of court, the food habits, the costumes and the music in practice, had undergone a great exchange during the pre-modern days.

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Some basic historic facts are necessary to set the backdrop .Tajikistan became a part of USSR since 1924, as an autonomous province under the Republic of Uzbekistan and received independent status in 1929, on the basis of their ethnolinguistic distinction. In fact, being the only Central Asian state with a Persian lineage, Tajikistan has a cultural heritage linked to the classical age. But, Tajikistan's political journey along with a well-defined geographical contour under the Soviet system, somehow, failed to provide her with the richness of geo-cultural spaces enjoyed historically. Its present geographical contours were created by the Soviet Government with their own sense of authority and highhandedness (which they termed as big brotherhood). Thus, the initiation of the Tajik Republic began with the loss of Samarkand and Bukhara, since 1929which is still lamented as an irreconcilable loss for the Tajik land and her people. These two cities of enormous historic value and religious-cultural importance remained with Uzbekistan as part of the Soviet diplomatic design.

Interestingly, the Soviet period stands as a strange epoch of both encouragement and restrictions to all kinds of cultural endeavor. On the one hand it encouraged literary and other artistic talents by full economic support, on the other controlled the theme and perspectives of creativity within the given socialist framework. Bollywood films or popular commercial Hindi films became the most successful vehicle for modern Indian culture, in a land whose cultural preferences and choice of entertainments were also under strong vigil. In the book Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas', Sudha Rajagopalan had highlighted as to how the consumption of Hindi films were a common feature of Soviet society, and why this movie culture was most intense in the Central Asian states.1 Of course, their access to Bollywood films was restricted by the strong censorships of Soviet state. Yet, within the given parameter, the fondness over the films, their actors, music, dance and even the simple social values projected in the movies from 60s-80s was remarkable. In fact, according to Rajagopalan, Soviet government took a conscious policy to encourage Bollywood mania in order to divert public attention from the Hollywood movies. Thus, craze for Bollywood, which is a marked feature of the Soviet republics were not spontaneous but a bi-product of cold-war culture. Consequently, the Soviet period, which consciously created water shed in the flow of culture between India and Central Asia for centuries, blurred the remote past and encouraged the bollywood films and their songs as a new take off point. Whatever the state intension might have been, the films provided a window for those keen to cherishIndian values and culture where Tajikistan, the most obscure state of Soviet Union played a leading role.

In fact, it was in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, that there was a stampede over the tickets for Disco Dancer leading to death of some crazy fans.² This one single odd event, tragic though it is, is enough to establish the magnitude

of Bollywood craze in this particular Soviet republic. Moreover, once tasted, the love for Bollywood became an irreversible madness for Tajikistan that sustained its intensity even after the end of Soviet regime. Thus, was created the immortal saga of Awara³ and Disco Dancer⁴, here. 'Awara' still remains a thriving link and Raj Kapoor, the creator of the movie, the most idolized Bollywood icon. The appeal of this film survived about half a century through all the ups and downs of the Soviet experiment till its collapse and still continues to influence the post-Soviet minds so much so that a Tajik film of 21st Century is named "Ovara" which depicted a similar story about children without parents in a village.⁵ What is even more interesting is the songs of Awara being played or sung in it to remind the connection. In fact, the director of this film explained in a personal interview that the connotation of *awara* is multi-dimensional in this cinema. While the child-hero's *awara* image is obvious, his own father, an immigrant worker held in a Moscow prison, his grandfather, who lost his sight in an accident, the local youth who had no job security in the post-Soviet transition, all depict vagabondism of one or other kind.⁶

The other film of legendary fame was Disco Dancer that brought Mithun Chakravati, the hero of the film untold fame and recognition across generation. The epitome of madness over this film in Tajikistan has been already mentioned earlier. However, most interestingly, this film almost led to the rise of a sort of social category called 'Jimmy' after the hero of this film, who was a street singer. One can find many such semi-vagabond singers (Jimmys) in nook and corner of Tajikistan who sing in small family occasions and survive on the meager dole they receive in return. One suchJimmy, a Tajik immigrant worker acquired world- wide fame in the 21st Century with some strange twists of luck. His original name is Baimurat Allaberiyev⁷, He is not a trained singer. He was discovered while working in a warehouse as the result of a colleague video recording him with a cell phone and posting it on the internet. Since that time he has moved to St. Petersburg and performed in theaters and night clubs. Recently he is also chosen as an actor in a Hollywood movie. Thus imitation of Bollywood songs brought a tectonic shift in Baimurat's life and career and opened the floodgate of unexpected success.

But these self-trained Jimmies are not the only messengers of Bollywood melodies in Tajikistan. The attraction of Bollywood songs are remarkable with the well trained singers from Tajikistan as well. Thus, the rising pop star Nozia Karomatullo⁸ also ventured through a few Hindi film songs. The tantalizing effect of her song and dance combination can highly challenge the real performances in the films. This young and versatile singer has devoted two years to learn Indian classical songs and dance staying in India as part of a Government cultural exchange programme. But, her talent deserves more widespread appreciation in this land. In spite of her songs, including the Hindi film songs being available in the YouTube, there are hardly much Indian viewers enjoying her performance. Here the common

ignorance about the singing talents of Tajikistan and their proximity to Indian moods and melodies stands as an opaque wall that prevents the growth of cultural and emotional exchanges through the most effective medium, that is music. Personal interview with this singer revealed the rich academic and musical legacy of this vivacious young talent. Significantly, her involvement with India, though manifested through Bollywood songs lies much deeper.⁹

However, although Bollywood movies of the last century remain a high water mark in Tajik understanding about India and her cultural face, yet there are some Tajik directors from old and new genre who were impressed by the great Bengali director, Oscar winner Satyajit Ray. Davlat Khudonazarov¹⁰, who was the founder of 'Satyajit Ray Fan Club' in Dushanbe, shared his anecdote about his adventure to India only in search of "Ustod (Master) Satyajit Ray" – he admitted that 'Pather Panchali', the debut feature of Satyajit Ray mesmerized him. He found his way to India just to see the genius in his own eyes....... With the restrictions of the Soviet regime, making way to India by any Soviet citizen for a personal visit was no small achievement. And he was not the only one influenced by Ray's work. Jamshed Usmaonv, a more contemporary director of Tajik films, had borrowed his music. In his debutant film "Pervez I Zanbur"¹¹, a tune of a song by Rabindranath Tagore appears- interestingly, even Tagore took this tune from an Irish song during his youth when he visited England.¹²

However, it was not only Bollywood that provided glimpses of India to the Soviet citizens. The institutes of Oriental Studies were academic hubs to study Indian history, language and culture throughout the 20th C. Popularity of the two Indian Epics Ramayana and Mahabharata among the educated Tajik people is mind blowing. So is the popularity of the works of Rabindranath Tagore and many other Indian authors of the past century. Effectively, this trend has given rise to a sizable number of intellectuals still interested in India and consciously contributing to the cultural interaction even today. Tajikistan can boast of a good number of such specialists, namely, Prof. Habibullo Rajabov, Prof. Zarina and so on, who not only teach Hindi language in the National University of Tajikistan, but had also translated a large number of Indian literatures into Tajik, which include Rabindranath and Prem Chand. University of Tajikistan, but had also translated in Indian literatures into Tajik, which include Rabindranath and Prem Chand. University of Tajikistan, but had also translated a large number of Indian literatures into Tajik, which include Rabindranath and Prem Chand. University of Tajikistan, but had also translated a large number of Indian literatures into Tajik, which include Rabindranath and Prem Chand.

However, India was a land of richness, a land of fantasy since antiquity, the fondness intensified even under the Islamic Inroads. The legacy of Persian language and its rich inheritance is a gift of Central and West Asia to India. Persian poets and intellectuals of this genre were not confined to any particular geographic or political entity. Their works were considered universal as they were almost internationally accessible to the then contemporary academicworld.

One particular reference from Hafiz, the great Persian poet of this genre remains a landmark in the history of Indo-Tajik connection where he, charged with poetic imagination stated that he can even bargain Samarqand and Bukhara in exchange of a 'Hindubeauty-mole'! ¹⁴ And this verse of Hafiz with its ironic destiny still resonates in Tajik intellectualism, feeding upon their tragic memory of loss. Another literary composition by Abdul Qadir Bedil¹⁵, titled 'Komde-va- Madaan' is noteworthy in this context, which was a love story between an Indian dancer and a Tajik musician of royal court of Bukhara. References to both these literary works have been found among Tajik intellectuals across generation. It was the Soviet – Tajik poet Mirzo Tursunzoda's¹⁶ (who visited India more than once), poem that the imagination of both Hafiz and Bedil saw a fascinating fusion in the image of 'Tara Chanderi', ¹⁷ an Indian dancer he was mesmerized upon. Tursunzoda's passion for India was not only confined to reliving the ballad of Komde and Madan. His poems titled 'Indian Ballad' ¹⁸ and "Gang'' (river Ganga) are equally mesmerizing in their depth of emotions and subtlety of imagination.

Away from the popular film and serious academic genre, theres till, remains a huge space of cultural interaction, i.e., the sphere of music. Perhaps, it is not part of common knowledge in either of the countries, that almost all the string instruments in India, starting from *setar* to *dotar* are actually some visible icons of cultural debts from Central Asia at certain point of history. Katherine Buttlar Brown stated, "The obvious descent of such quintessential modern Hindustani instruments as the sitar and sarod from West and Central Asian forebears is further living testament to the meeting of diverse musical cultures facilitated by Mughal rule in North India." The popular claim demands Aamir Khusrau to be the harbinger of *setar*to India from Persia. But, Tajikistan traditionally belonged to the greater Persian culture zone and therefore, had a strong legacy of setar, especially in the mountain tracts of Badakhshan.

The classical music tradition of Uzbek-Tajik variant is known as "Shashmaqam." This music style was not allowed to flourish in its fullest scope under the Soviet rule, for their attachment to royal court. It is after the independence of Tajikistan, in the 1990s, that the revival of Shahsmaqam began in her full glory. It has been observed, that "The Sanskrit theorist Pundarika Vitthala for instance noted the names of the Persian maqams in his sixteenth-century treatise Ragamanjari." ²¹In fact, in this sphere of classical music there lies enormous scope for exchanges, experiments on harmony and fusion that's till remains rather an unexplored field. One very significant amalgamation of literature and music was experimented by the legendary Tajik musician Ziodullo Shahidi²²during the Soviet era by creating an opera format of Komde-va-Madan. This was the first opera by a Tajik composer. But he always regretted that in spite of the choice of a ballad on Indian heroin, he was never allowed to have an Indian dancer to play the role of 'Komde'! His own

daughter, the renowned cultural connoisseur of today's Tajikistan,Dr. MuniraShahidi²³, still hopes to fulfill her father's unfinished project of staging *Komdeva-Madan*, with an Indian heroin and a Tajik hero, as had been originally imagined by Bedil, centuries ago! The partially ruptured chord of cultural bonding can be restruck under the musical spell of such love ballads that touch human emotions flooding the boundaries of time and space.

However, after Tajikistan received independence, with the demise of the USSR in 1991, Indo-Tajik links of the past, largely blurred and buried into oblivion began to be revived. State level initiatives had been cordial and encouraging on both sides to know each other and help grow their cultural links. In the process of post-Soviet cultural revival, Tajikistan has always acknowledged India's contribution, although much scope remains unexplored as yet. India today, remains more of a generous benefactor for Tajik nation, who is ever anxious to enrich themselves by the enormous legacy of Indian cultural heritage and abundance of resources. But this, however, fails to create a balanced rhythm of mutual give and take. In the process, the exchange remains rather one sided and incomplete. The lost heritage of cultural connectivity with significant insights from the academic and cultural spheres can help resume more frequent, thoughtful and interactive dialogue between the people, artists and intellectuals of both the countries.

Notes

¹Sudha Rajagopalan (2008), *Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas: The Culture of Movie-going After Stalin*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2008.

²Rajagopalan(2008), p-30

³ Awara (Tramp), directed and produced by Raj Kapoor, India, 1951.

⁴Disco Dancer, directed and produced by BabbarSubhash, India, 1982.

⁵Ovara, directed by Gulandom Muhabbatova and Daler Rakhmatov, Tajikistan, 2005.

⁶DalerRakhmatov in personal interview dated September, 28th, 2013, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

⁷Baimurat Allaberiyev - Wikipedia, the free

encyclopediaen. wikipedia.org/wiki/Baimurat_Allaberiyev, 15th Oct, 2007, site last visited on 4th October, 2013

8i) NoziaKaromatullo, A Rising Star, Jadid

Online,http://www.jadidonline.com/story/31072008/frnk/tajik_female_singers_eng, site last visited on 15th October, 2014

ii)Noziya Karomatullo, Dil chiz kya hai aap mere jan lijiye (vocal performance), youtube, www.youtube.com/watch?v=52CdW5q8C5U, accessed on 12th August, 2012

⁹ Interview of the author with NoziaKaromatullo on 3rd October, 2013, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

¹⁰Tajik filmmaker DavlatKhudonazarov meets Satyajit Ray, the 'Ustad', March 28, 2013Ismailimail, http://ismailimail.wordpress.com/2013/03/28/tajik-filmmaker-davlat-khudonazarov-meets-satyajit-ray/, accessed on 12th October, 2014.

¹¹Pervez-i- Zanbur(Flight of a Bee), directed by JamshedUsmanov , 1998.

¹²The Tagore song 'phoolephoole dhole dhole'

¹³HabibulloRajabov, Head of the Department of Hindi and Urdu, Tajik State National University, Tajikistan

¹⁴Would that Shirazi Turk behold our heart; then... – Diwan of Hafiz, Iranian.com iranian.com/RezaOrdoubadian/2001/January/Hafiz/shirazi.html, accessed on 4th August, 2014

¹⁵Abd Al QaderBedil (1644-1721), Encyclopedia

Iranica,http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bidel-bedil-mirza-abd-al-qader-b, Accessed on ^{3rd} August, 2014

¹⁶MirzoTursunzoda(1911-1977), National Poet of Tajikistan, awarded Hero of Tajikistan posthumously in 2001.

¹⁷Tursunzoda met an Indian danseuse during his visit to India, whom he mentioned as Tara Chandri. He was mesmerized by her beauty and overwhelmed byher talent. Back home, he wrote a poem in her name that immortalized his accolades for this Indian beauty.

¹⁸AntologiaTadzhikskoiPoezii, C drevnnixvremeni do

nashixdnei, Gosudarstvennoi Izdatelstvo Khudozhestvennoi Literaturi, Moskva, 1951, pp-503-506 ¹⁹Poezii, 1951, pp-509-510.

²⁰ Katherine Butler Brown, "Evidence of Indo-Persian synthesis? The tanbur and rudravina in 17C Indo-Persian treatises", *Journal of the Indian Musicological Society*, 36-7(2006),pp. 89-103, http://lit.gfax.ch/Possible%20Evidence%20of%20Indo-

Persian%20Musical%20Synthesisaccessed on 7th September, 214

²¹Brown, (2006), p-89

²²Ziodullo Shahidi (1914-1985), remains the towering icon of music for modern Tajikistan. Trained in the Moscow under the Soviet era, he brought the influences of Russian and other musical tradition to his land, introduced opera ballet , notations, piano, violin and other Western instruments in the musical culture of Tajikistan. Yet his unflinching commitment towards the indigenous music and its rich hoard of instruments and styles made him remembered as the father of Tajik Music.

²³MuniraShahidi, personal interview, Dushanbe, Tajikistan 23rd October, 2013.

Major Security Issues (Traditional and Non-Traditional) in South Asia & Beyond

Emergence of Geopolitics and Security Concern in South China Sea: A Critical Review on Security Concern, Peace and Marine Disputes in South and South East Asia

By

Sailajananda Saikia*

'Just as German soil constituted the military front line of the Cold War, the waters of the South China Sea may constitute the military front line of the coming decades...It is through sea power that China will psychologically erase two centuries of foreign transgressions on its territory, forcing every country around it to react."

-Robert Kaplan, The South China Sea is the Future of Conflict," Foreign Policy, Sept/Oct. 2011

Introduction

The complexity of maritime and territorial disputes in the South China Sea is nothing short of mind-numbing. They involves six countries for hundreds of tiny land features, and a body of international law that is both contested and complicated to interpret. The verdict by the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) rejecting China's ownership claims to 80 percent of the South China Sea was ruled to be invalid under international law by an international tribunal. But China does not accept the verdict and still clam the territory and the dispute over island in South China Sea still prevails.

The South China Sea is one of the most important waterways in the world and helps facilitate economic activity throughout Asia. Trade passing through the sea exceeds \$5 trillion per year, with U.S. trade making up more than 20% of this

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economic activity.¹ The South China Sea channels a third of the world's shipping and is rich with islands, fisheries, oil and gas deposits. It is also one the most disputed areas in Southeast Asia and has the most potential for armed conflict. China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei have made overlapping territorial claims to these waters, as well as to some of the islands and rocky outcrops in them such as the Paracels and the Spratly Islands. Small naval confrontations and skirmishes between official vessels and fishing boats of various countries have become commonplace. A disruption of freedom of navigation would significantly affect international economic activity, as well as harm global norms that encourage peaceful resolution of conflicts.

South China Sea has emerged as a critical maritime theatre that links the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Its geopolitical fulcrum lies in the extensive offshore mineral and hydrocarbon deposits and the intense trade routes that link the Indian and Pacific Ocean economies. The economic rise of Asia-Pacific in terms of its economic vibrancy, social robustness, cultural resilience and the remarkable adaptability to scientific and technological innovation leveraging into national power have well been demonstrably orchestrated by the rising maritime powers in Asia. China, Japan, India and South Korea have emerged to be the pivotal powers of the maritime Asia that has attained unequivocal power standing in the current hierarchy of geo-economics and geopolitics.

Disputed Claims

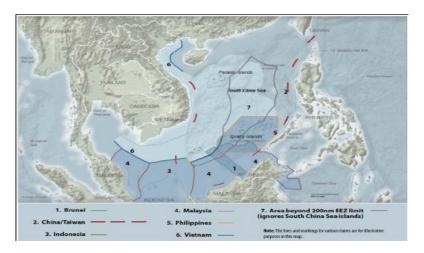
Approximately one hundred territorial features are presently disputed in the South China Sea,² and because issues of sovereignty affect which countries are entitled to exploit the potentially lucrative resources around a feature, much is at stake. UNCLOS, to which all claimants are party, provides an international legal framework for determining the ownership of territorial waters and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) based on coastlines and other features. There are five kinds of features: islands, low-tide elevations, rocks, submerged features, and artificial islands or structures. These features are defined by their status at high and low tides, as well as by their ability to sustain human habitation or economic activity. Some categories yield different territorial entitlements, such as territorial seas, contiguous zones, EEZs, and continental shelves. Although it outlines the rules for determining sovereignty, UNCLOS does not provide standards for resolving sovereignty claims.

The Law of the Sea

The South China Sea dispute may be examined in the context of the Third United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III). The latter has been

ratified by all the claimant states and some may have misused it to extend their sovereign jurisdiction unilaterally and justify their claims in the South China Sea. The Convention regulates internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial seas, contiguous zones, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), continental shelves and high seas.³ It provides coastal states with the authority to extend their sovereign jurisdiction under a specific set of rules. It authorizes expansion of the territorial sea to 12 nautical miles and limits the contiguous zone to 24 nautical miles. It also states that the EEZ 'shall not extend beyond the 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured'⁴. The sovereign rights of a coastal state over the EEZ are limited to the exploration and exploitation of its living and non-living resources. Continental shelves may not be extended beyond a limit of 350 nautical miles from territorial baselines. The sovereign rights of a coastal state over the continental shelf are reduced to the exploration and exploitation of its non-living resources.

A key difficulty in navigating the web of claims in the South China Sea is inadequate information. Current data on whether features are above or below water at different tide levels is either unavailable or incomplete. China and other claimants frequently issue maps demarcating their claims, which they then use as evidence to reinforce their respective assertions of sovereignty over features. Some participants in the roundtable discussion argued that a better understanding of the types of features under dispute could better define, and possibly pare down, the overlapping claims in the region. Because the available data is too old or unclear to be useful, participants highlighted this as an area in which the United States could lead to help resolve the conflict.



Claimants of the South China Sea

China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei are the claimants of maritime zones in the SCS. In the South China Sea there are more than 200 tiny islands and several uninhabited rocky outcrops, atolls, sandbanks and reefs; majority of them located in the Paracel and Spratly Island chains. The Spratly and Paracel islands are the major flashpoints of overlapping territorial disputes within the South China Sea.

Table.1: Territorial Claims Relating to Paracel and Spratly Island Group

| Country | Claims | | | | |
|---------|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
| China | defers to the Spratly Islands as the Nansha islands, and claim all the islands and most of the South China Sea for historical easons. These claims are not marked by coordinates of therwise clearly defined. China also claims the Paracel Island referred to as the Xisha Islands), and includes them as part of the Shainan Island province. Chinese claims are based on a number of historical events including the naval expeditions to the Spratly Islands by the Han Dynasty in 110 AD and the Ming Dynasty from 1403 433 AD. Chinese fishermen and merchants have worked in the region over time, and China is using archaeological | | | | |
| | evidence to bolster its claims of sovereignty. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, China asserted claims to | | | | |
| | the Spratly and Paracel islands. During World War II, the | | | | |
| | islands were claimed by the Japanese. In 1947, China produced | | | | |
| | a map with 9 undefined dotted lines, and claimed all of the islands within those lines. | | | | |
| | A 1992 Chinese law restated its claims in the region. In 1974, | | | | |
| | China seized the Paracel Islands from Vietnam. | | | | |
| Taiwan | Taiwan's claims are similar to those of China, and are based | | | | |
| | upon the same principles. As with China, Taiwan's claims are | | | | |
| | also not clearly defined. Occupies Pratas Island in the Spratlys. | | | | |
| Vietnam | Vietnamese claims are based on history and the continental | | | | |
| | shelf principle. Vietnam claims the entire Spratly Islands | | | | |
| | (Truong Sa in Vietnamese) as an offshore district of the | | | | |
| | province of Khanh Hoa. Vietnamese claims also cover an | | | | |
| | extensive area of the South China Sea, although they are not | | | | |

| | clearly defined. In addition, Vietnam claims the Paracel Islands | | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | (the Hoang Sa in Vietnamese), although they were seized by the | | | | |
| | Chinese in 1974. | | | | |
| | The Vietnamese have followed the Chinese example of using | | | | |
| | archaeological evidence to bolster sovereignty claims. | | | | |
| Philippines | Its Spratly claims have clearly defined coordinates, based both | | | | |
| | upon the proximity principle as well as on the explorations of a | | | | |
| | Philippine explorer in 1956. In 1971, the Philippines officially | | | | |
| | claimed 8 islands that it refers to as the Kalayaan, partly on the | | | | |
| | basis of this exploration, arguing that the islands: 1) were not | | | | |
| | part of the Spratly Islands; and 2) had not belonged to anyone | | | | |
| | and were open to being claimed. In 1972, they were designated | | | | |
| | as part of Palawan Province, and have been occupied. | | | | |
| Malaysia | Its Spratly claims are based on the continental shelf principle, | | | | |
| | and have clearly defined coordinates. Malaysia has occupied 3 | | | | |
| | islands that it considers to be within its continental shelf. | | | | |
| | Malaysia has tried to build up one atoll by bringing soil from | | | | |
| | the mainland and has built a hotel. | | | | |
| Brunei | Does not occupy any of the islands, but claims part of the | | | | |
| | South China Sea nearest to it as a part of its continental shelf | | | | |
| | and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as defined by the United | | | | |
| | Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982. | | | | |
| | Therefore, in 1984, Brunei declared its EEZ which included | | | | |
| | Louisa Reef. | | | | |
| Indonesia | Not a claimant to any of the Spratly Islands. However, Chinese | | | | |
| | and Taiwanese claims in the South China Sea extend into | | | | |
| | Indonesia's EEZ and continental shelf, including Indonesia's | | | | |
| | Natuna gas field. | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Source: www.southchinasea.org



Map: South China Sea

The Geopolitical Frames of the South China Sea Issue

In its analytical context, the geopolitics of South China Sea could be constructed from four positions:

- a) Resurgence of Chinese Nationalism and Sovereignty concerns;
- b) Shifting Power and Chinese hegemony;
- c) Economic interdependence and strategic competition;

Resurgence of Chinese Nationalism and Sovereignty concerns:

Territory and boundary dispute is the crux of the dispute over the overlapping marine boundaries over many of the island in the South China Sea. Moreover, with the growth of technology and limited natural resource and as this region is believed to have a huge concentration of host of resources could be monopolized by the dominant power. But what is contended is the extent and scope of commercially recoverable resources and the means of sharing them among the claimants.

With the growing power of Red Dragon in the region there is a resurgent of Chinese nationalism also. Chinese claim of the South China Sea as its own lake complicates the China-Southeast Asian relations as the contending nationalisms aggravates the contestation claims in all the countries of the region. The complexity of the boundary delimitation is catalyzed by the historical animosities, the prevalent perceptions and misperceptions, the twists and ironies of the domestic politics that regimes play on the dominant actor—China in the region and the escalation of the Chinese military modernization that directly fuels the power rivalry.

The South China Sea is yet another source of national identity for China. The "recovery" of the area for the Chinese leaders provides a means to erase a century of national humiliation of colonialism and "unjust treaties" that China was subjected to. China views the issue as a part of the domestic issue and hence the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Waters and Contiguous Areas was passed by the National People's Assembly as a means to recover the area to Chinese suzerainty.

China reiterated claims in the South China Sea and stipulated the right to use force to protect islands—the Spratlys and their surrounding waters. The law questioned the peaceful management of the territorial dispute and was regarded by the Association as a political provocation. China tends to view the South China Sea as a domestic issue—a derivative of China's national identity.

Shifting Power and Chinese hegemony

Post Vietnam War there has been a sea of change in East Asia and Asia Pacific Region. As China's economic growth grew and sustained, there has been the gradual decline of the US hegemonic power in the region. Increasingly the US had adopted a neutral stand on the South China Sea issue stating it is one of regional sovereignty issues. The increasing economic engagement and dependency on China had resulted in China's growing strength. While economic engagements of Southeast Asia with China have been constructed on various enmeshment strategies, the power rise of China has been aggressively evident in the spate of conventional military and strategic nuclear modernization of China in the region. The Hainan Island and the Chinese naval facility of the Sanya naval base has been China's regional power projection base.

The geopolitics of the South China Sea has thus emerged as a multilateral competitive regional rivalry with trans-regional implications having contentions of sovereignty, resources competition, implications for sea-lane security, new patterns of maritime access and projection of power and also the potential stoking of a hegemonic war.

Economic Interdependence and Strategic Competition

The region hedging South China Sea has witnessed the dramatic increase in economic growth and development. It has featured the growing economic and trade interdependence between China and Southeast Asia. It has also witnessed growing integration of the East Asian economies through the aegis of the ARF, EAS and the APEC. On the other hand, the drivers of territorial and sovereignty concerns and resources are driving the trends of military modernization of Southeast Asian nations with emphasis on maritime and air forces. Southeast Asia does not have a recognizable dimension of land power and their reliance on maritime and air forces is understandable in view of the maritime contiguity of the issue.

Increased national wealth and the proportionate share of gross national product are driving nations to enhance their military expenditures and spur military modernization. The correlation of increased national wealth and military expenditure is lead by China both as proportion of national wealth as well as the rising trends of military modernization. The spiral of military modernization and strategic modernization of a Chinese led defense modernization has resulted in the increasing trends of military expenditures and military modernization of the littoral countries of the South China Sea region.

Strategic and Economic Importance of the South China Sea

The main reason behind the scramble for the two island chains is its richness in natural resources, especially oil and gas. On April 19, 2011 China's *Global Times* published a special report that termed the region as the "Second Persian Gulf' – a repository of 50 billion tons of crude oil and more than 20 trillion cubic meters of natural gas (about twenty five times China's proven oil reserves and eight times its gas reserves). The SCS is not only a strategic maritime link between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans, but also a vital gateway for shipping in East Asia. Eighty per cent of China's energy imports and Japan and Koreas oil supplies pass through these waters. Almost, fifty five per cent of India's trade with the Asia Pacific transits through the SCS to China, Japan, Korea and the United States. The economic potential and geopolitical importance of the SCS are the primary motivating factors for the surrounding countries to claim the islands and their resources. The bountiful fishing opportunities within the region are yet another motivating factor for the overlapping territorial claims in the SCS.

11

12

13

14

15

WORLD TOTAL

12

13

14

15

BRAZIL

SOUTH KOREA

AUSTRALIA

CANADA

TURKEY b

| Rank | | Country | Spending, 2012 (\$ b.) | Change (%) | | Spending as a share of GDP (%)a | |
|------|------|--------------|------------------------|------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 2012 | 2011 | | | 2011- | 2003- | 2012 | 2003 |
| | | **** | 100 | 12 | 12 | | 2.5 |
| 1 | 1 | USA | 682 | -6.0 | 32 | 4.4 | 3.7 |
| 2 | 2 | CHINA | [166] | 7.8 | 175 | [2.0] | [2.1] |
| 3 | 3 | RUSSIA | [90.7] | 16 | 113 | [4.4] | [4.3] |
| 4 | 4 | UK | 60.8 | -0.8 | 4.9 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| 5 | 6 | JAPAN | 59.3 | -0.6 | -3.6 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 6 | 5 | FRANCE | 58.9 | -0.3 | -3.3 | 2.3 | 2.6 |
| 7 | 8 | SAUDI ARABIA | 56.7 | 12 | 111 | 8.9 | 8.7 |
| 8 | 7 | INDIA | 46.1 | -0.8 | 65 | 2.5 | 2.8 |
| 9 | 9 | GERMANY | [45.8] | 0.9 | -1.5 | [1.4] | 1.4 |
| 10 | 10 | ITALY | [34.0] | -5.2 | -19 | 1.7 | 2.0 |
| | | | | | | | |

The Figures for Military Expenditure

Source: [] = SIPRI Estimate

33.1

31.1

26.2

[22.5]

[18.2]

1753

56

44

29

36

-2.1

35

[1.5]

2.7

1.7

[1.3]

2.3

2.5

1.5

2.5

1.9

1.1

3.4

2.4

-0.5

-0.5

-4.0

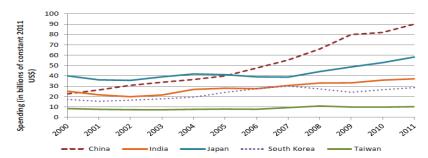
-3.9

1.2

-0.5

a) The figures for military expenditure as a share of GDP are based on data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Economic Outlook database, Oct. 2012.

b) It is possible that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) would be in 15th position in place of Turkey, but data is not available for the UAE in 2012.



Sources: Chinese MoD White Papers, China's National Defense, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010; U.S. Department of Defense 2010 Annual Report to Congress on Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China; Indian Union Budget and Economic Survey: Expenditure Budget, 2000–2013; Japanese MoD White Papers, 2005–2011; South Korean MoD White Papers, 2000, 2006, 2008, 2010; South Korean MoD; Taiwanese National Defense Report, 2009 and 2011; analysis by CSIS Defense-Industrial Initiatives Group.

The South China Sea has been a most disputed area of concern and still persist to remain so. The most serious trouble in recent decades has flared between Vietnam and China. The Chinese seized the Paracels from Vietnam in 1974, killing more than 70 Vietnamese troops. In 1988 the two sides clashed in the Spratlys, when Vietnam again came off worse, losing about 60 sailors. The Philippines has also been involved in a number of minor skirmishes with Chinese, Vietnamese and Malaysian forces. The most recent upsurge in tension has coincided with more muscular posturing from China. The Philippines has accused China of building up its military presence in the Spratlys. In early 2012, the two countries engaged in a lengthy maritime stand-off, accusing each other of intrusions in the Scarborough Shoal.

In July 2012 China formally created Sansha city, an administrative body with its headquarters in the Paracels which it says oversees Chinese territory in the South China Sea - including the Paracels and the Spratlys. Both Vietnam and the Philippines protested against this move. Unverified claims that the Chinese navy deliberately sabotaged two Vietnamese exploration operations in late 2012 led to large anti-China protests on the streets of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam was also one of a number of nations that refused to stamp new editions of Chinese passports which include a map showing disputed areas of the South China Sea as Chinese territory.

In January 2013, Manila said it was taking China to a UN tribunal under the auspices of the UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea, to challenge its claims in the South China Sea. Again in May 2014, the introduction by China of a drilling rig into waters near the Paracel Islands led to multiple collisions between Vietnamese and China ships.

Conclusions

Sea-trade is foundation of global economy: 90% of world's commerce travels by sea. It is the second most used sea lane in the world - over 50% of the annual merchant fleet tonnage passes through the Strait of Malacca, the Sunda Strait, and the Lombok Strait. The Strait of Malacca accounts for nearly 10 million barrels of crude oil every day. There are enormous mineral and fishing resources, and the South China Sea is estimated to hold about 7 billion barrels of oil and 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Oil and gas policy subject to larger geopolitical concerns. The South China Sea conflict is often framed – at least in the oil industry – as a struggle for energy resources. But most countries with a stake in the dispute are more concerned over trade security and, in some cases, fisheries.

Over the years, China has tended to favour bilateral arrangements negotiated behind closed doors but other countries want international mediation. Even if the Philippines is successful in its attempts to pursue China at a UN tribunal, however, China would not be obliged to abide by the ruling. Recent attempts by regional grouping ASEAN (The Association of South East Asian Nations) to discuss new ideas for resolving the dispute appear to have left the bloc severely divided.

Regional stability faces several threats in the South China Sea. The first is the potential for armed conflict among the various claimants in the disputes over territorial sovereignty and maritime rights. A second threat to stability would be increasingly frequent use to coercive measure short of armed conflict to advance a state's claims. China's threats to American oil companies in 2007 and 2008 provide one example of such coercive behavior that can increase instability. A third threat source of instability, indirectly related to the South China Sea, would be the potential for a spiral around efforts by China and the United States over threatening and maintaining access, respectively. Fourtly, China's hardline policy reflects in part a growing sense of national self-confidence and a belief that US pre-eminence is on the wane. Fourth, domestic politics increasingly influences China's policy, especially growing nationalist sentiment over sovereignty of the Paracels and Spratlys. Fifth, China's policy is proactive, coordinated and top-down —it is not driven by interagency rivalry nor is it in reaction to the behaviour of the other claimants.

Sixth, the modernization of the PLA-Navy and the expansion of civilian maritime law enforcement agencies have provided China with the hard-power assets to increase its presence in the South China Sea and press its claims more vigorously. In particular the use of civilian patrol boats lowers the threshold of conflict. Finally, as China's policy is deliberately designed to undermine US interests in Asia, the South China Sea, together with the East China Sea, is likely to become one of the

principle points of contention between Washington and Beijing over the next decade.

Finally, there is a possibility of conflict between China and India. Relations between the two Asia giants have always been uneasy, and in the next decade tensions could escalate. China is developing a system of diplomatic, military and political ties in Indian Ocean under the "String of Pearls" doctrine and India is attempting to forge closer and deeper integration with its neighbors in South East Asia under its "Look East" policy. These two opposing doctrines clash in South China Sea.

Notes

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- ² John Baker, "Cooperative Monitoring and the South China Sea Disputes," Banyan Analytics, October 16, 2013, http://www.anser.org/ba-brief_cooperative-monitoring-and-south-china-sea-disputes
- ³ See Rebecca M. M. Wallace, International Law, Second Edition, London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1992, pp. 128-165.
- ⁴ Article 57, 1982 Convention. Official Text of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea with Annexes and Index, New York: United Nations, 1983.

Movement of Population and Demography of South Asia: Contexts of Diaspora and Migration

Footsteps of the Abhiras in Early India

By

Dev Kumar Jhanjh *

Movement and migration is common to South Asian experience. Though in early India we do not have migration in the contemporary sense, yet movement of people could be perceived throughout early Indian History. This paper would delve in a situation where movement of a particular group of people could be studied. That particular group is called Abhiras in various sources of early Indian History be it inscriptions or texts. This group probably hailed from Abhiravan, an area between Herat and Kandahar in Afghanistan and settled in the valleys of Punjab around 2nd Century BCE. Both literary and epigraphic sources tell us that in course of time they migrated from one place to another, possibly in different groups. They were spread over the whole of the country extending from the Punjab in the north to Maharashtra in the south and Bengal in the east to Gujarat in the west. With the passage of time by defeating different groups they gained considerable political importance which elevated their social status too and thus we see their transition from lower caste status to upper caste. The paper seeks to explore this journey of this particular group from Afghanistan to different parts of India over a period of time.

Tracing the route of Abhira migration naturally brings us to the question of their origin. Scholars like Bhagwansingh Suryavanshi¹, Buddha Prakash², R.S.Sharma³ believe in their aboriginal identity. On the contrary D.C.Sircar⁴, R.V.Rusell⁵, D.R.Bhandarkar⁶, Major Rawlinson⁷is of the opinion of their expatriate origin.

We shall start the journey with the sources to find out the footsteps of the Abhiras in accordance with the time and try to make an attempt of presenting a conjectural picture with the evidence from the ground. The *Mahabharata*mentions three divisions of the Abhiras dwelling in the north-west of India, viz., those who lived on the bank of the Sarasvati, fisherman and mountaineers (sindhukulasrita ye ca

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gramaniyamahabalah / sudrabhiraganascaiva ye casrityasarasvatim / varttayantica ye matsyairyecaparrvtavasinah //)8. In another passage the epic states that the tirthavinasana lay in the country of the Abhiras as the sacred river Sarasvati disappeared at the place through hatred of the Sudras and the Abhiras living there (tatovinasanamrajana! jagamath ahalayudhah / sudrabhira nprati dvesadyatra nasta sarasvati)9. Elsewhere, Panchanada, the land of the five rivers is described as the stronghold of the Abhiras. When Arjuna, after the catastrophe at Dvaraka, is conducting the wives, children and the old men from thence to Indraprastha, the Abhiras attack him when he was arrived at Panchanada and rob most of the women.

(Abhirahmantrayamasuhsametyasuvadarsanah || ayamekorjjuno dhanvi vrddhabalam hatesvaram | nayatya smanati kramyayodhasche mehatoujashah | |)10. All these references indicate the eastern part of the Punjab between the Sutlej and Yamuna as the original homeland of the Abhiras. Above Patalene, Ptolemy places Abiria or the land of the Abhiras¹¹ who seems to have entered India during the confusion after Alexander's death. Patanjali locates them in the Sindhudesa which according to W.W.Tarn to be 'the country of the Indus'12. D.C. Sircar on the basis of Periplus states 'that part of it (the kingdom of Nambarus) lying inland and adjoining Skythia (Sakasthana in the lower valley of the Indus) is called Abiria (Abhira country)¹³. It shows further that Abiria or the country of the Abhiras spread up to the Indus Valley region. DebalaMitra states that the Abhiras extended their territory from the deltaic region of Sindhuriver till Kathiabadh¹⁴. The Markandeyapuranain one passage locates the Abhiras in north-west, but in another passage they were placed in the south together with the inhabitants of Maharashtra, Vidarbha, Asmaka, Kuntala and others. In a third passage the Markandeyapurana groups the Abhiras with thepeople of Bhrgukachchha, Konkana, Maharashtra, Karnata, the country on the banks of the Veni, Nasikya and others 15. Why the Markandeyapurana refers to different locations of the Abhiras? Probably it indicates their migration with the passage of time. The Vayupurana mentions a list of future kings (in Kali age) where the Abhiras have been mentioned with the powers like Andhras, Sakas,

Pulindasetc.(andhrahsakahpulindacatulikayavanaihsaha | kaivartahhirasahara ye canyemlecchajatayah)¹⁶. If we look at the period of composition of the Vayupurana (2nd to 4th Century CE), we can easily assume that the Puranas refer to their later migration which is corroborated by the epigraphic documents too.¹⁷

We have eleven inscriptions which directly and indirectly throw light on the Abhiras. Among these four inscriptions were directly issued by the group and rest only bear their references. It is to be remembered that these evidences dates from 2^{nd} - 10^{th} Century CE, which not only indicate their presence but their strong existence in the country which lead them to issue the inscriptions.

Gunda stone inscription of the time of Rudrasimha I [Saka] year 103(181 CE)¹⁸ is the first one which directly talks about the group. Written in a mixed dialect

of Sanskrit and Prakrit, this five lined inscription besides mentioning the reign of Lord Rudrasimha gives the following pedigree of the king :---king and Maha-kshatrapa Lord Chastana—his son king and kshatrapa Lord Jayadaman—his son king and Mahakshatrapa Lord Rudradaman—his son king and kshatrapa Lord Rudrasimha. It tells us that Senapati (general) Rudrabhuti Abhira, son of SenapatiBapaka (according to Buhler 'Bahaka')¹⁹ under the reign of Saka king Rudrasimha dug and constructed a well at the village of Rasopadra for the well-being Abhirenasenapati-Bapakasyaputrenasenapatimen (...tra-muhurtt/e] [bamddh]apitas=cha Rudrabh[u]tinagrame-Raso-|[pa]driyeva[pi] [kha]ni[to] satvanamhita-sukhartham=iti [//]). This clearly indicates that by CE181 the Abhiras acquired the position of Senapati under the Sakas and this designation became dynastic and they mentioned their status in the inscription too. It also proves that Kathiabadh region of Gujarat was the stronghold of the group wherefrom this inscription was found in 1880 by Major J. Watson. Some scholars have claimed that shortly after this anAbhira named Isvaradatta seized the Western Kshatrapathrone between the years 188-191 C.E. and ruled for some time²⁰. But it cannot be said with a greater degree of certainty that Isvaradatta was an Abhira ruler.

Next we have the Nasik Cave Inscription of Isvarasena, the Abhira(258 CE).21Interestingly, here for the first time we find the reference of the Abhira as ruling authority (Sidhamrajnah Madhariputrasya Sivadatt-Abhiraputrasya | Abhirasy-Esvarasenasyasamvatsarenavama...|). Son of Abhira Sivadatta& Madhari, Isvarasena took the control over the Sakas. The inscription informs us that Visnudatta (Sakani), daughter of Agnivarman and mother of the Ganapaka Visvavarma, wife of the Ganapaka Rebhila made a perpetual endowment to provide medicines for the sick of the sampha dwelling in the monastery on the mount Trirasmi. For this endowment an amount of Karsapanaswere invested through the four guilds evidently of Govardhana. We know that Govardhana was the ancient name of Nasik. So this inscription bears the evidence of Isvarasena's jurisdiction over northern Maharashtra. So from Kathiabadh till Nasik in this journey the Abhiras became stronger and became independent of the Sakas. Finally they subjugated the Sakas, their former lords. It is to be mentioned in this context that after Yajnsri Satakarni for the next three or four generation, including western Maharashtra, Nasik, Aparanta and Lata region came under the control of the Abhiras and at that time Abhira ruler was Isvarasena.22

Another inscription which indicates the Abhiras as rulling authority is the Nagarjunikonda inscription of AbhiraVasusena (278 CE)²³. The object of the inscription was to record the reestablishment of the *astabhujasvamin*(a form of Vishnu) image (made of wood) at Setagiri. It further tells that on the auspicious occasion Yavanaraja of Sanjaypura, Saka king Rudradaman of Avanti, Vanabhasi's Visnurudrasivalananda and many more rulers were invited to witness this moment

(Ava[nta]kenaSakenaRudradam[e]navanavasakena[cha] Vishnurudrasiva[la]nanda-[sata]-karnnina[s]th[a]na(na)to = pi nachalito(ta) [e]shabhagavam(van) rumbara-bhavo Astamjasvami). This indicates that in 3rd Century CE the Abhiras became powerful in the Krishna-Guntur region and they maintained the political relations with the contemporary rulers' too.²⁴

From the inscription of the time of the Rudrasimha III (?)(c. 348-78 CE)²⁵, we come to know that Vasu's son AbhiraVasuraka constructed an abode for the welfare of the king *Mahakshatrapasya(putrapuputrasya rajno mahakshatrapsya barsata...VyuttarakeVasuputrasyapraladapuputrasyaAbhirasyaharihovakasagotrasya Vasurakasyagutthajjaduhitusya).* Find spot of this record from a place (unknown) in Saurashtra clearly bears the footprints of the said group at this phase; however, they were no longer holding the position of ruling authority.

Next we have the other genre of inscriptions which indirectly refers to them. From the Chandravalli inscription of Mayurasarman (c.330-60 CE), ²⁶we learn that the Abhiras along with the powers like Pallavas, Punadas, Traikutakas, Pariyatrikas, Sakas and Maukharis were subjugated by Mayurasarman (Kadambanam Mayurasammana Vinimmiam | Tadakam [kuta] – Tekuta- Abhira- pallava- puri-yotika-Sakastha [na] sayinathaka- punda-mukhari [na] |). With the exception of Pallavas and Pundas, these powers were occupying a tract in Central and Western India. This inscription indicates that BhagwanlalIndraji's statement that the Abhiras and the Traikutakas are same powers does not hold well.

For example the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta²⁷ (c.335-75 CE) lists them along with eight more non monarchical powers (........Mmalav-Arjunayana-Yaudheya-Madrak-Abbira-Prarjuna-Sanakanika-Kaka-Kharaparik-adibhis= cha sarvva-karadan-ajnakarana-pranamagamana), who were indirectly ruled by the great Gupta monarch. AshviniAgrawala locates this group in Western India.²⁸ Probably after being defeated by Samudragupta the Abbiras migrated to different parts of the country in several small pockets.

Next we see the association of this group with the history of Nepal which begins around 5th Century CE.²⁹ From Nepal we find an inscription namely 'Pasupati Sivalinga base of Abhiri'³⁰, wife of the son of Paramabhimani (Samvat.402) here the term 'abhirikhatyagunavaryya' has been written. Probably here the term 'Abhiri' has been used as a proper name but it can also be assumed that this name is the indicator of the presence of the group at that region.³¹

The Abhiras were present in Gadhwala district of Uttarpradesh around the middle of 9th Century CE, which is supported by the Pandukesvar inscription of Lalitasura (854 CE)³². Here they are mentioned as the subjects (mahamaushya - kiso(so)ravadavagomahishyadhikrta-bhatta-mahattam-ahi(bhi)ra-vanik- |) of Lalitasura, the king of Kartikeyapura. The 9th Century CE Ghatiyala record of Kakkuka³³ locates them at Rohinmakupa wherefrom they were uprooted by the former who mentions

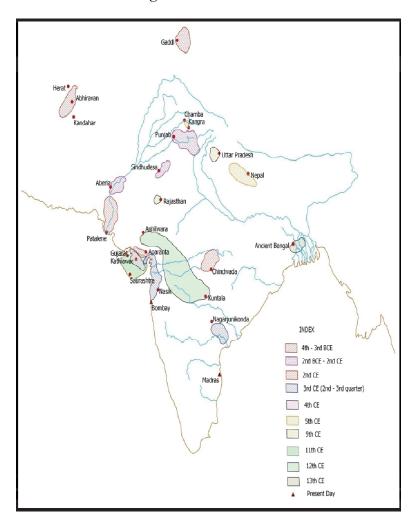
them as 'abbirajanadarunah' (....Rohinmakupakagramah purvvamasodana - | srayah | asevya | sadhulokanamabhirajanadarunah |) indicating the terrible character of the group³⁴. The term 'abhirapalli' has been mentioned in the Gurgi inscription of Prabodhasiva³⁵, though the area cannot be identified properly.

In one inscription belonging to the reign of Vikramaditya VI (1084 CE)³⁶ the Abhiras are mentioned as defeated groups by the king and located in between the Surastras and Cheras(...Gauda- khasha(sa)- Komkana- Kerala-Chera-Chola-Kantaraja-Simdhu-Parasa-Varā\[\text{a}\] a-Surashtraka-Lata- Barbbar-Abhira-mahesarambasakemadidan=A-bavamalla-Vallabham | |).

Around the second half of tenth Century CE, we see them as plundering groups in the rich commercial town such as Somanatha Pattana³⁷ under the leadership of king Graharipu, ruling at Junagadh³⁸. RomilaThapar calls them as 'local rajas'³⁹. The epigraphic sources inform us that the Abhiras were repeatedly defeated by the Eastern and Western Chalukyas⁴⁰, Hoyasalas⁴¹, Yadavas⁴² around 10th-13th Century CE. From *Brhatdharmapurana* we come across the Abhiras present in Bengal around 13th Century CE.⁴³The Abhiras later known as Ahirs still stands in the recent scenario. A look at the Census report of 1891 not only shows their distribution throughout the country but also enumerates no less than 1767 varieties of Ahirs.⁴⁴ The Census report of 1901 clearly attests their presence in Bombay City, Ahmedabad, Cutch, Kathiawar,Palanpur etc.⁴⁵ They are also active in Bihar, particularly in south Bihar where worship of the GodlingBasawan is very popular among them.⁴⁶Vadali, a village of Gujarat recently (2001) came into the forefront concerning water scarcity and declining groundwater table where 120 families of Ahirs inhabit. In Harayana an entire village is lived by the Ahirs.

From the above discussion it seems that the Abhiras probably entered into the subcontinent thorough the north-western borderland around 3rd Century BCE. Then from 2nd Century BCE they established their sway over Gujarat and Kathiabadh region. Around Second half of 3rd Century CE, we find them in Nasik and Nagarjunikonda region exercising royal authority. They are again visible in the Gujarat area wherefrom they migrated to Nepal (5th Century CE), Uttarpradesh (9th Century CE), Rajasthan (9th Century CE), Junagadh (10th Century CE), Bengal (13th Century CE) etc., possibly in different groups. Though their centre of activity revolved around western India, their footsteps could be seen from west to east and north to south. This study is an attempt to revive the Abhiras from their anonymity to a strong presence in history.

Migration of the Abhiras



Notes

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²Buddha Prakash, (1954) The Abhiras: Their Antiquity, History and Culture', *Journal of Bihar Research Society*, Vol.40, pt.2, , pp.249-65.

³R.S.Sharma,(1958) Sudras in Ancient India, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1958, pp.32-34.

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⁵R.V.Russell & Rai Bahadur Hiralal,(1916) *Tribes and Castes of The Central Provinces of India*, Vol.II, Rajdhani Book Centre, Delhi,pp.18-38.

⁶D.R.Bhandarkar,(1989) Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Culture, Asian Education Series, New Delhi, , p.62.

⁷Major Rawlinson, 'Comparative Geography of Afghanistan', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol.12, 1842, pp.112-114.

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9Ibid, Salyaparrva, Vol.29, 35.1, (Kolkata: Visvabani Prakashani, 1395 Bangabda), p.393.

¹⁰Ibid, *Mausalaparrva*, Vol.43, 7. 46-49, (Kolkata: Visvabani Prakashani, 1400 Bangabda), pp.54-55.

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²⁸Ashvini Agrawal, *Op.Cit*, pp.119-121.

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³⁰-----, Inscriptions of Ancient Nepal, Abhinav Publication, New Delhi, 1983, pp.33-34.

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Gender, Migration and Cities of India: South Asian Perspective

By

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Introduction

Migration has become a critical and serious global concern today. It is not just an academic debate and discourse but also vital in grasping the global inter-connectivity which also brings along with it insecurity and susceptibility where forced migration is plays a crucial role. Post-Cold War period has seen rising trend of forced migration which involves flow of refugees, internal displacement of people, forced migration of women and children, migration in the wake of war, conflicts, disputes, terrorist attacks and human rights violations, natural calamities, and humanitarian disasters create a sense of statelessness making people the victims of border violence, militarisation of borders and human trafficking in sex and labour as found in not only bordering states of south Asian countries but also a common picture in the war prone West Asian countries today. Migration today has emerged as a major phenomenon in the world and maximum suffers of migration are the women and children subjected to series of atrocities.¹

Movement of people from one place to another for a better life, freedom from deprivation, insecurities, and uncertainties have been an age old phenomenon. International migration has not been a part of research agenda in the field of politics or international relation except occasionally while discussing the States foreign policy issue or when refugees have become a matter of concern for the security policy of the state. In recent era of globalisation with world becoming more interconnected and interrelated large inflow and out flow of people become a

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natural phenomenon. Migration over the period of time has thereby gained considerable currency with its impact felt in policy making, demography, security, and empowerment. As any other theorisation, migration has also been traditionally male biased. Migration theory has failed to capture the questions of women and address the gender related migration experiences. Proper theoretical underpinnings are required to understand the circumstances under which they migrated, conditions and experiences. The traditional migration theory fails to explain the causes behind way women are forced into trafficking, how trans -national migration effect their life, their entry into labour market and the problems faced in resettlement. The experiences of women in new place and their adjustment to new environment have not been captured by existing theories. ²

Migration which otherwise is gender neutral needs to be gender specific. Since 1980s there has been increasing number of women migrants and according to UN Population Division data of 2009³ approximately half of all international migrants today are women. The significant change that has been observed in recent globalised era is that women are no longer moving as mere dependants of male counterparts but independently in search of better jobs and life. This has also raised the concern regarding the vulnerability and risks involved the economic contribution of these women in terms of remittances, care giving jobs. This era of globalisation can be said to be an age of migration as it is also characterised by steady growth, differentiation in terms of ethnicity and groups, politicisation and feminisation.⁴

The paper looks into theoretical aspects pertaining to gender and migration, the issues and challenges faced by the women in South Asia, the rising trend of female migration in Indian cities, legal framework for the refugees and migrants. The paper also briefly looks at the census data and the scholarly articles to analyse the changing trend in migration in Indian cities. Methodologically it is a qualitative analysis of framework and drift of migration found among women within India and outside.

Theoretical Framework: Feminisation of Migration

There has been a noteworthy body of literature on gender, focusing on how different societies have assigned and established separate and often discriminatory roles for men and women in different spheres of the economy, politics, art, culture, religion, and family. Majority of literature explored pertaining to gender studies have looked at the public and private divide, with women mostly located inside the four walls and subjugated to an inferior status or value both within and outside. On other side of the coin, studies have also demonstrated how the nature and culture have been used to outline the gender differences and justification to the discrimination

which prevail in the society. Sexual divisions of labor that continue around household work were viewed to establish a binary system between male and female work. Social science literature pre 1980s are grappled with the divergent ideas of the worldwide, collective subjugation of women and culturally specified gender differences.

Piper's essay on, "Gendering the Politics of Migration," details the relative scarcity of gendered analysis of migration by political scientists. Research work since the 1970s and the 1980s that became inclusionary did not brings any dramatic shift in thinking about who migrated, how immigration took place, or the migratory consequences. Gradually over the period of time, the concept of "add women, mix and stir"⁵ or the "gender as a variable" ⁶approach has been included in research. The prior research did not probe into the existing models to explain why and where people migrated nor went into analysis as to how they integrated. Instead, migration was explained as a mere reflection of different sex roles. From the economic analysis e.g. the neoclassical economic models and the push-pull demographic models of the 1970s and 1980s, perceived migration as the outcome of individual decisions. The gendered responsibilities explained why women participated less than men in migration decisions or in the labour force of the host country when they joined their husbands. The ongoing power relations that operate in families suggest that the interests of men and women in families do not always concurin deciding where to migrate, for how long, and to which countries. This is where gender plays an integral role of the migration process.

Scholars today view gender as a core organising principle that underlines migration and other issues such as the adaptation and legalities in the new country. As Byod underlines that in understanding international migration it is important to delve into three distinct stages where gender relations, roles, and hierarchies stimulate the migration process and produce disparate outcomes forewomen: the pre-migration stage is influenced by gender relations and structural hierarchies; the transition across state boundaries, which are highly influenced by the national policies of country of origin through their selective, promotional, permissive or expulsive rules of exit which effect men and women differently. Immigration laws often perceive women as dependent and thereby place them within realm of family roles rather than in the market role.

The institutional framework also plays a vital role in controlling gendered composition of immigration flows and lastly is the post migration stage where men and women are treated differently and they experience resettlement differently in their receiving country. Integration is chiefly influenced by three factors: 1) the effect of entry status on the capacity to integrate and settle; 2) patterns of inclusion into the labor market; and 3)the bearing of exodus on the status of women and men. Entry status often tends to hinder female migrants than male migrants because of

the residency status and employment rights and related entitlements which are gender discriminatory. Since migrant women are regarded by the state as dependents, their rights also naturally become legally dependent on the migration and residency status of other family members. This simultaneously affects the ability of migrant women to acquire those rights and entitlements in their own right⁷.

There appears a melange of incentives and coercions that shape the migratory pattern in the South Asian region as well as worldwide such as a desire for seeking economic betterment for self or family; migrating to break the shackles of gender discrimination or challenge gender norms in the state. BRIDGE reports which look at migration and gender outline that globally, most women who have migrated to find work have been incorporated in unskilled, informal occupations, for instance in domestic or care workers especially in Middle East or to take a closer look in metro cities of India migrants from neighboring country Bangladesh dominate the domestic worker market, or as entertainers (bar girls in Mumbai), opening of beauty parlors(dominated by Nepalese), in manufacturing (especially garment), jewellery, handicrafts and agriculture. Changing scenario of labour markets globally has augmented both opportunities as well as pressures for women and men to migrate internationally in bulk. Women generally face more radical decision-making and financial restrictions compared to men, which act as an obstacle to choice of movement. However income-earning opportunities can empower women and help them escape traditional restraints on female mobility and rights. Economic, political and social turmoil can also provide them with an impetus to migrate especially among educated women who are unable to overcome employment discrimination in their native country want to fend for opportunities in other countries for better utilisation of their skills that is well-paid.

The census reports and several institutional reports reflect that female migration is also induced by other non-economic factors, such as patriarchal traditions and norms that limit opportunity and freedom, coming out of a traumatising marriage, escaping from domestic violence, and hoping for equal opportunities. Discrimination against single mothers, unmarried women, widows or divorcees also coaxes many to move away from place of origin which are conservative in their outlook especially taking South Asia where patriarchy is embedded in the society. Marriage is an important cause of migration for women. Arranged marriages which are common phenomenon in Indian subcontinent can provide support for women in many cases but some of them are forced into marriages which can act as facades for trafficking women. Apart from marriages in the past few decades women have emerged as autonomous migrants as the main economic providers or breadwinner for their families.

Poverty acts as a major cause for women migration. If we look at migration trends in cities of India most of the women migrants are from poverty ridden

countries like Bangladesh, Nepal searching for job opportunities in mega cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata. Domestic work is one of largest absorber of women migrants. Metro cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata are flooded with domestic workers from Bangladesh which over the period of time have become a matter of concern for the government. It is this sector which lacks proper legalisation and women are prone to exploitation or ill treatment. They are subjected to long working hours, abuses by employers, instability due to informality, lack of proper working conditions, no social protection or access to legal and health services. Often the disproportionate burden of earning for their family has psychological impact on the women and maximum of the unpaid labour at home goes unrecognised in global economy. With globalisation playing its role in migration decision women have emerged to play a vital role in country's economy. Women also play an important role in political economy of the country through remittances. Women and migrants enter into macro level developmental strategies which represents a major basis of foreign exchange for the home government. In Phillipines for instance migrant women engaged in entertainment represent third largest source of foreign exchange8

The growing presence of women over the last few decades in the cross border circuits is linked to excesses of globalisation. The variety of global circuits are incorporating women in the dynamics of economic globalisation at the backdrop of growing unemployment in the home country presence of women in global market provides an alternative source of income for the government. Prostitution and labour migration are now growing ways of living and illegal trafficking of women and children for sex industry is a lucrative business for profit making. Subsistence food production, informal work, emigration, prostitution have become survival options for women⁹ There is a nexus between trafficking and migration. The phenomenon of "feminisation of migration" has been increasing at an alarming rate globally in twenty-first century. Bonded labour takes place in two forms: sexual and non-sexual, and women are victims of both. Given that for women in Asia generally "it seems to be more economical and quicker to proceed through informal and often illegal channels to obtain regular labour than to pass through legitimate official channels" ¹¹

At present, there is a trend towards a migration-based approach to trafficking, which focuses on regional cooperation, policies on migration globalisation of the economy, development strategies, and human rights as well as feminist approaches, seeks to address invisibility of trafficked women who are exposed to numerous vulnerabilities related to health, sexual exploitation subjected to opportunistic elements and unfortunately in these cases women fails to protect themselves from the sex market given the feminisation of poverty and lesser bargaining power. In South Asia, Bangladesh and Nepal are the focal points for

trafficking, where India and Pakistan are the transit points to other regions especially Middle East and trafficking is rampant in both whereby women are often objectified by the militants. Sex labour is a common phenomenon in the West Asian countries which are war zones and women trafficking are a serious matter of concern. The degree of trafficking is quite difficult to access because collection of data and facts on trafficking is obstructed by the covert nature of the trade, especially for the Commercial Sex Industry (CSI)12, "the trade is secretive, the women are silenced, the traffickers are dangerous and not many agencies are counting" 13 In 2001, it was estimated that 12 million Bangladeshis were illegal immigrants in India's north western states ¹⁴There is also internal migration within the countries too usually from rural areas to the cities. Pornography has now become a lucrative trade, and women and children in South Asia both are visible in sex racket and the mega cities of India such as Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi have become key points for illegal migration. Moreover given the illiteracy of women they are lured into illegal informal job sector. Many Bangladeshi women struggling poverty and deprivation after losing jobs in garment industry as the country lacks development many women migrate to India and get forced to flesh trade. Every step of trafficking shows powerlessness of women in economy and society. Trafficking of the Nepalese women and girls has been outlined by Deepa Mehta in the office of the Director General of Police in Delhi, as "less risky than smuggling narcotics and electronic equipment into India" 15 As Mehta observes, "The procurer-pimp-police network makes the process even smoother".16

Migration and globalisation together shows how international economic patterns have contributed to increasing trafficking generally, but singularly cannot explain why the majority of victims are women, or why prostitution is still a lucrative market.¹⁷ A preference for particular race and ethnicity shows the vulnerability for in a stereotyped fashion.¹⁸ It has been revealed that forty per cent of prostituted girls rescued during major raids on brothels in Bombay in 1996were from Nepal¹⁹and majority of Bangladeshi women in Kolkata brothels. The Nepali women are in the international trade. The phenomenon of high way sex worker is also found where trafficked women service the demands of truck drivers.

The demand is critical, "unless the demand is tackled, it is not possible to prevent trafficking." ²⁰It is a fact that there is a nexus between migration and trafficking in South Asia. Migration creates the environment susceptible for trafficking, and migrants who are keen to take risks or are not adequately informed about the dangers they face are the most vulnerable. The debate on trafficking of women is not only in the Indian subcontinent but globally it is a serious phenomenon today. Migration of women has two faces of empowerment and disempowerment: on one hand it empowers women and gives them power of decision making whereas on other hand it is also about disempowerment through

shackles of poverty, legal and gender discrimination. The women are entrapped in the process of being treated as trivial subject because of a patriarchal system that denies social and legal protection for them.

Migration and Indian Cities: Trends and Legalities

Cities are sites of migration and opportunities. The cities become valorizing for the disempowered because it provides a space to reinvent own identity. Cities thereby have become a focal point of fulfilling aspirations. Women from backward community, poor countries who aim at betterment of their life migrate to cities with a dream in their eyes. Today migration has shown a changing pattern within Indian cities calling for many changes in the government policy making and changing role of NGOs.

The changing pattern of women migration in India is reflected in the increasing proportion of women towards cities for purpose of employment as well as marriages according to the Census of India1991 and 2001.21Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore continue to be the attractive cities of India opening the doors of opportunities for women who come to fulfill their dreams of a better life. UNESCO conducted a research where it found that there is a trend of women migrating to Delhi was more for independent lifestyle rather than marriage.22 However the general sources show that migration is generally to accompany spouses.²³ Usually the negative cultural practices as well as conservative patriarchal power structure coax women to come to the cities and adjust to the new changing environment. Even the changes experienced in our economy since globalisation have also encouraged women to move to cities for employment. The small towns or villages fail to provide those opportunities which otherwise are found in big cities. The role of women only as house wife is also changing with time. Most of the illiterate women also come to these cities as there are more scope for making earning income and making investments. According to census there volume of male and female migrants is highest for Mumbai urban agglomeration in comparison to other mega cities. Percentage of female migrants is high in Hyderabad (49.08 percent in 1991) and in Chennai (48.61 percent). It is found that in 2001, the highest percentage of female migrants in these six cities came from Uttar Pradesh (32.0 percent) followed by Bihar (10.0 percent), Gujarat (7.0 percent), Tamil Nadu (6.0 percent), Rajasthan (5.8 percent) and Haryana (5.8 percent). Other states having significant proportion of female out-migration are Andhra Pradesh (4.3 percent), Karnataka (5.1percent), Kerala (4.5 percent), Punjab (3.2 percent), Uttaranchal (2.9 percent) and West Bengal (2.8 percent). Almost similar trend of female out-migration is observed form all these above states during 1991.²⁴

The proportion of migration for employment has increased over time in Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata. The highest percentage of female migrants in Delhi came from Uttar Pradesh (32.0 percent) in 2001. The female out-migration is high from Uttar Pradesh to Delhi and Mumbai urban agglomeration of during 1991 and 2001. Rising urban migration has given rise to urban slums in these mega cities and the problems faced by women; the daily harassment, violence and exploitation fail to reach the concerns of governments. Apart from Indian migratory flow, the inflow of migrants from neighbouring counties to big cities in India has been overwhelmingly high. Confronted by poverty and communal tension, lack of women's freedom, educational opportunities, many Bangladeshi women as well as Nepali women migrate to India. These women conglomerate mainly in Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata. Most of these women end up in bar as dance girls."Pushed by poverty and pulled by the lure of well-paid jobs in distant Indian cities, the young women defied tradition to make the perilous journey across India in search of freedom and cash."25Women are subjecting themselves to all kinds of risks that come in their way to experience freedom.

Overwhelming increase in migration in the Indian cities and neighbouring regions have called for several policy reforms which aims at controlling the migration flows. The policies and legal frameworks are gender biased which do not look at women migrants independently but as dependents of male counterparts. Women refugees are the most vital section of migrants specially in war prone situation and they are the most vulnerable section in the society facing many health issues and psychological setbacks. It however becomes difficult for them to gain refugee status because often these women lack the education to complete the bureaucratic process. There is a rise of violation of human rights and United Nations, NGOs playing a major role in suggesting policy frameworks for protecting the rights of women. It is also important for countries like Bangladesh and Nepal to ease the restriction in migration to prevent illegal migration. Government needs to deal with the condition of living of women who are living in urban slums and in order to ensure safety and security of state review the approach in which the urban migration is dealt with. Human trafficking is contentious issue worldwide and a major threat to human security. South Asia has become a major hub of trafficking of women which needs to be controlled addressing the underlining structural problems rather than border control. CEDAW(Convention on Elimination of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Women), Beijing Platform For Action, United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime(Palermo Convention) had drawn provisions for protection of women's rights that needs to be implemented in right spirit. Women in armed conflict are given protection under UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution, 1325 in 2000 which aims to protect women's rights and similarly urges state to protect rights of women refugees and displaced persons. Civil Society also has a major role to play in protecting the rights of women migrants.²⁶

Conclusion

Female migration all over the world has different trends and characteristics which are opening sources of opportunities and risks. The independence and desire for good life, escape from torture, abuses have induced women to cross borders. It has been found that poverty has been a major factor drawing women to lucrative jobs in big cities. In this migration journey women are exposed to varieties of vulnerabilities which make them a prey to all the smugglers and women traffickers who make business out of it. It is the vulnerability which prevents women from speaking out and claim for their rights. Human mobility is a common phenomenon and a part ofentire developmental process. It is expected that there will be more women migrants to the mega cities of India and the state as well as civil society must provide them with the space for development keeping in mind the national security by preventing illegal influxes and activity. Legal protection and guarantees are required to provide an environment where women can make their choice.

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Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations in South Asia &Beyond: Challenges and Opportunities

Universally and Regionally: The way towards a Partnership in South-Asia

By

Jacques Tenier*

From the founding of the United Nations, the issue of the relationship between the Organization and regional institutions has been set up. Chapter VIII of the UN Charter recognizes the priority of regional authorities for regulation of disputes but subordinates any coercive action on their part to the authority of the Security Council. In the past seventy years, regionalization has proved to be more dynamic than foreseen by the Charter. Cultural, political, economic and social integration processes are in the works on all continents. Also, the hierarchical relationship that was initially imagined was empirically transformed into a series of partnerships and cooperation tends to replace subordination. On one hand, the UN undertakes to regionalize its mode of action and on the other hand recognizes the legitimacy of regional organizations. In these conditions, vitality of regional phenomena could open way towards a consolidation of the UN, beginning with regional pillars.

Regional Structuring of the United Nations Organization

As a grouping of nations, the UN has, however, since its creation, allowed a place to the geographic divisions of the world.

According to article 23 of the Charter, member States that are non-permanent members of the Security Council are elected every year, according to their contribution to the peacekeeping operations but also to an "equitable geographic distribution". Chapter VIII recognizes the role of the "regions of the world" in an eminently political domain, that of peace and security. Article 52 allows for the creation of agencies and the signing of regional agreements with the

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stipulation that they are compatible with the principles and objectives of the United Nations. Article 53 states that the Security Council can use these regional agencies and agreements in order to implement coercive measures to be taken under its authority. On the contrary, no coercive action can be taken at a regional level without a decision of the Security Council.

In the economic field, the regional dimension was quickly taken into account. As soon as the middle of the 20th century, it was obvious that the national economies were interconnected and that continental or sub-continental scales were better adapted to long-term outlook. Five regional economic UN commissions were established, the one for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok¹. Executive secretaries of the commissions have the rank of under-secretary general of the UN. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) defined itself as a "politically neutral forum where every country has an equal vote." Launched in 1947 in Shanghai and established in Bangkok after the creation of the People's Republic of China, ESCAP encountered difficulties due to an unfavorable geopolitical context. Collapse of the Soviet Union, commercial opening of China becoming a member state of WTO and enlargement of ASEAN to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia changed the situation. Now ESCAP favors regionalization in Central, East and South Asia and in the Pacific. It holds meetings with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Pacific Islands Forum.

UN Actions and Regional Integration

While the idea of the nation has inspired the organization established in San Francisco in 1946, nowadays, the idea of regionalization, of the world as a combination of regional processes, appears in the implementation of policies. One will make the hypothesis that nations continue to offer the main base of legitimacy while "regions of the world" become a privileged place for an efficient action. We have to question the durability of this hiatus between legitimacy and efficiency. In some regions like Europe but also South America, a direct regional legitimacy is progressively established through regional elections. A better equilibrium of the world implies a greater capacity of action of regional groupings and their interaction with UN and other world organizations such as WTO. Interaction can be studied through regional implementation of universal democratic principles, UN support to the building of regional integration capabilities in the less developed countries (LDCs) and thematic partnerships.

Regional Implementation of Universal Democratic Principles

Regionalization can contribute to the implementation of the principles set up by the universal declaration of human rights, December 10, 1948. Philosopher Jean-Marc Ferry discovers, behind the technocratic appearances of regional processes, the building of what he calls "a state of cosmopolitical lan" combining the rights of the people and the rights of the nation states². The EU grants to private individuals a right of appeal before the European Court of Justice, Luxemburg, for cases relevant to the internal market in which they have been aggrieved. As far as the whole European continent is concerned, Russia and Turkey included, after exhausting the rights of national appeals, nationals of member states have the right of individual referral to the European Court of Human rights, Strasburg. Unduly imprisoned Kurdish members of the Turk parliament have thus been freed after a condemnation of the Turkish State by the European Court.

ASEAN built by States, most of them with authoritarian regimes, a long time refused such mediations and opposed European interference on these matters, particularly as far as Peace Nobel Prize Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom was concerned. Since President Suharto's departure, a very significant evolution has occurred. The 2004 tsunami, particularly severe in Northern Sumatra, brought the Indonesian government and the Aceh rebellion to a compromise put under double control of ASEAN and EU.

In South Asia too, the regional level is considered relevant to enforce universal commitments thanks to a cooperative action of neighboring states. 2001-2010 was declared SAARC decade of the rights of the child. The member states commit themselves to guarantee the basic rights of what they call the "South Asian child". For instance, "State Parties shall make civil registrations of births, marriages and deaths, in an official registry, compulsory in order to facilitate the effective enforcement of national laws, including the minimum age for employment and marriage." SAARC has signed several conventions recalling the commitment of the member States to implement international legal instruments relevant for human rights: 2002 convention on preventing and combating trafficking in women and children for prostitution, 1996 Rawalpindi resolution on children of South Asia and 2002 convention on regional arrangements for the promotion of child welfare in South Asia. They look for the implementation of the universal declaration of human rights asserting that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance, of the UN convention on the rights of the child and the declaration of the World summit for children.

UN Support for Regional Capacity Building between LDCs

The World Bank belatedly started to regionalize its programs. It was first more interested in dealing with isolate States, making its bargaining power greater but at the expense of the regional coherence and efficiency of the investment. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has preceded the World Bank in such an evolution. It helped ECO, in Central Asia, to build a web site and to establish a regional report on human development. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) brought its contribution to the elaboration and the implementation of a regional food security plan in Central Asia.

Thematic Partnerships

Just like food security in ECO countries, regionalization of strategies allows for an organized and constructive dialogue between member States and international organizations. It increases the bargaining power and the coherence of action of the first ones. For instance, in 2002, the SAARC member states committed themselves to take up together the decision of the UN millennium summit to reduce poverty by half by 2015. They stressed upon microcredit, small business and women's vocational integration. Security, environment and health are important fields of partnership between regional and global scales.

Regional and International Security

As early as 1992, the UN agenda for peace underlined the relevance of a division of tasks between the UN and regional organizations. These ones however are not UN subsidiaries anymore as the UN is the aggregation of them. Regional processes could strive for it if every continent or subcontinent came to become effectively integrated. For the moment, the UN has not found in every region of the world the partner it is more or less looking for. In Asia, the most relevant process seems to be the working together of regional organizations on some important topics. The status of dialogue partner devoted to neighboring countries – but not only – by regional integrations contributes to a better intelligence of peoples and states. In 1994, ASEAN launched a regional forum (ARF) to answer to the stakes in regional security, particularly in South China Sea. Opened to the East Asian but also to Pacific countries like Australia, New-Zealand, Canada and the USA and Russia, ARF has enlarged itself to member states of SAARC (India, Bangladesh and Pakistan), providing them with a supplementary opportunity for improving their own relations. The forum aims indeed at forging a climate of confidence through a preventive diplomacy (Confidence Building Measures).

Environment

Environmental issues ignore borders and require a transnational commitment, let us think of climate change but also in this state of Assam of ice melding and water management.

In 2007 SAARC signed with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) a memorandum of understanding. In 2009, UNEP and SAARC coproduced the South Asian Environment Outlook (SAEO). SAARC secretary general underlined that these issues were one of the main fields of regional cooperation. He remembered the establishment of specialized regional centers for meteorological research, coastal zone management, forestry and disaster management. UNEP executive director underlined the ecological tensions in South Asia, a region occupying only about 5 pc of the world's land mass but home to about 20 pc of the world's population³. Its report concludes that South Asia is very vulnerable to climate change: in the Himalayan region, "the approximately 15,000 glaciers will likely shrink from the present total area of 500,000 km² to 100,000 km² by 2035". As the glaciers form a unique reservoir supporting perennial rivers such as the Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra, "this will exacerbate the challenges of poverty reduction and improving access to safe drinking water4." UNEP and SAARC ask for a greater "transboundary water-sharing", neighboring countries having to negotiate for sharing water resources and thus preventing people from water stress⁵. UNDP human development reports ask for making water a human right: "Everyone should have at least 20 litres of clean water per day and the poor should get it free⁶" South Asia pioneered the concept of area water partnerships (AWPs) as a way to implement an integrated water resources management (IWRM) through dialogue on critical water management issues and to settle conflicts between neighboring countries. With partners from six member states of SAARC, a South Asian consortium for interdisciplinary water resources studies has been set-up in Hyderabad, India.

We can give an example of concrete action between UNEP and South Asian actors: South Asian seas program launched with the South Asia Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP); indeed, Indian Ocean is said to be " - with its wealth of coral reefs, sea-grasses, and mangrove forests-, perhaps, the most poorly protected coastline" Globally speaking, as far as protected areas are concerned, the situation in South Asia is contrasted according to the country: Bhutan has set aside nearly 40 pc of its land under protection: "The country is among the top ten countries of the world with the highest proportion of land under protected areas, whereas in Bangladesh the area is extremely long." SAEO asks for "a South Asian biodiversity conservation agreement which would facilitate: "more detailed assessments, mapping and delineation of protected areas; revival of traditional

conservation knowledge, curtailment of bio-piracy ... "This agreement would be prepared by SACEP in cooperation with UNEP.

Health: Aids and Tuberculosis

Fight against Aids and tuberculosis and Ebola in Africa underlines the need for a coordinate interaction between global, regional and national scales. In 2001, the General Assembly of the UN, meeting in an extraordinary session, referred itself to regional statements adopted in the prospect of the UN meeting, world and regional dynamics thus interacting. In 2002, leaders of the SAARC countries showed their anxiety in the face of the spread of Aids but also tuberculosis in South Asia and called for a regional strategy supported both by international bodies and civil society. After an extensive consultative process, a regional strategy on HIV and Aids was effectively launched in 2006 in cooperation with UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO and UNICEF. Annual work plans are coordinated by the director of social affairs in the SAARC secretariat. Universally and regionally, through the combined action of the UN system, of the political machines – national and regional –and of the people – the citizens, whatever the scale and the present and future of their citizenship, local, national, regional or universal -, thus takes shape in Jean-Marc Ferry's words, of a new configuration for public action on the planet as a whole.

Impact of World Regionalization on the UN System

Until the 21st century, partnership between World organizations and regional integrations was darkened by the omnipresence of the Bretton Woods institutions (Word Bank, IMF), hardly interested in reducing their bargaining power by promoting regional groupings at the expense of Nation States. Set up of WTO favored regional coalitions particularly among South countries versus the USA and the EU.

Regional Integration and World Finance and Trade Institutions

The choice of the latter general managers of IMF proved the will of the so-called emerging powers to increase their recognition in the working of the institution. A new balance of power has to be taken in charge but regional integration is not only a way to perform economies of scale and to adapt decision-making process. It is also a way to enlarge the scope of rights and of opportunities for the people. In the vast Asia-Pacific region, APEC entitled itself to control the implementation by its member states of the standards of the IMF forum for financial stability. As often if not always, International Labor Organization (ILO) issues did not take the lead. It is

still very difficult for workers to make their rights recognized and implemented in a globalized economy. We all know the difficulty met to compel transnational companies to control their sub-contractors, difficulty revealed in January 2013 by the Rana Plaza tragedy. Anyhow, always as far as this large regional APEC forum is concerned, Asia-Pacific network of Unions, affiliated to the International confederacy of free trade unions, asked the Heads of State and government of APEC countries to recognize the trade-unions as partners and to adopt the social principles set up by the 1996 WTO ministerial meeting in Singapore.

Towards UN Regionalization?

At the end of World War II, nations united to establish their common organization. In the planetary theater, they were then the uncontested public actors, even if big business had accompanied them for a long time. Let us just think of the Eastern Indian companies set up in the 17th century by the Netherlands, Great Britain and France, which played as ancestors to the present globalized companies. Seventy years later, in an ever more interconnected and ever small becoming world, their status is in decline. Nation States are less and less homogenous buildings moving independently from one another. Since the collapse of the Soviet bloc, they have never been so numerous⁹, but the sovereign power of the smallest ones is only an illusion and the medium-sized ones, even the biggest of them, have understood the need for a shared sovereignty. A regional coming-together of nations restores vigor to proximity and alleviates the outside constraints weighing on States. Contemporary economic but also, political, social and ecological realities plead in favor of a renovation of UNO, taking into account the long process of world regionalization.

If the regional level can be contemplated as mediation between global and local, it is not a question of reproducing at a higher scale the working of nations. The diversity of the world requires integrating political processes taking place, according to their own logic, on a national, sub-continental and world level. In his third article for perpetual peace, the philosopher Emmanuel Kant proposed as early as the 18th century, the following formula: "And so, remote continents can peacefully come in contact; these connections can finally be regulated publicly and move mankind ever closer to a cosmopolitan constitution!"." This new kind of public interaction requires actors which cannot only be States. As underlined by the research institute of the UN for social development (UNRISD), Geneva, the "invisible hand" of the market is unable to imagine a society which suits everyone or to work in a coherent way to build it. This capacity is given only to men and women inspired by a deep concern for the public good." A former Belgian Prime Minister, today president of the Liberal European MPS, opened the way, asking for a G8 or G10 of the great regional organizations which exist on the different continents. In return, a good working of a regionalized UN system implies a rise in

the level of expectations on the part of the regional organizations themselves. At the least, they must pave the ground for a viable common future of their peoples: peace and security, including ecological and social security, decent public institutions and transportation infrastructures. Time looks ripe for a progressive regionalization of multilateral institutions. To regionalize the representation of nation states within the UN system could be a guiding principle.

Power not only economic and military, but also demographic, demands its part in the organization of the world and it would be vain to deny this. But the future of the world, its peace, its balance, and, by time of increasing consequences of climate change, particularly here in Tezpur, in the Brahmaputra valley, demands also an inspiration which does not require force. Legitimacy of multilateral institutions requires an equal expression to cultures of the whole of mankind, to the people who make it up and to the political organizations which they themselves endow. Conscious of our common world membership, in all the regions of the world, we are looking for organizations complementary to the States built around nations. The world as a sum of regional divisions, not exclusive from one another but getting shared spaces, will find the political organization relevant to the characteristics and the constraints of the 21st century.

Notes

- ¹ Latin America and the Caribbean islands (Santiago de Chile). Europe (Geneva). Africa (Addis-Ababa). Western Asia (Beirut).
- ² Jean-Marc Ferry, (2000)La question de l'Etat européen, Gallimard editions, Paris, .
- ³ The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna region is "second only to the Amazon with an annual discharge of 1 350 billion cubic meters and a total drainage area of 1.75 million square km. With a population of over 600 million people living in the region, which is growing at an annual rate of 2 pc, there is considerable pressure on the region's resources."
- ⁴ Achim Steiner, (2009) Foreword, South Asia Environment Outlook (SAEO) (Bangkok, UNEP regional office for Asia and the Pacific, Kathmandu, SAARC), p. 3.
- ⁵ SAEO 2009, p. 25: "In India, "gross per capita water availability" will decline from around 1,820 cubic metres a year to as low as around 1,140 cubic meters a year in 2050."
- ⁶ Human Development Report (HDR), 2006, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- ⁷ Human Development Report (HDR), 2006, UNDP.
- ⁸ SAEO 2009, p. 35.
- ⁹ Founded by 51 States, UNO today includes more than 190of which many African, Caribbean, Pacific -, are of very small size.
- ¹⁰ Emmanuel Kant,(1999) Projet de paix perpétuelle (1795), Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, Paris, p. 57.

Myanmar: A Land Bridge to Connect South Asia and Southeast Asia

By

Konsam Shakila Devi*

Introduction

Myanmar is located at the tri juncture of South, Southeast and East Asia. Strategically Myanmar holds an important geostrategic location as India's gateway to Southeast Asia, Southeast Asia's gateway to South Asia and a land bridge to connect South and Southeast Asia. It is the largest mainland in Southeast Asia. It has an area of some 678,500, surrounded by three region of Asia: South Asian country of India and Bangladesh in the West, Southeast Asian country of Thailand and Laos in the East and East Asian country of China in the North and the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea in the South. It has nine ports available for sea going vessels along the coastline connecting the Bay of Bengal. India sees Myanmar as an open door to Southeast Asia. It holds an important place in India's Look East policy (LEP) for economic integration between South and Southeast Asia and for the development of Northeast region of India. Myanmar's geographical location, where it shares border with Bangladesh, China, India, Laos and Thailand, adds a special dimension to the prospects of bilateral business relation between Bangladesh and Myanmar. The country endowed with rich natural resources, arable land, forestry, minerals like gas and oil, freshwater and marine resources also increase its importance. Most of the natural resources are still under utilised. The two Myanmar states Rahkine and Chin was separated by Arakan Mountain Range bordering Bangladesh from the rest of Myanmar, possess abundant natural resources which include limestone, timber, bamboo, marine products and variety of valuable minerals. So connecting with Myanmar is of high beneficiary for Bangladesh to gain access to the rich resources.

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The competition of two Asia regional powers India and China to get access into Myanmar for resource and influence increase the strategic importance of Myanmar.¹ The rapid growth of several sub-regional economic grouping in the region makes Myanmar the centre of many regional initiatives. Myanmar became a member of regional grouping Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1997 and accorded the status of observer in South Asian Association for Regional Corporation (SAARC) in 2008, also member of sub-regional grouping including Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC which comprises of two member countries of ASEAN and five member countries of SAARC), Forum for Regional Economic Cooperation among Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM), Ganga-Mekong Cooperation Initiative (GMCI), Ayeyarwaddy-Chao Phaya-Mekong Basin Development Cooperation (ACMECS), Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), etc. One of the objectives of these grouping has been to increase connectivity and commerce in the region and Myanmar's geographical location is seen as the link between South, Southeast and East Asia.

But the country's internal problem, military policy of isolationism, lack of progress of Myanmar towards political reform, close market policy, ambiguous economic policies and consumer boycotts give an obstacle in fulfilling Myanmar as an important land bridge to connect south and Southeast Asia. But the recent political development in Myanmar gives positive signal for land connectivity between South and Southeast Asia which was not feasible before.

Connectivity between South and Southeast Asia

Physical connectivity between South and Southeast Asia is of great important for economic integration. South and Southeast Asia have historical, political, economic, social and cultural interfaces and relations from ancient times. There were close ties between these two regions. Goods, ideas, religions and cultures moved across nations in Asia and India has strong cultural influence upon Southeast Asia. The region was referred to as "Greater India" prior to the popularisation of the term "Southeast Asia". The Silk Road in the 13th century facilitated flows of culture, goods, services, people, capital, information and idea across Asia. There was increased linkage during colonisation due to large migration and settlements from South Asia. In the postwar era until 1990, South and Southeast Asian economies were isolated from one another and there was little cross sub regional economic integration through trade. The second half of the 20th Century witnessed limited economic and political interaction and cooperation due to the adoption of different economic development models. Trade between South Asia to Southeast Asia is by sea as mountains acted as natural barriers between India and Myanmar. The road

connectivity between South and Southeast Asia is very poor and there is no rail connectivity. Trade by land between India and Myanmar is very low, but significant trade by land takes place between Thailand and Myanmar is higher. So, trade between South Asia and Southeast is low compare to trade between Southeast Asian countries.

Opportunities and Benefits from Connecting South and Southeast Asia

Connecting South and Southeast Asia is of vital importance to integrate trade and economy of both the regions. Integrating Southeast Asia with South Asia through trade and economic can contribute to peace, prosperity and stability of these two regions. It can also bring economic growth, reduce poverty, closing developmental gaps and promote peace, stability and security to the region.⁵ Free movement of goods, services, labour, knowledge and capital within Southeast Asia and South Asia will pave the way for an Asian common market. Integrating India with Myanmar and through India other major South Asian economies such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to the low-income South East Asian to East Asian production network will generate huge economic benefits.⁶ So, improve relations between India and Myanmar is of great importance to integrate South and South East Asia. 7 South and Southeast Asia comprise several energy surplus countries -Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, Lao, Cambodia, while many other countries suffer from severe and growing energy deficits. Trade and energy market integration will allow energy surplus economies to supply clean energy to energy deficit economies. In order to integrate the two regions, land connectivity is of very important. And in order to gain maximum by integrating South and Southeast Asia, Myanmar played an important role as it is the only land bridge between South and Southeast Asia. Its geostrategic location as a common border with South, Southeast and East Asia can produce huge benefits for both the economy of the region.

Strategic Importance of Myanmar

The geostrategic location of Myanmar as a tri-juncture of South, Southeast and East Asia makes her important land bridge between South and Southeast Asia and a potential hub for exchange of goods, services and technology.⁸ It's historical and cultural evolution has given her an identity that is as much South Asian as it is Southeast Asian. It shares international borders with five countries of South, Southeast and East Asia: India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Lao and China. It also has coastlines stretches 2,800 km from the Bay of Bengal to the Andaman Sea.⁹

Myanmar because of its geopolitical position attaches the importance of regional and sub regional cooperation. The growth of sub-regional economic

groupings in the region creates Myanmar a centre of many of the regional initiatives. Since 1997, Myanmar has been participating in regional and sub regional cooperation programme. And the sub regional organisation, BIMSTEC has been emerging as an important economic power in global economy as well in Asia and provides a unique link between South and Southeast Asia. It has inter-regional dimension aimed at fostering development of the two regions of South and Southeast Asia. It also serves as strategic link of cooperation in the framework of GMS, Ganga-Mekong Cooperation (GMC) and Kunming Initiative. It also bridge India's LEP with Thailand's Look West Policy (LWP). Better transportation will lead to regional economic development of amity and unity among the national people. In the success of BCIM which is as a land bridge connecting ASEAN and SAARC, Myanmar holds an important place.

The idea of an Asian Highway Network and a Trans-Asian Railways Network has heightened Myanmar's Strategic importance as it is a land bridge between major Asian economies. In the Asian Highway plan, Myanmar connects five regional countries of South, Southeast, and East Asia- India, China, Bangladesh, Laos and Thailand. The principal Asian Highway 1 and 2 connect South and Southeast Asia through Myanmar, which is the only land bridge between the two sub-regions. Myanmar linked the countries of China, Bangladesh through the Tri-Nations Highway and India and Thailand through the trilateral Highway project under the sub-regional BIMSTEC. The agreement on direct road linkage between Bangladesh and Myanmar was signed in 2007. This road will not only facilitate trade between Bangladesh and Myanmar but also open a gateway to China and ASEAN.

The availability of rich natural resource like petroleum, natural gas, coal, timber, minerals and precious stones and abundant low-cost labour and historic sites with notable tourism potential in Myanmar gives an economic dimension to its importance for South Asia country. It has reserve oil of 3.2 billion barrels and annual production of 7.3 million billion barrels, gas reserves and portable gas reserves of 18 and 89.7 trillion cubic feet and probable gas reserves and power capacity of 39,669 MW.12 In term of maritime connectivity, Myanmar also holds central position for transit and trade. The increasing connectivity and maritime activities in the Bay of Bengal region resulted in seeing Myanmar as a link to further increase trade and commerce. The Tavoy/Dawei deep sea port being developing by Thailand in southern Myanmar would enhance Myanmar's connectivity with the South and Southeast Asian countries of India, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Laos. Myanmar on the other hand will benefit from opening up and becoming a land bridge between South and Southeast Asia. Myanmar is also of immense importance for the success of India's LEP as it is a direct "land bridge" economies of Southeast Asia.¹³ It also holds an important place in development of ties with the ASEAN counties and Myanmar shares common border with Laos and Thailand in speeding economic development of India's Northeast states as Myanmar provides the shortage links to Southeast Asian markets by air, land and sea and help India to emerge as a major Asian power.¹⁴

Regardless of all the importance of Myanmar as land bridge to connect South and Southeast Asia, the isolationist policy of the military regime, the policy of closing the economy, and the security concern as a consequence of internal conflicts, gives an obstacle to connect South and Southeast Asia through Myanmar which is the only land bridge. But the recent political reform in Myanmar gives positive signal and makes possible land connectivity between the two regions.

Myanmar's Political Reform and its Impact on Land Connectivity

The recent political reform in Myanmar which was started under the newly elected civilian Government provides opportunity to strengthen connectivity and makes possible the land connectivity between South and Southeast Asia, which was not feasible before. The new civilian government brings reforms in recent years including political as well as economic. Their Sein after coming into power lifting media censorship, releasing political prisoners, adopting market-oriented reforms and signing ceasefire agreements and peace talks with rebel ethnic groups. ¹⁵ Its international relations have also improved attracted foreign countries to invest in the country. So, the recent opening up in political, economic, and financial terms gives opportunity for both South and Southeast Asian region to gain from each other. India's relation with Myanmar also increased and both the country plan out projects to strengthen trade integration between the two regions. India and Myanmar recently signed 12 agreements in several areas that include infrastructure connectivity and also agreed to setup several border markets and development of border infrastructure.

Political change in Myanmar also changes the strategic calculus in Southeast and South Asia. Myanmar's policy of political isolation from the world in the past makes the countries of South and Southeast Asia divide themselves into two camps, with one group allying with China and the other allying with the United States. So, a changed Myanmar isolates from the pawn of China and bring into more possible to become a bridge between South, Southeast and East Asia.

Challenges Facing Land Connectivity between the Regions

Even after the reform in Myanmar and initiatives taken up to improve the land connectivity, the land connectivity is still very low. There is no rail connection between South and Southeast Asia. To improve land connectivity between South Asia and Southeast Asia, series of initiatives like India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral

Highway Project, the Mekong–India Economic Corridor (MIEC), the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project, and the Delhi–Hanoi Railway Link were taken up. But these initiatives were also not successful yet. The highways and rail link are passing through Northeast states of India to Myanmar and the Northeast states of India is hilly and isolated from the rest of India and do not have much to offer economically. And the road connectivity among the Northeast States of India is very poor and there is lots of missing rail links. Insurgency in Northeast India also affects in implementation of connectivity between this region and Southeast Asia¹6 has also been a serious obstacle.¹7 Not only this, there is also missing links among the Southeast Asian states and even within Myanmar. Construction of roads and rail is also very expensive and insecurity has also another serious obstacle. And that is the reason that majority of trade between South and Southeast Asia is by sea with little transiting by land through Myanmar.

Conclusion

Connectivity between and South and Southeast Asia is of great important for economic integration. Integrating through trade and economy is of great opportunity to bring economic growth, reduce poverty, closing developmental gap, peace, stability, and security in the region. In order to integrate the two regions, land connectivity is of very important. In connecting the two regions Myanmar has played an important role as it is the only land bridge to connect South and Southeast Asia. And not only connecting South and Southeast Asia through Myanmar, access into Myanmar is also of high beneficiary for both the regions. In the previous years, the military policy of isolationism, close market policy, ambiguous economic policies and consumer boycotts gives an obstacle in land connectivity and to access into it. The recent political reform in Myanmar makes possible the land connectivity between South and Southeast Asia which was not feasible before.

Notes

¹ Yhome, "Myanmar's changing Geostrategic Value: Drivers and Implications", *Burma Centre New Delhi*, 2011, p. 36.

² Biswa Nath Bhattacharyay, "Prospects and Challenges of Integrating South and Southeast Asia", International Journal of Development and Conflict, No. 4, 2014, p. 41.

⁴ Jean-Francois Gautrin, "Connecting South Asia to Southeast Asia: Cross-Border Infrastructure Investments" *ADBI Working Paper Series*, No. 483, May 2014, p. 6.

⁵ Ibid p.44

- ⁶ For further references, see Biswa Nath Bhattacharyay, "Prospects and Challenges of Integrating South and Southeast Asia", *International Journal of Development and Conflict,* No. 4, 2014, p. 48.
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Through Uncharted Paths: Reflecting on the BCIM Co-operative Framework

By

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After being essentially dormant for over a decade, the BCIM Forum or the Kunming Initiative has recently assumed a renewed importance after being promoted from a Track II to a Track I initiative. For the first time in December 2013, official representatives have met to discuss timelines and frameworks for establishing viable and increasing existing linkages among the four constitutive countries (Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar) through the establishment of an economic corridor. In light of these developments the BCIM project has perhaps been given a new lease of life. During the recent visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to India, talks on the BCIM-Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC) featured prominently, with India agreeing to conduct joint research and exploration into the project, after having been ambivalent about it for years.

The importance of developing a cooperative framework for engagement is being acknowledged more and more in the wake of a world increasingly characterized by shrinking natural resources and increasing demands of consumption. The establishment of an economic corridor running from Kolkata to Kunming via Dhaka and Mandalay will in theory be extremely beneficial for all the four constitutive countries. In theory' because there is still quite some distance to be covered in order to make the EC a reality. But nonetheless, as was pointed out in an article published in the Dhaka Tribune, the corridor would not only help in connecting the four countries but also link demand with supply in the region.

Nevertheless, challenges to the realization of the goals set to be achieved by the Forum abound. Most importantly, the BCIM project is situated in a geographical region that is not commonly considered as politically complementary. Also, though the Forum has been in existence for over a decade not much has been done till date.

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Hence while the fresh insistence momentum is appreciated, the modalities of functioning that the Forum has and is assuming needs reflection.

Given the complexities of the region, it is important to understand the challenges that would need to be overcome as well as the potential areas that may provide impetus to the endeavor. In the light of these considerations, the paper would seek to explore the political dimensions of realizing the cooperative framework of the BCIM project and attempt an appraisal of how the challenges will be negotiated.

Missing Links

The Look East Policy which is the wider conceptual framework, under which the BCIM agenda can be fitted, is yet to substantively take off although several attempts in that direction have been adopted over the years. The BCIM Forum or the Kunming Initiative has been a Chinese proposal which is part of their 'Bridgehead' strategy of opening up the country's landlocked south-western provinces, especially Yunnan and offering these provinces maritime access. In fact the 'Bridgehead' strategy is part of the larger 'Westward Development Programme' initiated by Hu Jintao which included heavy investments in the southwestern and western part of China to encourage development. 'China's speed and determination is much talked about and the same is true as far as its efforts to link economical viability among Yunnan and the countries which are crucial for making this a success, Bangladesh, Myanmar and India. The country has already built a number of roads that ease access and is in the process of building pipelines and other infrastructural projects to increase physical contact.

While Bangladesh and Myanmar have on different levels welcomed the prospect offered Beijing, India has been more than less than lukewarm. Indeed the fact that it has been over a decade since the idea of connectivity as propounded by the BCIM Forum was espoused, is often largely attributed to India's inertia and misgivings regarding Chinese designs. Much like the apprehensions that characterize India's response to Beijing's recent proposal of a Maritime Silk Route akin to the historical trading routes that prospered centuries ago across the Indian Ocean, the idea of connectivity as laid by the BCIM framework has raised concerns over what China's actual objectives might be. In a sense, doubts about China's motives have been a historical constant for a long time.

Gaining Traction

The recent visit by President Xi Jinping to India in September was much anticipated which is probably why it fell short of meeting expectations. Nonetheless, it was

during this visit that India has officially 'warmed' up to the proposal and has promised joint exploration into the establishment of the BCIM-Economic Corridor.² The corridor, which was first floated in early 2013, was traversed by participants from the four constitutive countries in a car rally from Kolkata to Kunming with the slogan, 'Networking People and Economies'.³ The corridor has gained traction mostly from 2011 onwards after the BCIM framework was elevated from Track 2 to Track 1 level coordination and the first meeting at the heads of government during the visit of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang to India in 2013. The idea behind the corridor is to establish an inland bridge linking countries of South Asia with the central and eastern coastal regions of China, to encourage and enable development of these regions and thus contribute to their economic betterment.

Like any nation growing in economic might, China too wants to explore and establish the means through which its capabilities will be consolidated and expanded. From the economic perspective, it is natural for the country to want to use all available methods towards the enhancement of its prosperity. But the fact that China does so quite aggressively, more often than not, adds to the misgivings not only in India but also among other countries of South and Southeast Asia. However, what differentiates the concerns of other South and Southeast Asian countries from that of India is the fact that all these other countries are comparatively much smaller in terms of geographical size and also political and economic might. For these aspiring middle income countries, infrastructural assistance which promises economic benefits are a boon and of utmost priority, in the face of which all other apprehensions take a backseat. India, given that it is the more powerful of countries in South Asia, has had the luxury, if it may be comparatively observed, of taking time to consider its options and often hold potential economic opportunities secondary to its perceived security concerns. It is nonetheless argued by some scholars that time may be running out and if the country fails to clarify its position and its policies, then it might just miss the bus and be required to take a peripheral position in its own backyard.

One of the major reasons that has as yet stalled any movement of the Initiative is a stark difference in research perspectives between China and India. While the approach in China has been one of working out how to establish the corridor and bring into focus the different needs and demands of the constituting four countries, the approach in India has remained confined to understanding and emphasizing the security dynamics that would compound the functioning of the initiative. For instance the Chinese are keen on boosting tourism through the length of the corridor capitalizing on the ethnic and cultural diversity that spans through the same. However, India is not as welcoming to the idea since this would imply making access to the country's northeastern states easier for foreign tourists.⁴

The extent of economic interaction that can be made possible in the BCIM arrangement would not just be limited to trade. It would also assist power distribution through inter-linked grids, the movement of hydrocarbons, oil and gas from resource areas such as Myanmar, the transport of mineral ore from places like West Bengal and Orissa and so on.⁵ It is a framework that would complement the resources and capabilities of all constitutive four countries.

The change of guard at Delhi might signal a shift in how the country is steered as far as the BCIM initiative goes. The highlight directed toward neighbouring countries and the subsequent reports of India being more conscious of the Initiative may offer the prospect of developments. A study group report is expected according to media reports by the end of this year⁶(to be held at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh) which would in all likelihood consist of a plan for taking things forward. In the previous meeting of the BCIM countries it was decided that each country would produce a national plan elaborating on their specific requirements and priorities that would fit into and complement the establishment of the BCIM-EC.

The Primacy of the Northeast

With the increasing emphasis on regional connectivity in the last few years, India's northeast has also inevitable gained prominence in the dialogue that has ensued. Indeed, when the Look East Policy was formulated in the early 1990s, it did not factor in the geo-strategic location of the northeast. The acknowledgement of the location of the northeast as a gateway to Southeast Asia has happened a long time after the initiation of the LEP. The growing significance of the northeast has attracted foreign investment, the most recent being Japanese investment in infrastructure. However, foreign investment has been accorded limited access for two key reasons. First, concerns over security, especially the border; and second, because of the inadequate development of the states in the region and intermittent political volatility, there are difficulties of operationalizing any developmental or industrial work. Be it private domestic agencies or government agencies, it has till date been challenging to set up shop in the region or monitor any infrastructural work. The government of India has also faced a lot of criticism regarding is inability to effectively control the challenges of the northeastern states.

It was the Kunming Initiative which had, for the first time offered a proposal which focused on China's southwest and India's northeast. In an April 2000 issue of the Frontline, P.V. Indiresan writes – 'The main thrust of the exercise was to exhort the governments concerned to improve communications between the southwestern region of China and the northeastern region of India by developing appropriate road, rail, waterway and air links. More specifically, a call was made to

revive the ancient Southern Silk Route between Assam and Yunnan.⁷China is conscious of Indian capability in 'software outsourcing' whereas the former's strong suit is 'hardware outsourcing'. This is another aspect which is sought to be exploited by the Initiative, and more specifically, the economic corridor. Association between the two countries in this regard was discussed at the fourth K2K meeting in Dali. In this case, the proximity of West Bengal with Yunnan could lead to the former's access to Yunnan's domestic market for manufactures while Yunnan could gain benefit from software capability of West Bengal.⁸ This has led to the proposal for setting up industrial parks in Yunnan and West Bengal during a recent visit of the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee to Yunnan where she met with Governor of the province, Li JiHeng and representatives from the Centre for Promotion of India-China Cooperation (CPICC), which is a non-governmental body for the promotion of economic and bilateral trade.⁹

The success of the BCIM-EC, and on a larger plane, the realization of the Look East Policy is inextricably linked with the economic and infrastructural development of the northeastern states of India. As Nirupama Subramanian wrote in The Hindu in 2005, "...the best way to deal with that is not by glazing over when China talks about the Kunming initiative, but to rise to the challenge by paying more attention to the development of the North-East so that it can act as a springboard for genuine two-way economic cooperation between India and Yunnan and the other countries in the region."10 Economic opportunities hold the potential of engaging the populace of the northeast and consequently creating a stake for the populace. This is very important for the central government in Delhi to realize. Whatever security considerations there may be, the time probably has come to understand that the country cannot move ahead all by its own without effective engagement among the region. To that end the various existing mechanisms which offer a regional impetus towards connectivity and economic momentum should be utilized. The northeast should not be a mere conduit for the exchange of trade but should be encouraged to become an active participant.

One of the simplest ways in which these states can be supported is by promoting tourism given that he region is one of the most beautiful, yet not explored or frequented as other destinations across the country. Tourism can provide a huge impetus to these states and subsequently the establishment of industries will complement the level of engagement. Economic empowerment is essential for the northeast and for India to realize its objectives of engagement with Southeast Asia. The aim of this being to "develop the capacity of rural communities to plan and manage funds for various economic initiatives and common activities for the public". Another important factor which needs to be exploited is the hydro-electric potential of the region. There are plenty of perennial rivers and water bodies in states like Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Meghalaya which, if harnessed

can be used for the power deficit region as well as exported to other parts of the country. Tapping the hydro-power potential would consequently also imply the development of physical infrastructure such as roads, electricity supply and ease of communications with remote hilly areas.

The Road Ahead

As was pointed out succinctly in a recent report, "Institutional change supporting economic enhancement and growth at a social level requires economic incentives, supported by political will." The mindset in Delhi for a number of years has been that it does not need to worry about its neighbours. But in an age of interlinked and inter-dependent capacities, the country can only thrive when its neighbours do so as well. The BCIM and the BCIM-EC framework is a key arrangement for transforming the geo-political, geo-economic and geo-cultural map of the subregion. Politics and development should not be conflict but rather in congruence with each other.

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The March of Democracy in South Asia: A Study through the Lenses of Electoral Politics

By

Swagata Saha*

The Struggle for Democracy has given birth to many countries which are together identified as South Asia. While Pakistan and India have had change of guards from British rule, Bangladesh has fought for linguistic identity and against dynastic politics and limited representation, to usher in Independence. In all these formations, desire for democracy or discontent with it has been a constant force. Election has been the litmus for examining strength of democracy¹ and State in this part of Asia.

For this paper, the recent elections of Bangladesh and Pakistan are studied to understand the dynamics of democratic politics in the region and in this comparison what could be India's role as the largest neighbour.

Bangladesh General Election 2014

The most recent Bangladesh General Elections took place in January 5, 2014, ostensibly in accordance with Constitution (Article 123(2)(A)) which requires that election must take place within the 90 days period before the expiration of the term of the Jatiyo Sangsad (Parliament) on January 24, 2014. However, the elections had many shades to it and its conduct was perceived as pseudo-democratic at large.

For starters, election took place sans substantive opposition (154 out of 300 seats remained uncontested), widespread gruesome pre-poll and poll violence, low voter turnout (22%), estrangement of international community and elections observers, prioritization of party bi-polarity over popular mandate had derailed Bangladesh's nascent experimentation with democracy².

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The provision of Caretaker Government (CTG) in Bangladesh's Constitution and the current incumbent, Sheikh Hasina's resolve to open the war crime trials has been the major causes of controversy surrounding election.

The Caretaker Government that was a unique feature of Bangladesh's democracy was in place over the years to oversee elections in a country that has a history of military coups, political assassinations and electoral fraud. Originally, the Caretaker Government system was constitutionally introduced through the thirteenth amendment to the constitution after the three main political parties, the Awami League (AL), the Jamaat-e-Islami and Jatiya Party boycotted the sixth general elections in 1996, to press for the demand of a Caretaker Government to oversee political transition in the country³. The thirteenth amendment gave power to an elected government to transfer power to an unelected non-partisan Caretaker Government to oversee new parliamentary election on completion of its term. The system which lasted for 15 years, held four elections under it viz. in 1991, 1996, 2001 and 20084. The system of CTG was dispensed by the AL government in 2011 through 15th Constitution Amendment following the Supreme Court verdict that declared the thirteenth constitutional amendment illegal. This created quite a furor in the political circles leading to the current political stalemate. Thus, history repeated itself when the CTG once instituted for a fair election became a rallying point of Bangladeshi National Party (BNP) led 18-party opposition which had outrightly boycotted the elections demanding its re-introduction⁵. Hasina's argument is a non-party CTG would means an 'unelected' oversight of election, citing the 'neutral' election f 2007-'08 that had shaped her perception. What lies beneath the garb of struggle for a fair election is the escalating trust deficit between two main political contenders in an already divided political domain. She has also offered an all party interim election cabinet government which would include opposition parties till the election but the proposal was rejected by Begum Khaleda Zia, leader of Opposition6.

Since 2000, popular opinion has been amassing for justice related to war time crimes of 1971. This issue became central to 2008 elections and made AL an election winner in 2008 largely due to its promise to prosecute war criminal as mentioned in the election manifesto. Many of the top brass of BNP and Jamaate-Islami 's were allegedly involved in war crimes. In 2010, the Awami-led government announced the formation of a three-member tribunal, a seven-member investigation agency, and a twelve-member prosecution team to conduct the trials under the International Criminal Tribunal Act 1973. Although the team was accused of being less representative, especially of international observers as the war crime has amounted to genocide, hence assumed proportion on international standards. In 2013, the Shahbagh awakening where students and young activists had vociferously demanded stricter sentences (death penalty) for Abdul Quader Mollah, who had

been sentenced to life imprisonment, and for others convicted of war crimes by the International Crimes Tribunal had drawn global attention to the issue. This in turn has created a window of opportunity as also developed popular pressure on Hasina government to reconsider the punishment which will on one hand garner more popular support in next elections but at the same time risk governance under her regime.

Predictably, the whole of 2013 was raking with protest movements of BNP and its 18-party alliance led by Zia over war crime pnishment. Zia had called for 85 days of nation-wide strikes and blockades which had brought the entire country to a standstill. In 2013, more than 500 people were killed in several political clashes based on bipolar nature of political divide in the country. The violence included brutal tactics like arson, rape, loss of human, animal and property, also train derailment at Gadibandha⁷. In December 3, 2013Jatiya party led by the former President Hussain Mohammed Ershad also announced intention to boycott the election. Ershad was confined to military arrest and shifted to military hospital on grounds of ailing health following his decision to boycott elections. On December 13, 2013 Mollah of Jamaat became the first person to be executed for war crimes. This led to a surge of violent protest and dissent throughout the length and breadth of Bangladesh. On December 29, 2013, Zia was also put under house arrest. On the same day, BNP called for 'March for Democracy' towards Dhaka in defiance of police ban. General stike was called on 4th to 6th January, 2014 by Opposition parties following the announcement of non-stop blockade of roads, railways and waterways in December 30, 2013. On January 3rd and 4th, 2014, opposition activists attacked potential polling centres in Bangladesh and over 100 centres in Lakhimpur, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Firojpur, Jhenaidah, Natore, Sirajganj and Brahmanbaria were set on fire. Intriguingly, a Daily Star and Asia Foundation opinion poll before elections found 55% of people think that that BNP will win the election, and only 28% think that the AL will win8.

The European Union (EU), the United States and the Commonwealth announced that they would not send observers since they were not concerned about the credibility of the election due to the boycott⁹. United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon criticized both BNP and AL saying they should, "resume meaningful dialogue and to urgently address the expectations of the people of Bangladesh for an inclusive political process".

Pakistan General Election 2013

The most recent general elections took place in Pakistan on May 11, 2013 which elected the 14th National Assembly and the four provincial assemblies- Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. For the first time in history, people of

Pakistan experienced a civilian government running full term of five years hand handing over power to a civilian incumbent through electoral process. Pakistan is the second largest Muslim democracy, only next to Indonesia

Democracy in Pakistan has been subverted by coups. Pakistan has frequently oscillated between Parliamentary civilian governments and Presidential (military dictator) regimes, electoral politics causing derailment of democracy being a dominant feature. The last military government under General Pervez Musharraf which came ousting Nawaz Sharif's civilian rule post Kargil war in 1999 was brought down largely due to the lawyer's movement against Musharraf in 2007 after he had sacked the Chief justice of Supreme Court, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudry for suspending National Reconciliation Ordinance or NRO(granted amnesty to politicians, political workers and bureaucrats who were accused of corruption, embezzlement, money laundering, murder, and terrorism between 1 January 1986, and 12 October 1999, the time between two states of martial law in Pakistan) issued by Musharraf. Although Pakistan People's Party (PPP) initially supported the lawyer's movement, it was in no hurry to reinstate the sacked justices after it came to power benefitting from NRO's blanket amnesty. The then opposition, Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) or PML (N) and current incumbent continued to support the lawyer's movement. This shows a continuous bombardment among the organs of government, legislature, executive and judiciary for their own personal aggrandizement without taking popular choice or concerns of democracy into account. Political leaders in Pakistan are mostly on self or imposed exile and show themselves up for elections- Nawaz Sharif of PML (N) was in Saudi Arabia and returned for 2007 elections, in 2013 elections Bilawal Bhutto made his campaigns from Dubai like his mother Benazir Bhutto who was assassinated on her return to country during 2007 election campaign. This kind of tumultuous political situation and no-show by political leaders are extremely demoralizing and even detrimental to onward march of democracy in Pakistan.

The 2013 election had more democratic safeguards than its predecessors. The 18th and 20th Constitution Amendments passed in 2010 and 2012 respectively have introduced many democratically progressive legal frameworks. It has established an inclusive process of appointing 'politically neutral' care taker governments with Prime Minister, Chief Ministers and Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) leadership, parties were allowed for the first time to legally organize and field candidates in tribal areas. It has restored the federal parliamentary character of the 1973 Constitution and has also introduced right to information and education. Furthermore, the Parliament also signed and ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention against Tortute (CAT), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

(ICESCR)¹⁰. Thus the legal-institutional framework was at place for facilitation of a democratically sound election in 2013.

Despite these arrangements on papers the election took place in tensed environment of escalating militant attacks and suffered from many procedural shortcomings during elections. A Pew Research Global Attitudes Project poll in May 2013 found that people of Pakistan were living in immense insecurity of livelihood, extremism and were cynical of democratic chances of the country. 83% of Pakistanis expressed unfavourable opinion about the President, Asif Ali Zardari while two-thirds had a positive view of the then Opposition leader and current incumbent, Nawaz Shariff. Although 60% supported Imran Khan however it was less than 70% of previous ear. Nine out of ten Pakistanis believed that the country is in wrong track and 93% felt terrorism is a big problem¹¹.

From April 2013 when election campaigning had formally began, the Taliban and other armed groups have made systematic attacks to jeopardize democratic elections. In March, 2013 a spokesperson of the Tehrik-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) declared elections pat of 'un-Islamic democratic system which only serves the interests of infidels and enemies of Islam'. It further warned that it 'had decided to target those secular political parties which were part of the previous coalition government''12. TTP had claimed the responsibility for bombings at the offices of independent candidates on April 28, 2013. In Kohat, the TTP bombed left wing Awami National Party's Nasir Khan Afridi's office, also about 15 people were killed in rallying in Kurram valley, to mention a few. During last four weeks of campaign, there werea reported 130 security incidents resulting in more than 150 people killed especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and Karachi¹³.

The election process itself is fraught in many measures. Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan were ineligible to vote due to their disputed status. Only Muslims were allowed to vote but non Muslim voters (including Ahmadi Muslims) had 10 non Muslim members allocated between the parties in proportion to the seats they already had won. Universality of franchise was further limited by the underregistration of women compared to men.11 million less women registered in electoral rolls than men. Equality of vote is also compromised by the irregular constituency sizes¹⁴.

The ECP estimated voter turn out to be 55% in comparison to 44% in 2008¹⁵. All those parties which had boycotted 2008 elections had participated in 2013 and only one party had declared a boycott a day prior to elections. The EU, National Democratic Institute and the Asian Network for Free Elections had sent election observers to Pakistan. On May 12, 2013 US President Barack Obama said, "The United States stands with all Pakistanis in welcoming this historic peaceful and transparent transfer of civilian power, which is significant milestone in Pakistan's democratic progress"¹⁶.

These accomplishments, however, donot necessarily indicate Pakistan has testified itself as a strong electoral democracy. Election Commissioner admitted there has been serious rigging in the elections and in its report it blamed the Returning Officers (ROs) of the lower judiciary¹⁷. ECP had delegated essentially unchecked power to the ROs and recruited them from other State agencies rather than from its own ranks. Infact it was almost discretion of ROs to accept or reject nomination papers of contesting candidates as no specific instructions were given by the ECP in this regard. In the Post Election Review Report 2013, ECP admitted that candidates got clearance to contest elections without proper scrutiny as State institution like State Bank, Federal Board of Revenue, National Database and Registration Authority did not cooperate fully with the ECP. The report also pointed out that Result Management System devised by the United Nations Development Programme was a failure in Pakistan. Also candidates who had won seats as Independents have joined a political party, three days following elections. Election Commission confirmed that it did not have voter record of 139 constituencies (which is including and beyond PML-N's margin of victory). Chief Election Commissioner and Secretary had resigned following reports of widespread vote rigging.

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) raised a serious criticism of the election. According to FAFEN, on 25% of the constituencies, 61 seats, there were more votes in boxes than in registered voters indicating ballot stuffing. These seats are inclusive of PML-N's margin of victory.

On the poll day, atleast 20 people had dies in scattered gun and bomb attacks. A question on representativeness of mandate may be raised on grounds of region specificity of vote banks. The competition between PML-N and PPP is one between Punjab and Sindh. Sharif came to power as he had a clean sweep in Punjab (214 out of 297 seats), remaining marginal or non-existent in other parts of the country¹⁸.

Pakistan's disputed voting election had infact opened a Pandora's Box. More recently since June, 2014 Imran Khan of Tehnrik-e-Insaafparty(PTI) had warned the government that it had one month to comply with its demands for electoral reforms and investigations into constituencies where alleged vote-rigging had taken place or 1 million people would march toward Islamabad on Aug. 14, Pakistan's Independence Day. Although the march was not joined by as many people, neither did Nawaz Sharif resign on demands of Imran Khan yet in August, 2014 Sharif declared that a commission will be instituted to probe allegation of vote rigging in 2013 elections. A separate protest movement by the cleric Tahir ul Qadri has consolidated the voices of dissent surrounding 2013 elections¹⁹. Pakistan's democracy has degenerated into military rule at the slightest provocation of party confrontations. This time around a military rule may be in sight under the pretext of

stability concerns, especially considering Sharif's topsy-turvy relations with the military premised on Musharraf's trial, above all.

| Α | Com | parative | Estimate |
|---|-----|----------|----------|
|---|-----|----------|----------|

| Subject of Comparison | Bangladesh Election 2014 | Pakistan Election 2013 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Voter's turn out | 22% | 55% |
| Seats won by winner party | 234/300 (154 seats were | 166/342 |
| | uncontested) | |
| People killed on polling | 21 | 20 |
| day | | |
| International Observers | Absent | Present |
| Parties boycotting election | 18 | 1 |

Election has been the churning point of democratic politics in both the countries. While discontent of democracy was palpable in the conduct of election itself in Bangladesh, in Pakistan it was fraught in the process of conduct. Controversial legislations passed in previous regimes for the sake of convenience have had its aftermath in the following elections. In Pakistan, the NRO and its selective amnesty granted to politicians has been the cause of party skirmish and electoral misses just as the fanciful introduction and withdrawal of non party caretaker government in Bangladesh. Whether out of concerns of fanfare or of resolutions made in manifestos, Sharif's decision to open trial against Musharraf or Hasina's determination to hold war crime trials have deepened partisan bifurcation of polity and unleashed forces of political violence. In either case, the predicament of democracy and its chequered history has come to forefront.

In this context, it is interesting to know what may be the role of either country's single largest immediate neighbour from which it had routed out through another struggle for democracy in some other tangent.

India Factor

India has also come a long way in its democratic journey and has earned the fame of one of the most stable democracies in South Asia. In 2014, a democratic feat was achieved when in election, the Indian popular mandate went in for a single party majority government after three decades.

Prime Minister elect Narendra Modi has sensationalized the illegal immigrant issues with Bangladesh at an election campaign in West Bengal he said that illegal immigrants better pack their bags if he comes to power. Similar stir was

created when Modi had promised to get back Indian fishermen arrested in Pakistan over transgressing international waters at an election campaign in Maharashtra. Despite these provocative speeches, on ground Modi's first diplomatic step of inviting SAARC countries; Heads at his swearing-in ceremony had sent out a message of inclusiveness and good neighbourliness in South Asia. It is a matter of time to testify whether Modi prioritizes his party affiliation or his elected role in dealing with Teesta²⁰, sharing of border enclaves and illegal immigration with Bangladesh and brokering with West Bengal government on the same²¹. In the face repeated border attacks and shelling by Pakistani army, India is showing diplomatically sound behavior. The rise of Balochistan issue or Modi's tacit reference to Pakistan in recent G20 summit in incubating terrorism are albeit signs of tension. An interesting development in democratic politics of India and Pakistan has been Kejriwal and Imran Khan's rise to fame premised on such antithetic to democracy like corruption, non-performance, lack of governance, etc.

In the South Asian cauldron of democratic debacle, India may revive its Post-Cold war role of non-aligned leader and may act as harbinger of democracy in the region especially when it stands at the 60th year of promulgation of Panchsheel agreement. While bilateral dynamics must improve with time, all the countries in the region must prioritize democracy as a transnational goal which may be achieved through multilateral ethos. This is because struggle for democracy has been almost universal reason of state formation and reformation in this region and therefore no national-territorial attribute may make sense of it. This will only lead to piecemeal democracies bombarding against one another and further destabilizing Asia. For democracy to consolidate itself multilateralforas in and cross-cutting the region be permeated by democracy- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, Bangladesh—China—India—Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation (BCIM), Shanghai Cooperation Organization, etc.

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'China in SAARC: Challenges and Opportunities'

By

Tuithung Dounreitim*

Introduction

The South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SSARC) established in 1985 comprising seven countries Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sir Lankan is a dynamic institutionalized regional cooperation as a role model for examining different forms of political or economic region integration and to accelerate the pace of socio-economic and cultural development. Among the SAARC member countries India is a dominant player, due to its territorial size, population, nuclear power and non-permanent member in United Nation Security Council. India's impressions toward SAARC mark a positive contribution in the development in various areas. The South Asian countries are united by the fact that they today all SAARC countries are being run according to basic democratic principles.

In today world regional association and global organization has become more effective in bringing peace and prosperity as well as in development perspectives. Regional association are becoming more effective in a new scene for political and economic interaction in the world, While SAARC has attracted the attention of the rest of the world, by various countries wanting to become observers and observers aspiring to full membership. China has shown its active interest in becoming full member of the SAARC, China is already one of nine observer's states.

So the paper is dealing with China's engagement with SAARC in order to explore China's policy in cooperation with the South Asian region. The paper analyses the modern China's diplomatic foreign policy towards South Asia and the theory of multilateralism. It also observe India's dominant player in SAARC and

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argue that China's involvement in SAARC. Finally the paper looks into some future scenario challenges and opportunities of China in SAARC and contains concluding comment.

China's Engagement with SAARC

Since the establishment of SAARC as a regional organization there has been seventeenth summit meeting and the eighteenth SAARC summit will be held at Nepal (Kathmandu) in November 2014. A number of countries interested in the affair of the region have attended the summit meeting of SAARC and more state has shown their interest in acquiring observer status in SAARC. So, China has shown its interest in joining SAARC. While in the process Pakistan and Bangladesh supported China's candidate, India was more reluctant about the prospect of Chinese membership. But in 2005, China was approved as an 'observer' state of the organization.

During the fourteenth SAARC summit April 2007, China for the first time attended the SAARC summit as an observer, which marked a new beginning of China-SAARC relations and which will further strengthen their friendship with mutual beneficial cooperation with SAARC members. The most South Asian countries share an important neighbour's border with China and it bears a member of intrinsic connection to the South Asian region.

Chinese discourse towards South Asian suggest that that there are some reasons of engagement with the region, firstly China attempt to institutionalized the China-SAARC network, secondly it make efforts to strengthen bilateral ties with the individuals countries of SAARC. Thirdly China explores the possibility of establishing a China-SAARC regular mechanism for cooperation on disaster relief to share experience and infrastructure. The Chinese connections with individual SAARC members are changing rapidly and planning to maximize the linkage with South Asia with regards to capitalise the bilateral ties with select SAARC members. SAARC as an institution has built up a cooperative framework with various countries through regional as well as global level. The Chinese efforts of tying with South Asia through SAARC incorporate two objectives: (a) to facilitate China's as an effective player in the neighbourhood politics and to minimize its strategic interest by integrating into the region. (b) China took part as an observer meeting in SAARC summit has seen interest in the region with lots of enthusiasm for the cooperation of China and South Asia region.

Nowadays, China's increasing interest in SAARC indicates its environment and have become increasingly interconnected and China as SAARC's observer has made great contribution to the stability of South Asia. The main achievement of

Chinese government is to supports the objective and priority areas of SAARC and promotion of regional peace, stability and prosperity.

China's Changing Policy Towards South Asia

Nowadays the role of China in global and regional affair has been changing internal and external environment in order to have a continuous process of interaction. China has played an important in the process of regionalization in the region. In the South Asian region it is more limited successful in their diplomacy, the main reason is China's 'sensitive 'relations with India. It is true that China and India are also competitors for regional power in South Asia. The issue of China's leadership in regional level is obvious that China's potential for regional dominance is growing. China's South Asia policy is to safeguard for meeting its foreign policy goals:

- South Asia is important for stability in China's South-western frontier region of Tibet and Xinjiang, South Asia geographically borders and political and security instability of South Asia has split over effects on the Chinese territories.
- China has to maintain the security of the energy trade and the sea lanes of communication around South Asia passing through the Indian Ocean.
- Network manufacturing economy that requires large amount of raw materials, the supply of these resources is necessary for the Chinese economy.
- Access to markets in the South Asian region is an important goal for China.
- South Asia also vital to break the US strategy encirclement of China.

The main purpose of China's foreign policy is the promotion of multilateralism and regionalism in the region of Asia, where China's role will be advanced. In SAARC, China's role is limited because of the increased role of India in the area of South Asia as an important regional actor and the evident presence of global power such as USA, as well as because of the weakness of SAARC to be consistent regional. China's increased interest in promoting multilateralism and actively participating in regionalization process by building win-win and prosperous relations with SAARC. This can be estimated the potential of China's involvement in South Asia and leadership in advanced.

While China's current exertion of leadership doesn't seem to be hegemonic, it nonetheless bears certain hegemonic characteristic. However, any further development of those characteristic will require China to overcome resistance from its regional partners as well as from external power with interest in Asia. Indeed China may need the current discourse would indicates if the middle kingdom is to

rise again. China's overall diplomatic strategy and China's strategies interest in South Asia, so as time goes on China would stick to the policy and give more priorities in acquiring a new strategic focus in the China power building dialogue.

The Opinion of China's Involvement in SAARC

India's position of prominence is shown to be one of the many hurdles standing in the way of South Asia's integration. Its neighbours often view India's A both a saviour and as part of the problem. India fears that its neighbour will join together oppose the country's interest, particularly in the light of the role of Pakistan and China involvement in the region. There had been many conflict broken within the region, so SAARC was formed despite the many obstacle put in its path and the strong nationalist forces which were expressly set in motion to counter the idea of increased cooperation on a regional level.

The SAARC initiative to expand its membership and external observer's status to some of the extra-regional power has been taken in response to persistently aired view that these measures would strengthen regional grouping and make it more dynamic and vibrant The status that have been accepted as observers are strategically and economically important actors in the international system. China as an observer as well as the others might energize SAARC towards greater economic cooperation and dynamism within the member states and with the outside world especially with the observers.

When it comes to full membership there is a big question, would their participation will bring real value to the region or China's entry into SAARC will help the regional process? Sujit Dutta article China in SAARC? To What Effect? Has expressed strong concerned, He deemed China as not being eligible to be a full member of a 'cohesive, secure and integrated, democratic political order in South Asia'. He states 'politically, it is the world's largest authoritarian state: economically, it is not a market economy: and in security terms it is not only have active territorial claims against India and Bhutan but as its power grows it poses increasingly complex security challenges to India and the neighbour as a whole'. Dutta's view that China is not ready to join as a full membership, but for different reason, ShenDingliagrees with criteria Dutta's has based his argument.

But Shen Dingli disagree with Dutta's analysis of conclusion for different reason, politically it is not enough to disqualified China because India and China have somehow different political system. Probably China and India have more in common than China and Pakistan, but Pakistan still qualifies for membership. India's is against full membership for China because it is concerned over a possible competition of leadership to India's disadvantage. Even without China being a full member, India's leadership is SAARC has been challenge by some of the member

countries, so what happen if China were to be member? China has not challenged ASEAN leadership in the EAS and has only shared leadership with Russia in the SCO which it co-initiated.

In fact, China's membership in SAARC with enthusiasm Indian support can go on long way towards reducing the mutual mistrust between the two nations. And what we need is an 'open door' policy that opens up the Chinese market to Indian goods; China in SAARC may facilitate that.

Challenges and Opportunities to China-SAARC Integration

China needs an approach to properly handle the relationships between it and South Asian countries in order to ensure its own strategic and security interests. Here are some important challenges such as:

- A vision for change in political atmosphere and economic setting through a new model of cooperation based on mutual interests, trust and accountability.
- Emergence of shared concerns such as climate change, poverty reduction, border dispute and the spread of global terrorism.
- Obstacles to enhance interaction between China and the SAARC states in their collective capacity.
- To forge a new partnerships between China-SAARC would attached more collaborative interaction between India and China and their counterparts in neighbouring region.
- The dispute between India and Pakistan has hijacked the development and expansion of SAARC and also the integration process of the region.
- Complex security challenges.

On the bilateral level, China has promoted its relationship with all countries in South Asia. The relationship between China and South Asian countries has open up opportunities for development at different level, such as:

- China was committed to integrate into the regional development of SAARC an observer.
- The economic relations between China and South Asian countries has mounted rapidly in the development of trade cooperation in energy and natural resources, infrastructure and communication and people and people relations to ties between them.
- Institutionalized framework upon on already burgeoning network of communicable link between China and South Asia.

- India and China did not think that their boundary issue should be an obstacle in the improvement of their relations and promotion of trade in the border areas.
- Academics should evolve gateway strategic for South Asia in respects to its neighbours and environment should build communication bridges through specific project such as SAARC can rallies through Asia.
- The states of South Asia could enter a new phase collective and inclusive growth within the region as well as across the countries.

Conclusion

We must value the positive change of China's policies towards India as well as others South Asian countries and not be rigidly focused on some problems in history. Only when we see and acknowledge these changes can properly deal with the changes in the new situation by using rational attitudes. By truly grasping the new opportunities of historical development of achieve ultimate "win-win" or "winwin-win" objective. Multilateralism has become a pressing point in the Chinese policy dialogue in global affairs, particularly in the relations at regional level with developing countries. China's association with SAARC stands as a clean testimony to this policy orientation. China has changed their policy and ideological position and follows pragmatic thought and adopted the combination of strategy and economic oriented policy towards South Asia. The concept of mutual and common interest should promote "confidence building measures" and strengthen mutual trust and cooperation to ensure their own security. Regardless of China's full membership of SAARC, it should not be in hurry to seek full membership. It should do when it feels to be necessary to South Asia without India feeling its legitimate interest undermined. The membership decision ought to be positive only if the benefit out weight the costs for South Asia in general, but India in particular. Appropriate criteria should also be evolved for a disciplined expansion of SAARC in the future.

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Peace and Conflict Studies in South Asia & Beyond

Breaking the Water Sharing Juggernaut of Brahmaputra: Possible Solutions

By

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Introduction

South Asia houses a quarter of the world's population, yet contains less than 5 percent of its annual renewable water resources. The annual per capita water availability in the region has dropped by 70 percent since the 1950 and from around 21,000 cubic meters in the 1960s to approximately 8,000 cubic meters in 2005.¹ The region is on the verge of an acute water crisis. Though having centuries old civillisational ties, countries in the region have bred suspicion and mistrust, seeds of which were sown by the colonial ploy of 'divide and rule' of the British. Partition and formation of sovereign nation states in the middle of the 20th century led to a fragmented geographical region; leading to the division of Himalayan mountain range and rivers like Ganga, Brahmaputra and the Indus. Once, the region projected southwards into the Indian Ocean from the Himalayas.

The Indus river basin and Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin are the two major river domains in South Asia. The Indus River originates in the Tibetan Plateau in the vicinity of Lake Mansarovar and runs through the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir, towards Gilgit and Baltistan and then flows in a southerly direction along the entire length of Pakistan to merge into the Arabian Sea near the port city of Karachi in Sindh. The Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin comprises of two major rivers- the Ganga and the Brahmaputra both originate in the Himalayas in Eastern Tibet.

The Ganga flows southwest into India, turns southeast to join many major tributaries. The Ganga flowing into Bangladesh, then joins with the Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers to flow into the Bay of Bengal. Brahmaputra flows east through the south-eastern part of Tibet, then flows south into eastern India turns southwest

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and enters Bangladesh before joining Ganga and Meghna rivers. The Brahmaputra river that drains across 5, 80,000 square kilometers is the fourth largest river in the world in terms of water discharge and sediment yield. Out of the total length of the river, about 50 percent lie in China, about 34 percent in India, 9 percent in Bangladesh and 7 percent in Bhutan. The entire Brahmaputra-Meghna basin has China-India-Bangladesh-Bhutan structure. India is a middle riparian state while Bangladesh is a lower riparian.

Hydro-politics in the Region

Hydro-politics or water politics has become the dominant discourse in South Asia. According to one academic, hydro-politics is the "systematic study of conflict and cooperation between states over water resources that transcend international borders." Hydro-politics in the post-colonial period begun early in the 1960 when Pakistan and India signed an agreement on Indus river water sharing.

Brokered by the World Bank, the treaty provisions for reserving the waters of eastern rivers of the Indus basin (Ravi, Beas, Sutluj) for use by India and making it obligatory for India to allow the flow of Western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab and its tributaries) except for the following uses by India viz. domestic use, non-consumptive use, agricultural use as specified and generation of hydropower as specified³. The treaty avoided sharing of Indus waters to become yet another triggering point for tensions between the two arch-rival nations. Moreover, it also set a precedent for cooperation over river waters in the South Asian region. The Indus treaty as early as in the 1960s recognised the importance of at least two major drivers for hydro-politics in the region, water for agricultural use and hydropower generation.

But on yet another river, India claiming her upper riparian rights by building a diversion that hydro-politics was again accentuated between India and erstwhile East Pakistan. It was in 1962, in the same decade as when the Indus treaty was signed that India constructed a 2.25 kilometers long diversion known as the Farakka Barrage to redirect the flow of the Ganga river into the moribund Hooghly during the dry season and save the Kolkata port from being obsolete. It took more nearly three decades for India and Bangladesh to sign a water sharing treaty over the Ganga, well known as the Ganges Water Treaty in 1996. The Ganges Treaty agrees to share surface waters at the Farakka Barrage near their mutual border. But the treaty, which was signed in 1996, divides water flow without sharing the value and uses of the river between the two countries⁴. Pakistan and after 1971, Bangladesh have hailed that the barrage will result in the dry season flow of the Ganga and would have serious implications for their economy⁵. Despite the Indo-Bangladesh

treaty of 1996 on dry season flows from Farakka, the crucial issue on ecosystem flows is yet to be resolved⁶.

Experts of hydro-politics have also held that India's plans for linking the Brahmaputra to the Ganges to improve the water flow of the Ganga as part of the larger National River Linking Project will make Bangladesh more susceptible to the lack of flow in summer months and larger sedimentation in the river-beds, make Bangladesh more prone to flood damages⁷. The river-linking project that has two components the Himalayan component and the Peninsular component has drawn serious criticism from the perspective of sustainability and equity. Scholars have expressed their apprehensions on the interlinking of rivers project and feel that the project may further aggravate inter-state water disputes, apart from aggravating the international hydro-political situation in South Asia⁸.

A study conducted by the International Water Management Institute has found the National River Interlinking Project to be inadequate detailed planning of the proposed links and conflict of interests amongst the stakeholders⁹. It highlighted any water surplus availability forecast must include detailed requirements in the basin including downstream riverine requirement and monthly water availability needs. The study also mentioned the necessity of strong basin organisations, prompting conflict of interests among stakeholders. Properly designed, disseminated and implemented rehabilitation and relief packages for the project affected people are also a necessity. Moreover, the study recommends that land acquisition to be handled carefully.

If equitable use of waters remained the main concern of hydro-politics in the 20th century, so far in the 21st century the main premise for hydro-politics has been hydropower generation. The emergence of China as a 'water-hegemon', 10 diverting waters away from the neighbouring riparian's and damming them have had a strategic imperative. China's maritime aggression in the South China Sea, its offensive on its borders with India and its refusal to be regulated by any treaty on sharing of waters, continue to illustrate the characteristics of dominance. China's South-North Water Diversion project that has three geographic parts, the Eastern, Middle and Western routes and Greater Western route that might extract waters from as far south on the Tibetan Plateau, including from the Yarlung Tsangpo-Brahmaputra has led to fear in middle riparian and lower riparian states of India and Bangladesh¹¹.

Though, reports about China's construction of dams on the Yarlung Tsangpo have circulating in the media, it was only in April 2010 that China confirmed that it was building the Zangmu dam¹². In January 2013, China approved three more dams on the river as part of its Twelfth Five Year Plan, namely, Dagu (640 MW) and Jiexu (560 MW) dams will be constructed upstream of Zangmu and the Jiacha Dam (320 MW) downstream. It has widely been reported that this dam

and other planned projects on the upstream Brahmaputra will bring about serious problems for South Asian environmental security¹³. In October 2015, China commissioned the Zangmu hydro-power project on the Yarlung Tsangpo that is expected to produce 2.5 billion KWH of electricity annually¹⁴.

Trans-boundary rivers like the Brahmaputra not just transcend international boundaries, but also administrative boundaries, making hydro-politics at subnational level equally important. Considering that the Brahmaputra basin traverses from the North East Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh (42 per cent of the total length) Assam (26 percent), Meghalaya (6), Nagaland (6), Sikkim (4) and West Bengal (5) percent, understanding.¹⁵

Arunachal Pradesh has allotted some 159 hydropower projects in the state with a total capacity of over 57,000 MW¹⁶. A series of dams are allotted along the main tributaries of Brahmaputra like Siang, Subansiri, Lohit and Dibang and tributaries of the Manas river like Tawang and Nyamjang Chhu¹⁷. Hydropower development in Arunachal Pradesh has also been likened as India's 'New Forward Policy' to legitimise its sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh¹⁸. However, out of the 150 odd plants allotted in the state only a handful are expected to see the light of the day. The projects like Lower Subansiri Hydroelectric Power Project that was started in January 2010, has been stalled due to the opposition from NGOs¹⁹.Public hearings for the Lower Dibang Multipurpose Hydroelectric Project were cancelled over 10 times due to protests, before the dam was finally completed in March 2013²⁰. Same is the fate of the Lower Siang Hydroelectric Project that involves building of 3 mega dams over the main channel of the river. Proposed dams in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh have found opposition by monks who feel hydroelectric projects might threaten heritage sites.

River experts argue that the downstream impacts of hydro-power and water transfer projects are quite different and should be distinguished. The series of projects undertaken by China on the Yarlung and its tributaries is reportedly for hydro-power generation, which does not reduce the total flow but changes its hydrograph (flow pattern)²¹. The impacts on the hydrographs of the Brahmaputra will be generated not merely from the hydro-projects on Yarlung Tsangpo, but also from the downstream projects on the same river Siang/Dihang and the Dibang or the Lohit, all of which flow through India²².

Impacts downstream of hydropower projects remain an ignored aspect of hydropower discourse in India. People affected by the downstream impacts, yet remain to be officially acknowledged as project affected people²³. Concerns over the dam's height and the inadequate safety measures and flood cushioning have remained the major arguments of citizen's groups opposing the Lower Subansiri project being built in Arunachal Pradesh. Citizen's groups have also highlighted the shoddy nature of the conduct of Environmental impact Assessments (EIA's).

According to them, EIAs for hydropower projects must calculate safe levels of ecological and hydrological change through the guarantee of minimum flows, the protection for bio-diversity and eco-fragile/sensitive regions, and the support for cultural practices vital to local and national economies²⁴.

Possible Solutions

River waters internationally are a difficult, complex and challenging topic. Water sharing agreements of the complex river basins of Nile, Jordan or Mekong have shown ways in which breakthroughs can be achieved in equitable sharing of river waters. Especially, when it comes to the Brahmaputra river, water security, security against flood and food security emerge as the main drivers of hydro-politics. However, river experts feel that the Brahmaputra's high discharge during the monsoon has the potential for supplying water year round if managed in a proper way. An important step ahead for trust-building between partner states could be sharing and evaluation of data on year-round discharge of the river and hydro-climatic data of the entire basin.

China has renewed the pact with India for providing the latter with hydrological data of the Brahmaputra twice a day during the monsoon seasons between June and October. However, this is not enough, year-round data on all hydro-climatic aspects should be declared. India and Bangladesh who have an average annual precipitation of 200 cm, can adequately supply waters for use in agriculture by proper resource planning and management. Bhutan which contributes 21 percent of the system output is also crucial not just for lower riparian Bangladesh, but also for securing the Indian state of Assam against floods. India (39 percent) and Bhutan together generate 60 percent of the total discharge command a key role in water management for Bangladesh as well as Eastern part of India.

Country specific solutions cannot serve the purpose of water sharing amongst trans-boundary rivers, and a river-basin approach needs to be employed for the management of water resources and an amicable solution reached jointly between the riparian nations of China, India, Bhutan and Bangladesh is required. Future treaties, Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) or joint bodies need to be based on open, amicable and informed sharing of the rivers. Hydro-diplomacy between India and Bangladesh or India and Bhutan on the Brahmaputra river need to be broadened to an integrated water treaty where India and China would be significant partners.

China in near future is likely to utilize both Yarlung Tsangpo, upper Indus and upper Sutluj systems for generating hydroelectricity and for canal irrigation. So far, only the dams on Yarlung Tsangpo is attracting attention but for China it is equally lucrative to use Indus and Sutluj waters for irrigation in north western Tibet

and in Chinghai, Sinkiang and Sunchow provinces. Also, China could connect upper Kosi, Karnali and Barun to Lhasa River augmenting flow of upper Tsangpo.²⁷ Such gains for China would bring extreme losses to India's interests unless a policy is developed among all stakeholders on integrated water resource management which in turn must be strengthened by treaties. India has to take a lead role in pushing forward a river basin management approach.

Regional cooperation organizations like SAARC need to become the platform for integrated management of the river basins in South Asia. Quite some time has elapsed since water agreements were reached between SAARC nations and some of them are still disputed- the India-Bangladesh Ganges Treaty of 1996 and India-Nepal Mahakali treaty are a case in point. It is time that the integrated basin management is applied in South Asia. However for that to happen, there needs to be a paradigm shift, which has been witnessed worldwide. The paradigm of river basin management needs to be adopted and implemented, which has so far not affected policymakers in the region. However, this shift cannot overlook the problem of poverty and ecological specificities of the region. Hence as scholars²⁸ suggest, South Asia needs to evolve its own hydro-diplomacy, which could draw from best practices of water management in the world as well as consider the present political, social, economic and ecological realities of the region.

India, though involved in the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-navigational uses of International Watercourses, abstained from voting in favour of the law and has not ratified or acceded to it. The convention adopted on 21 May, 1997 is basically a framework convention which lays down basic principles and procedures, leaving the details to the watercourse states to complement in agreements that take into account the characteristics of their specific watercourse.²⁹ It is a startling fact that no Asian nation has ratified or acceded to it. According, to observers³⁰ keenly following the convention there are several reasons behind the failure of the convention being ratified by most countries, the most important amongst it is the tension between the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization and the obligation not to cause harm. Upper riparians feel that the convention is highly in favour of lower riparian, whereas lower riparian nations accuse that the convention subordinates the no harm rule to the concept of equitable and reasonable utilization.³¹

Though, the adoption of the convention by UNGA has been hailed as a historic moment in the evolution of international water law; it came at a time when water resources management, whether at a national level or international level started to face challenges from the burgeoning population, environment degradation, urbanization and industrialization. The convention is and will continue to be the most authoritative instrument in the field of international water law. Even without being signatories, India or any other nations in South Asia or countries

sharing the Brahmaputra basin can use the principles to amicably solve the water sharing juggernaut. India's water polices and laws are based on centuries old British system. Even when European countries have evolved, India has refused to evolve. This demands for a shift in policies based on informed hydro-diplomacy between the riparian's. India needs to first recognize the importance of applying the integrated basin management approach for Brahmaputra and needs to restructure/form the river commissions. For now, the Brahmaputra Board is the only inter-state river organization. Considering that the new government in New Delhi is keen on setting up a Brahmaputra River Authority, enough scope should be left for aligning the upper as well as lower riparian's nations of China, Bhutan and Bangladesh in the conceptualizing the authority.³² Centre-State dialogue needs to take place on a regular basis for achieving a synergy between local and national policies, but at the same time sensitive to the no harm principle enshrined in the UN Convention. Cooperation on watercourses should be on the basis of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and mutual benefit in order to achieve optimal utilization of watercourses.

Conclusion

The water sharing juggernaut of Brahmaputra has been created due to long prevailing rivalries between the countries of South Asia, mostly political in nature. Hydro-politics has had to reconcile with the tensions outside that of the domain of water. Water scarcity has raised an alarm, further politicizing the issue. In case of Brahmaputra, the river remains highly un-utilized but still has been centre of contention for riparian's. Lack of transparency and dialogue between the riparian's is the major reason for water conflicts in the Brahmaputra sub-basin. Water conflicts can be resolved through dialogue. Sharing of hydrological and climatic data of the basin by the countries is an important step ahead in facilitating dialogue. Agreements need to be reached between the riparian's based on equity and 'no harm principle.' It also lest be said that there needs positive initiative and reciprocity from riparian's in adopting best practices. A paradigm shift to integrated basin water management is a solution for the future management of the Brahmaputra waters. The UN Convention on the Non-navigational uses of water can serve as a legal framework for treaties in the future. The regional organizations like SAARC should take initiative in becoming a platform for the integrated basin water management of the Brahmaputra basin. Necessity is the driving factor for India to engage in water diplomacy with other riparian's as the Chinese diversion threat looms large. India, a middle riparian country with a Constitutional Democracy in place has the potential for breaking the juggernaut of hydro-politics through water-diplomacy of an Asian variety.

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Human Rights and Empowerment: The Indian Scenario in the 21st Century

By

Sudeshna Mitra*

Former American president Bill Clinton once said (about human rights),' these are not American rights or European rights or developed world rights. They are the birthrights of people everywhere.' This declaration of President Clinton aptly suggests the value of human rights in the life of a person living in a society. The allure of human rights persists because they mean a host of things to a person's life as well as to a nation. Human rights can protect people against the society they live in and at the same time it generates empowerment. United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that respect for human dignity is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Actually human rights are universal legal guarantees necessary for protection of individual or groups from any sort of attacks on fundamental freedom and human dignity and hence provide empowerment.

Conceptualisation

Human rights are moral principles and norms that describe certain standards of human behavior and are regularly protected as legal rights in national and international law. They are commonly understood as inalienable fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled because he or she is a human being and which are inherent in all human beings irrespective of his or her race, religion, sex, caste, creed, ethnic origin or any other status. They are applicable everywhere and at every time in the sense of being universal

The doctrine of human rights has been highly influential within international law, global and regional institution. Actions by state and non-governmental organizations form a basic of public policy everywhere. The idea of

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human rights suggests that if the public discourse of peace time global society can be said to have a common moral language it is that of human rights. A human right, then is a general moral right that every human being has. Sometimes it finds legal expression and protection, sometimes not. This legal variability does not undermine the existence and firmness of the moral right and actually provides focus for contemporary human rights activism, where the goal is often to translate the pre-existing moral claim into an effective legal entitlement. In fact a human right is a high priority claim, theto each human person as a matter of minimally decent treatment. Such objects vary from material goods to personal freedom and its protection. So it is clear that the objects human rights refer to some fundamental benefits that each individual can claim from other individual or institution of any sort and inability or failure to provide them is called violation which is a pretty ugly phenomenon which requires remedy.

Empowerment

Empowerment refers to a process through which people and / or communities increase their control or mastery of their own lives and the decisions that affect their lives. Empowerment refers to increasing the economic, political, social, educational, gender or spiritual strength of an entity or entities. Sociological empowerment often addresses members of groups that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision making processes through- for example discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, race, religion or gender.

Basically at the core of the concept of empowerment lies the concept of power. Empowerment requires that power can change. The concept of empowerment depends on the idea that power can also expand. Empowerment is a process that fosters power in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important.

This principal focus of this paper is to concentrate on the main purpose of human rights and that is empowerment. Human rights can foster power among people, so that, human dignity is not outraged anywhere in any circumstances. But there are misunderstandings or ¹even fear about what human rights actually mean in reality and this requires good access to information about human rights. Human rights education is always a better option here. The inner relationship between human rights and empowerment will be discussed here in the backdrop of Indian scenario. Considering its size, diversity, its secularism, its status as developing nation human rights is and always will be an issue in India. In its report on human rights in India during 2013, released in 2014, Human Rights Watch stated, 'India took positive steps in strengthening laws protecting women and children, and in several important cases, prosecuting state security forces for extrajudicial killings.' The

report goes on saying,' the fact that government responded to public outrage confirms India's claims of a vibrant civil society. An independent judiciary and free media also acted as checks on abusive practices. However, reluctance to hold public officials to account for abuses or dereliction of duty continued to foster a culture of corruption and impunity.' At the global level also India has proved herself as one of the major protagonists of human rights by helping Afganistanto restore stability and human rights.

India is a signatory of Universal Declaration of Human Rights and if we go through Part III of Indian constitution which is based on Fundamental Rights of the citizens of India we will come across the reflections of those human rights mentioned in UDHR. So it is obvious that protection of human rights has always been a major issue in India. But in reality what India is lacking is awareness about human rights among people. This dearth of conscious about human rights exists at the governmental level also. Over the years it is observed that many of the people working at the decision making level also are totally unaware of the fact that basic human rights are being violated. So making people aware of their human rights is far more important task than incorporating provisions in the constitution. As a result several cases of violation of human rights have been noticed I our country. A few instances of human rights violation are mentioned below

The Asian Centre for Human Rights estimated four people per day died while in police custody with hundreds of those deaths being due to police use of torture. Instances of torture through a lack of sanitation, space or water have been documented in West Bengal as well.

Havoc human rights violations are taking place in Jammu and Kashmir. Many human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and the Human Rights Watch have condemned human rights abuses in Kashmir bi Indians such as extra-judicial execution, disappearances and torture.

According to the estimates of Reporters without Borders, India ranks 122nd worldwide in 2010 on the press freedom index (down from 105th in 2009). The press freedom index for India is 38.75 in 2010. In 2014 India was down ranked to 140th worldwide.

Until Delhi High Court decriminalized private sexual acts between consenting adults on 2ndJuly, 2009, homosexuality was considered criminal as per old Indian Penal Code. 11th December, 2013 homosexuality was again criminalized by Supreme Court law.

Human trafficking is another great issue that has been constant problem in India. Around 10,000 Nepali women are brought to India annually for commercial sexual exploitation. Each year 20,000-25,000 women and children are trafficked from Bangladesh.

Concerns regarding human rights violations in conducting deception detection tests were raised long back and the National Human Rights Commission of India has released guidelines in 2000 for the administration of polygraph tests.

Women's empowerment is another big issue in India which needs to be highlighted here. In the simplest term women's empowerment refers basically to the creation of an environment where women can make independent decisions on their personal development as well as shine as equal in society. Women in India need equal treatment everywhere. Gandhiji's idea of women's empowerment also supports this view. According to Gandhiji women's rights need to be protected and they are required to be given their due position in society and for that reason they need to be educated. Vivekananda advocated for women's education for the same reason. There are lot of challenges which are plaguing the issues of women's rights in India. Education, poverty, health and safety- these are the areas where India need to concentrate and as a matter of fact India has made a considerable progress in this regard. United Nations Development Programme constituted eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for ensuring equity and peace across the world. The third MDG is centred towards promoting gender equality and empowering women. Although India's progress in this regard is quite satisfactory, but there are a few corners that she needs to explore.

Solution

Central Human Rights Commission was set up in India to deal with the human rights issues. National Human Rights Commission of India is one of the most effective rights commission in the world. The daily average of complaints received by the commission varies from 50 to 60. Under the scheme of Act National Human Rights Commission is an independent autonomous body and is not subservient to any state official or agency. Its chief function is to protect human rights from the might of state. It has got even the power of suomotu inquiry on the basis of the complaint made by any person. Commission can seek report from any authority and can recommend for compensation. But the willingness of the governmental wing is another part of the story and herein lies the political gambling. Above everything else Commission is certainly an advisory body and value of its recommendation obviously depend on political willingness. Although so far National Human Rights Commission is more or less successful in performing its role, but so far as the human rights commissions at the state level are concerned the story is lot less colourful.

Another solution for human rights problem in India is setting up infrastructure for human rights education even at the school level so that people become aware of the their human rights starting from the initial stage. Mention has

already been made about human rights education at the school level earlier. Little bit detailing is given below.

In India various Education Commission and the statement of education policy have articulated the importance of right to education and education in human rights as a part of effort to reform and develop education. They assign special status in the national educational system to women, schedule caste, schedule tribes, minorities and the handicapped and emphasized value education. They also have discussed the basic components of core curriculum, which reflects some important human rights concerns.

The basic approach to human rights education in school is to integrate it into various subjects and not to treat it as separate area of study. In the upper primary stage, the major subject areas relevant to human rights education are social studies, science and languages. Secondary schools offer much wider and varied range of opportunities to teach human rights and to practice and observe rights and duties. In school at the secondary level human rights education aims at preparing the future citizens human conscious and at the higher secondary level it would make the students well equipped about protection of human rights.

Human Rights Commission in India had suggested to the University Grants Commission (UGC) to set up a curriculum development committee for human rights education in various universities. UGC acted accordingly in the light of that suggestion.

Conclusion

So it can be aptly concluded that human rights refer to a host of rights which are essential for existence of a human being and so awareness about them can generate a sort of sense of empowerment which in turn can help people to work for the protection and promotion of human rights.

Notes

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Gender in Society of South Asia & Beyond: Continuity and Changes

Muslim Women as Activists and Agents of Peace and Change: The Context of Colonial Bengal

By

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In the nineteenth century the, Muslim women had to live in strict *purdah* and nearly subjugated to their father or husbands. There was no question of their independent existence, except in exceptional cases. As a general rule, the women were excluded from public life and were secluded in what was called the *zenana* section of the house. A house in those days was divided in two parts: *mardana* and *zenana* (i.e., men's and women's quarters). Besides husband, father and son, only a close male relative could enter the *zenana*. Even if women went out, they went out in a *palki* (i.e., palanquin) wrapped in curtains.¹

So, it is no doubt about that Muslim women are illiterate and they have no idea about the public life. Now the question is how this illiterate and excluded people play a role for change the society? Anyone can be speaking why; Rokeya and Sufia Kamal were not come out from this society? My answer is that, yes, but they are exceptional. Moreover, these exceptional women play a role for change the society.

Though Muslim women in colonial India have been the center of many academic research works, Bengali Muslim women have not received academic attention until the publication of Sonia Nishat Amin's *The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal.*² The reformation movement of *Brahmo Samaj* had an influence on the Hindu orthodoxy that eventually led to the conditional freedom of the Hindu woman (as she was allowed to go to public places, meet men in social gatherings, and in some cases, go abroad for higher studies). Muslim society's treatment of the female Body was totally different from that of an orthodox Hindu or a liberal

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Brahmo society. The Muslim patriarch of colonial Bengal, being directly influenced by Middle Eastern Islamic culture, believed in the inherent danger of woman's sexuality and therefore tried to control her by imposing on her various cultural and political constraints. A woman's body was seen as a threat to the patriarchal harmony as it arouses sexual desire and thus chaos. The Muslim female body was a threat to herself because she was always in danger of being tempted or forced to be the focus of male desire. The Muslim patriarchy thus considered it a religious duty to protect and control the female body. It created a religiously interpreted space for its woman designating her specific role and position concerning her duty as a (Muslim) woman, daughter, mother, and citizen. The Muslim woman had to remain in seclusion since her body -a sex object- needed to be made invisible through proper covering. For a Muslim woman, her body was both a proof of and a threat to her existence, and she had to struggle hard in order to keep herself invisible.

As Fatima Mernissi argues, the contradictory theory of female sexuality implies that the power inherent in a woman's "divinely decreed inferiority" instigates "disruptive effects" on Muslim social order and therefore it needs to be neutralized. This neutralization of female sexual aggression is done systematically in an attempt to recast her as a veiled, silenced, and passive creature whose existence outside her marital life is never welcomed. Nawab Faizunnesa herself observed seclusion and performed all her administrative duties as a ruler of a province from behind a veil. The veil, however, did not keep her invisible, as she stood out as a pioneer of Muslim women's education, economic independence, and personal freedom.Not only Faizunnesa but Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, Nurunnesa Khatun, Fazilatunnesa Zoha, Sufia Kamal and others challenged Muslim patriarchal authority by writing about sexuality, a subject which the Muslim patriarch of colonial Bengal (along with the entire Muslim world) considered dangerous. My intent in this project is to examine how Muslim women crossed this boundary by textualizing the politics of Muslim woman's sexuality and by socio-legal and political movement.

In the second half of nineteenth century modern urban middle class Muslim women had emerged in the Muslim society. These women focussed their attention on certain social issues from their own point of view in order to change their traditional world and to uplift the status of women. They widely campaigned for women's emancipation through literature as it was one of the grounds of their battle for liberation. In course of time, they were associated with the voluntary associations set up exclusively by Muslim women, Muslim liberal and Brahmo or Hindu reformists. The idea of women's emancipation began to receive momentum from Taherunnesa.

The idea of women's emancipation may be traced in the writings of Taherunnesa, the first muslim woman to write modern prose⁹. Taherunnesa pleaded

for women's education in her article in the form of a long letter entitled "Bamaganer Rachana" published in February-March issue of the *Bamabodhini Patrica* in 1271 B.S.(1865).In this article she reminded the native *bhadralak* not to ignore the education of their womenfolk.¹⁰ Citing the example of Lilaboti, Khana, Rani Bhawani etc., she argued that female education is an argent need in order to make a happy and beautiful world-the land of paradise. Taherunnesa in her letter wrote:

It is nothing but a mere mockery to be born in this world as illiterate. Who will think that unborn and dead son is bitterly sorrowful one time, but ignorant child is more pitiful than that?....is there any doubt that a literate son only brightens his paternal race, but a literate girl brightens both the race of her father as well as husband?¹¹

Moreover, Taherunnesa emphasized on the utility of female education in the period when Rasasundari Devi, Kailasbasini Devi, Ganadanandini Devi, Krishnabhabini Das etc., did so.

Latifunnesa(born c.1877), inhabitant of Shahjadpur, was a brilliant student. She passed the Campbell Medical School examination with distinction. She was the first Bengali Muslim lady who studied the Vernacular Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery at a monthly scholarship of Rs.7 and being in the second year course was expected to graduate in 1896. When the Bengali Muslim society had been suffering from ambivalence to education, the daring confidence of Latifunnesa prompted her to come of seclusion and take study of medical science. The time space between Kadambini Gangully and Latifunnesa in about joined of medical profession not more than ten years. 14

Besides medical profession she interested to writing poem. In her poem depicted the vivid picture of the neglected and oppressed Bengali Muslim women. She urged the Muslim women to come out of seclusion and *purdah*. In 1897 *Bamabodhini Patrika* published a poem by Latifunnesa. Her poem entitled "Bangiyo Muslim Mohilader Prati" propagated for women's emancipation.¹⁵

Faizunnesa Choudhurani (1834-1903) (later known as Nawab Faizunnesa) was a courageous Muslim woman who broke norms by making herself visible through her social and literary activities. She established a unique example by crossing over the boundary of sexual restrictions of a Muslim society in Bengal. She was possibly the first Muslim woman to write a poetic fiction in Bengali, wrote some excellent books like *Rupjalal* (1876), *Tatta O Jatiya Sangeetsar* and *Sangeetlahari*, ¹⁶ set up schools¹⁷ and hospitals¹⁸ for girls in Bengal, hostel for Muslim student in Macca and *Mushafirkhana* in Madina¹⁹ member of Sakhi Samiti founded by Swarnakumari Devi and live an independent life, apart from her polygamous husband. Finally, she completed the crossover by receiving the title Nawab, from Queen Victoria a title that the British government normally attributed to the (male)

rulers of various provincial estates. She was the first women in Bengal who has given the title of "Nawab" by the British parliament for her philanthropic works.

Faizunnesa's RupJalal is a counter-narrative of male dominance in Muslim Bengal; at the same time, it focuses on the women characters of the text as they raise questions regarding their positions in home and society. Faizunnesa and her RupJalal trace the emergence of a self-conscious female voice by addressing the issues of social, political, and economic marginality of women in an Islamic, nationalist, and imperialist culture of colonial Bengal.

Azizunnesa khatun pleaded for women's emancipation and female education which the backward Muslim Society urgently needed. Her poem titled "Hamd" published in *Islam Procharak* in 1902 may be regarded as the first to be published in a Muslim edited periodical. ²⁰She was more familiar with Urdu than Bengali according to the preface to her work *Sanyasi*(1906). She also translated Oliver Goldsmith's, *The Hermit*, in Bengali in 1884²¹

Khairunnesa Khatun (1870-1912), was born in a middle class family of 'Munshibari' in the Sirajgunj district of East Bengal. Although Khairennesa had received some formal education, her talents as a writer bore fruit owing to the constant support and encouragement that she received from her husband, Asiruddin, himself a sub registrar. In 1895 Khairennesa took up the responsibility of shouldering the post of the Headmistress of the Sirajgunj Hosenpur girls' school (founded by Munshi Mehrulla),—a job that she discharged with extreme diligence until her last. Khairennesa's pioneering zeal and persistent efforts to keep the school going, the door-to-door campaigning in the village for the barest minimum necessities were unique²². Both the schools shared a kind of uniqueness as both were village schools meant for village girls, and the founders too were village women.²³

In 1904 she published an essay in *Nabanur* entitled "Amader Sikshar Antaray" in which she propagated for female education. Her "Satir Pati Bhakti" was a manual for women laying down the duties of a good wife. Her writings bore signs of sufficient learning, culture and intelligence. She highlighted the husband-wife relationship, duties of women to her family and women's emancipation. She had indirect connection with the nationalist movement launched by Indian National Congress. 1905 she published an essay entitled "Swadeshanurag" in which she appealed to women to boycott foreign goods and to take a *Swadeshi* vow.

Sahifa Bano(1850-1926), was born in Kuarpar in the district of Shyllet. She was the daughter of Ali Raja, the *Zamindar-dewan* of Kauria Lakshmansiri and step sister of the famous folk-lyricist Hasan Raja. Her husband Abdul Wahed, manager of Ali Amzad's estate in Syllet, encouraged in her literary career. Many songs in Hindi and Urdu were composed by Sahifa Bano and her poetical works are known as *Sahifa Sangeet*, *Yadgare Sahifa* and *Sahebane Jari. Sahifa Sangeet* is a unique poetical

creation in which the writer's deep feeling and sympathy to Hindu neighbours have been expressed.²⁴

Rokeya's elder sister Karimunnissa (1855-1926) learned Bengali from her elder brothers, but when her relatives caught her reading, they criticized her and married her off at a young age of 14 to a landlord in Tangail.She learnt not only Bengali well, but also English, Persian and Arabic. Karimunnissa's *Dukshatarangini* was composed between the years 1878-1881and her *Manashikash* was written in the year 1881-1901.Under her patronage Abdul Hamid Khan Yusufzai edited a secular journal named *Ahmadi* in 1886published from tangail.²⁵

Khujasta Akhtar Banu Suhrawardy(1874-1919), a member of the politically and culturally prominent Suhrawardy family of Midnapore and Calcutta. Educated in Persian and Urdu by her father, Maulana Ubaidullah al—Ubaidi Suhrawardy, who was the first Principal of the Dhaka Madrassa, she went on to become fluent in English as well, and translated several novels from English into Urdu. She also founded two primary schools for girls²⁶, and was the inspiration for a tradition of women's education and activism in her family. She was awarded an honorary degree in Persian by Calcutta University. She was married to her cousin, Justice (Sir) Zahid Suhrawardy and had two sons, the youngest of whom Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy (1892-1963) became the chief Minister of Bengal in 1946-1947 and later on the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1956-1957.²⁷

But by far the most remarkable Bengali Muslim woman in this respect was Rokeya Sakhavat Husain (1880-1932), the founder of the Sakhavat Memorial Girls School at Calcutta. Born in Pairaband, a village in Rangpur district in Northern Bengal, Rokeya was the daughter of a zamindar, Zahiruddin Muhammad Abu Ali Saber. Like many other men of his time, Zahiruddin Saber was aware of the need to educate his sons to meet the demands of the changing times, but he felt no need to educate his purdah-observing daughters, who were, as might be expected in a highly literate family-clever and eager to learn .28 Rokeya's elder sister Karimunnissa learned Bengali from her elder brothers, but when her relatives caught her reading, they criticized her and married her off at a young age. Rokeya, an avid reader learned from her sister's experience to keep literacy to herself. Rokeya's elder brother Ibrahim Saber, who had graduated from the St. Xavier's College, taught Rokeya Bengali and English late at night, when the rest of the household was asleep. Rokeya's marriage with Sayyid Sakhavat Husain, a civil servant posted at Rangpur, was also arranged by Ibrahim Saber. Rokeya's husband, was a firm supporter of women's education, and encouraged her literary talents. Though she observed purdah, her husband encouraged her to mix up with the educated Hindu and Christian women of the town.

Rokeya started her literary career in 1901 when her essay "Pipasa" appeared in Nubabpur. Rokeya published her articles in 1903-1904 in *Islam Procharak* on

subjects relating to the status of women. In 1905, a Madras-based English periodical, *The Indian Ladies' Magazine* carried a story titled *Sultana's Dream* written by Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. It was a "utopian fantasy"²⁹ – the first known example of such a work by a woman in India – in which Rokeya imagines a world where cooking is a pleasure, horticulture is an important activity and science is used only for humanitarian ends. It is a woman's world – peaceful and ordered – where men are "shut indoors" in the *murdana*.³⁰ As Rokeya's husband remarked on reading the story, it is indeed a "terrible revenge" on men³¹. Rokeya's happy marriage was cut short in 1909 when her husband died of diabetes. Before his death, he however, had urged Rokeya to start a girl's school at Bhagalpur. By 1911 Rokeya had moved to Calcutta and reestablished her school there.

Her famous essay "Amader Abanati" (1904), and its subsequent revised version, "Streejatir Abanati" (Women's Degeneration,1905), in which Rokeya argues that women's oppression should be understood as a direct consequence of unfair, male-centric "social injunctions" embodied in all religions, and not merely as a byproduct of the misplaced conservatism of a few orthodox mullahs.

Some of Rokeya's writings exclusively concerned with problems of patriarchy. Her "Stree Jatir Abanati" (1905), "Ardhangi" (1905) and "Narir Adhikar" (1932) express her feminist message which was revolutionary in the context of those times.

"Appeal" and "Niriha Bangali" (1904) were the two pieces where Rokeya directly addressed the prevalent liberal male ideology. "Niriha Bangali" was Rokeay's diatribe against the education, middle class and the unattractive quantities of that class. In this book rokeya focuse on the ordinary bangli women and their subordination position and also by that rokeya try to the wake of the Swadesi movement. Rokeya also support Sadesi movement and try to established women's right in society. Rokeya's views on Swadeshi were also evident in the poem *Nirupoma bir*. Rokeya's anti-colonial allegory "Muktiphal" which addressed the plight of india's society and polity on a wider and more ambitious canvas: colonization. This inspiremen and women about struggle against colonialism. And also it makes a love for motherland.

Besides, Rokeya was also active in organizing the Anjuman-i-Khavatin-i-Islam in Calcutta in 1916. This anjuman, in Calcutta was designed to spread interest in women's education among middle class women, to promote literacy and knowledge of child care and hygiene among poor women. Rokeya's writings point to the emerging views of the next generation Muslim women who gradually evolved their own viewpoints on purdah, polygamy, divorce and other social issues, distinct from those of the men in the generation of reform³².

Rokeya Sakhavat Husain, while undoubtedly the most outspoken, was not the only Muslim woman educator in the early twentieth century Bengal but she was really the pioneer of women's emancipation movement in the Muslim society.

Masuda Rahman or Mrs.M. Rahman(1885-1926)³³ was greatly influenced by Rokeya's feminist ideology published in *Nabanur*.In her article titled "Amader Swarup" published in *Dhumketu* in 1923 B.S. Mrs.M. Rahman wrote "there are a myriad other ways to realize one's womanhood other than marriage." She insisted upon a liberal interpretation of scriptures, the Islamic Golden Age, *purdah* and *aborodh*. In the *Sahachar*(Chaitra,1329 B.S) Mrs.M. Rahman severely condemned Muslim society for keeping Muslim women under *purdah*. She wrote:

"In the name of severity of *purdah*, we have been deprived of many good things in life; no longer must we remain so deprived. we demand honour, freedom and rights as bestowed on us by Islam. Who is there to hold us back? The *Satanic* society? No, it will never succeed."

The idea of women's emancipation held by Mrs.M. Rahman has been finely expressed in an article titled "Amader Dabi" in which she deplored the inadequate education given to women in the traditional system. Mrs.M. Rahman other articles such as "Barbanal", "Katha banam Kaaz" published in *Bijli* in 1329 B.S, and Santi O Sakti" published in *Dhumketu* in 1329 B.S. are the wonderful literary creations relating to women's awakening. Nurunnesa Khatun(1894-1975) born in an aristocratic family of Shahpur in Murshidabad district, she was confined to the *andarmahal* at the age of eight but encountered no opposition to studious pursuits. She married a liberal lawyer and travelled extenstively with him. She wrote several novels describing the lives of the Muslim *Bhadramahilas*, and obtained the title of 'Bidyabinodini' by the Nikhil Banga Sahitya Samiti and 'Sahitya Saraswati' by Nikhil Banga Sahitya Sangha for her contribution to literature. 34 She expressed her opinion against patriarchal society, purdah³⁵, polygamy and so on. In her novel *Swapnadrista* (1923) she condemned the arbitrary and indisciplined way of life in the name of women's liberty and emancipation. 36

Fatema Khanam(1894-1957)was another writer in that time. She is another Rokeyas's lesser known co-worker. She works for female education. Only seven of her short-stories survive today in the form of slim reprint *Saptarshi* (1964).

Fazilatunnesa Zoha(1905-1975),the first Muslim woman to receive a Bachelor's degree from Calcutta University (1925), and later a Master's at Dacca University (1927), she received acclaim from many, including Nazrul Islam, who dedicated a poem in her honour. A student of Eden School and Bethune College, she became Head of the Department of Mathematics, and then Vice-principal of Bethune College. 'Modern' in outlook She expressed her opinion against patriarchal society. She advocated equal educational rights for women.³⁷ In an article entitled "Muslim

Narir Mukti" published in *Sangat* in 1336 B.S. she boldly pleaded for women's emancipation through education.³⁸

Akhtar Mahal Syeda Khatun(1901-1928) must be placed in the same category of writers. Akter's prose was chaste and expressive, but her carrier cut short by her early death. Only two brief social essays have survived: "Narir Abhijiog" and "Sishupalan". In her novel Niyantrita, Akhtar cited the problem of extra marital romantic attraction in Muslim society³⁹ Mahmuda Khatun Siddika's(1906-1977) published literary works are Pasharini(1338), Mon O Mrittika (1367) and Aranyer Sur (1366). She longed freedom outside the purdah. Her essay entitled "Adhunika" depicted the life of the modern women.

Riziya Khatun Chaudhurani(1907-1934), A writer and social worker, she was married to an idealistic politician, Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chaudhury of Comilla. Her writing, like Rokeya's mostly focused on women, especially women's education and status. In her article entitled "Samaj O Grihe Narir Sthan" published in *Saogat* in 1334 B.S., Raziya drew attention to loveless marriage. She was an ardent supporter of the advancement of women's status, but was opposed to 'Westernization' that reflected on her short story "Narir Dharma".⁴⁰

Kasema Khatun, in her article entitled "Narir Katha" published in *Saogat* in 1333 B.S., she asserted that so long as men and women kept within Islamic ideals, reform would be wholesome and beneficial. She argued that women's emancipation is possible through education. According to her, only enlightened mothers could produce sons like the "Ali brothers and Napoleon".⁴¹

Shamsunnahar Mahmud(1908-1964), A writer, educationalist, teacher, and social worker, a close associate of Begum Rokeya, and later a Parliamentarian in East Pakistan, she was an aristocratic family of Noakhali, and was an abarodhbasini during her childhood. At the age of nine she was taken out of Dr. Khastagir Girls School because of purdah, but she pursued her studies at home under a private tutor, passed the Matriculation examination creditably, and obtained a Bachelor's degree with distinction from Calcutta University (1932). She joined Brabourne College as a teacher, and wrote a number of books, of which the best known is Rokeya Jiboni (1937) the first biography of Begum Rokeya. Her others literary works are Punnyamayee (1925), Begum Mahal (1938), Shishur Siksha (1939), Nazrulke Jeman Dekhechi (1958), Phulbagicha and Amar Dekha Turaska. Her work Shishur Siksha was highly appreciated by Rabindranath Tagore. Eshe also worked for Anjumani-Khawatin-i-Islam. Sufia Kamal (born in 1911) was born in a Zamindar family in Barisal. The idea of women's liberty and emancipation was strengthened by thoughts and works of sufia kamal, a poet and social worker of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

Moreover, from the above discussion it cleared that Muslim Women's writers focused on their real life and also it focused women's subordination position in society. And also it explores how patriarchy society exploited their love, position and other things. From the intend of this project is to indicate the role of the literature in spreading ideas of change, both educational and social, in colonial Bengal, I observed that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's witnessed the emergence of 'new women' within Bengali Muslim Society. Taherunnesa criticized the native bhadralok, both the Hindus and the Muslims for their opposition to female education. She pointing out that like son the educated daughters too can glorify both private and public worlds. Latifunnesa urged the Muslim women to come out of seclusion and purdah. Faizunnesa, philanthropist, promoted education and advocated women's emancipation. Azizunnesa's writings dealt with female education. Khairunnesa was a nationalist and like Karimunnesa she was a patron of learning. The idea of feminism, secularism, pragmatism, radicalism, rationalism, materialism has been formulated by Rokeya. Like Rokeya, Muslim women, such as, Shamsunnahar, M.Rahman and Sufia Kamal stressed on women's economic self-sufficiency for achieving self-reliance for the entire nation. Sex-education, husband-wife relationship, child education and above all, call for revolt against patriarchal society included the main theme of their thought process. A kind of feminist consciousness thus began to grow gradually among Muslim women in Bengal which led them in their journey towards the uplift of their sociolegal and political status.

Notes

- ¹ Aziz, Abdul. "Islam and Women Rights Movements in Pre-Independence India." Abida Samiuddin, R. Khanam. *Muslim Feminism and Feminist Movement*. Delhi: Global Vision publishing house, 2002. p.7.
- ² Amin, Sonia Nishat (1996) *The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal, 1876-1939* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996),
- ³ Amin., The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal, 1876-1939 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), p. 21
- ⁴ Founded in 1818 by Raja Rammohun Roy.
- ⁵ Mernissi, Fatima (1975) Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1975, p.23.
- ⁶ Amin, The World of Muslim Women in Colonial Bengal, 1876-1939 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), p. 43
- ⁷ Mernissi, Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975) p. 39.

- ⁸ But Faizunnesa used her power as a ruler to have mobility and traveled around her estate in a palanquin. See Begum, *Nawab Faizunnesa O Purba Banger Muslim Samaj* (Nawab Faizunnesa and the Muslim Society of East Bengal. Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1993), 46. Written in Bengali, Begum's is the only book that has done full-length research on Faizunnesa's life and works. I have depended greatly on this book.
- ⁹ Hossain, Selina and Islam, Nurul (eds.). Dictionary of Biography. (Dacca: Bangla Academy, 1997). p.250.
- ¹⁰ Bamabodhini Patrika, Falgun, 1271 B.S.
- ¹¹ Bamabodhini Patrika, Falgun, 1271 B.S.
- ¹² Hossain, Anowar (2003) Muslim womens struggle for freedom in colonial Bengal (1873-1940), Progressive publishers. Kolkata, 2003. P.,146.
- ¹³ First Hindu Women who had been taken medical profession.
- ¹⁴ Bamabodhini Patrika, no.389, June, 1897,pp. 77-78
- ¹⁵ Bamabodhini Patrika, no.389, June, 1897,pp. 77-78
- ¹⁶ Begum, Rowson Ara (1993) Nawab Faizunnesa O Purba Banger Muslim Samaj. Bangla Academy, Dacca, 1993.pp. 77-101.
- ¹⁷ First one was Comilla Girl's School established in 1873
- ¹⁸ Zenana Hospital in 1893.
- ¹⁹ Selina Bahar Zaman, "Kalantare Nari, Nawab Faizunnesar Jibon O Sahitya Karma", *Sangbad patrika*, 30 th year, no. 306., Dacca, 20 Chaitra, 1387 B.S.
- ²⁰ Anisuzzaman(1969) Muslim Banglar Samayikapatra, Bengla Academy, Dacca, 1969.p.39
- ²¹ Roy, Bharati (2002) Early feminists of Colonial India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, p.142.
- ²² "Sikshabrati Khairunnesa", in Akhtar, Saheen & Bhowmik Mausumi (eds.), *Zenana Mahfil: Bengali Musalman Lekhikader Nirbachita Rachana*, 1904-1938,(Calcutta: Stree Publications.1998), pp.36-39.
- ²³ Sayyid, M. A. (1992) Pathikrit Naribadi Khairennesa Khatun. Dhaka: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash.1992
- ²⁴ Nazmun Nahar, Syeda (1994) *Bangla Sahitye Muslim Nari*, Dibya Prokash, Dacca,1994 ,pp.21-23.
- ²⁵ Begum, Maleka (1989) Banglar Nari Andolan. Dacca University Press, Dacca,1989. p.41
- ²⁶ One was Suhrawardiya Girl's School in Calcutta in 1909
- ²⁷ Gail, Minault (1998) Secluded Scholars: Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in Colonial India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press., 1998, p. 261.
- ²⁸ Jahan, R (1993). Avarodhbasini of Rokeya Sakhavat Hossain. Dhaka: BRAC Printers. 1993.pp.7-37.
- ²⁹ Tharu, Susie and K.Lalita (ed), Womens' Writing in India, Vol.1. (New York: Feminist Press, 1991), P.340
- ³⁰ Men's quarters; opposite of a *zenana* or women's quarters.
- ³¹ Jahan, Roushan (1988) "Sultana's Dream: Purdah Reversed." Sultana's Dream and Selections from The Secluded Ones. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. New York: The Feminist Press, City University of New York, 1988. P.2

- ³² Gail, Minault (1998) Secluded Scholars: Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in Colonial India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press., 1998, p. 262.
- 33 This is the name which Masuda Rahman herself used
- ³⁴ Faruqi, Rashid, (1987) *Nurunnesa Khatun Bidyabinodini*. Dacca : Bangla Academy, 1987,pp.23, 30.
- ³⁵ Her grudge against *purdah* has been expressed in her novel titled *Bhagyachakra*.
- ³⁶ Manir, Sahjahan, (1993) Bangla Sahitye Bangali Musalmaner Chintadhara, Dacca: Bangla Academy, 1993,pp.238
- ³⁷ Fazilatunnesa, "Muslim Nari Sikshar Prayojaniyata", *Saogat*, Agrahayan, 1334 B.S.,pp.524-529.
- ³⁸ Fazilatunnesa, "Muslim Narir Mukti", *Saogat*, Agrahayan, 1334 B.S., in Akhtar, Saheen & Bhowmik Mausumi (eds.), *Zenana Mahfil : pp.*167-170.
- ³⁹ Syeda Khatun, Akhtar Mahal "Niyantrita" in Niyantrita, Dacca, Raihan Begum,1979,p.12.
- ⁴⁰ Abdul Quddus, Mohammad (1982) R*iziya Khatun Chaudhuranis Rachana Sankalan*, Comilla : Rabeya Khatun Chaudhury, 1982, p.74
- ⁴¹ Khatun, Kasema, "Narir Katha", Saogat, Asharh, 4th issue, no.1, 1333 B.S.,p.99.
- ⁴² Chowdhury, Anawara Bahar, (1987) *Shamsunnahar Mahmud*, Dacca : Bangla Academy, 1987,p.54.

Ganika Tradition in the Urban Society: Exploring the Early Indian Literature

By

Joyshree Nath*

The *ganika* or courtesan¹ was the category of woman who was accomplished and articulated in early India. They are a significant component of the urban life and are seen to manoeuvre at elite level which also distinguishes them from the other group, the prostitutes. The courtesan tradition is seen to have ascended in certain social and economic conditions such as highly stratified societies, often undergoing processes of modernisation from feudal to bourgeois which also is distinguished by new commercial structures, accelerated form of cultural production and marriage systems that separate love and sexual passion from the institution of matrimony.² It has been deduced that the term *ganika* was applied to a public woman so exceptionally endowed that she was reserved and enjoyed by the ruling elite of a particular locality.³ However the evidences from the later centuries illustrate these $ga \Box ik\bar{a}\bar{s}$ as institutionalised professional woman whose occupation was inherited from the maternal side of the family or adopts the profession if she is beautiful and talented and become one by mastering the sixty-four arts.

The courtesan is subject to ambivalence as she is at once an object of fascination and of fear; her appeal was not only sexual, but social and intellectual as well. In order to understand the elusive nature of the institution, one needs to look into how the institution developed and how certain ideologies were constant throughout the centuries. The paper proposes to represent some of these issues by working through a few texts that contains information about the practices, incidence and approach towards the tradition of the *ganika*, amongst other things, to suggest that the understanding of the continuities and changes were integral to move beyond typecast image and attitude towards the tradition.

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And in order to recognize these continuities and changes, the paper attempts to present an analysis of the irony, anxiety and attitude towards the public woman. Her freedom and sexuality both enticed and troubled the man attracted to her. The second area the paper will explore is the *ganika*'s relationship with her associates, the clientele and the political sovereign.

The texts on the basis of which the argument will be developed are the *Jataka* stories of the Buddhist tradition, *Chaturbhani* or *Sringarhata*, a collection of four Sanskrit *bhana*s, monologue plays and *Dasakumaracharita*, the story of ten princes.

The compilation of the *Jatakas*⁴ has been dated around fifth century CE, but its representation and the reference by its name in the sculptures as early as the third century BCE would suggest the stories varied in terms of length and theme.⁵ The canonical text of the *Jatakas* consisted exclusively of the *gatha* or verse and that a commentary on these, that contained the stories in prose account, was written subsequently elucidating the *gathas*.⁶ As stated by Kumkum Roy, the stories about the courtesans in the *Jatakas* are not stereotyped.⁷

The *Chaturbhani*⁸ is a set of four Sanskrit *bhana*s, or monologue plays, from the fifth to sixth century CE. The *bhana*s are Vararuci's *Ubhayabhisarika*, Isvaradatta's *Dhurtavitasamvada*, Sudraka's *Padmaprabhrtaka* and Saumilaka's *Padataditaka*. The first two *bhana*s are set in Pataliputra, whereas the latter two are set in Ujjayini. In *Chaturbhani*, it is the *vita* who enacts in each monologue and is the authority of the erotics and is depicted as advising the prostitutes, courtesans and amorous persons on the art and craft of love.

Turning to *Dasakumaracarita*⁹ of Dandin which has been dated around the seventh to eighth century CE, is a prose romance with a blending of *akhyayika* and *katha*. Dandin was a court poet of the Pallava kings. Dasakumaracarita is a collection of exciting stories revolving around the heroic and romantic adventures of ten princes.

Ι

The existence of the institution of the *ganikas* outside the patriarchal system of gender relations has led to its disparagement. As stated in the Law Code of Manu, a woman, whether a child, young woman or an old lady, should never carry out any task independently, even at her own home and a woman seeking to live independently would bring disgrace to the family.¹² The independent nature of the *ganikas*, their uncontrolled sexuality and their taking charge over the dealings with individual men, naturally creates the anxiety in the social order as the institution trespasses the patriarchal gender norms and social hierarchy of early India that places the men above the women. And the irony that is discernible is that even with

the anxiety that challenge the norm of masculinity by being under the control of a woman, though temporarily, the men could not contain his desire or passion for the *ganika*.

Within this context, the *Jataka* stories provide the subject of the courtesans betrayed by her lover due to their anxiety. In the *Kanavera Jataka*¹³, there is representation of a courtesan named Sama saving a robber by sacrificing one of her clients instead. But the robber was overcome by the anxiety over the courtesan's loyalty towards him and assuming the same fate, he runs away, and does not return. The *Sulasa Jataka*¹⁴ provides a slightly different account where the robber plans to escape with the courtesan's jewels after killing her. But in both the cases, the anxiety that was depicted was the fear of betrayal because of the courtesans personal history of disloyalty and the profession was not put into blame.

In another interesting story, the courtesan named Kali in *Takkariya Jataka*¹⁵, is represented as having a brother who wasted away her wealth in gambling. On a certain night the courtesan refused to give him a penny, after he had lost everything, till his clothes, in gambling and one of the clients of Kali gave away his own clothing as he was wearing the cloths received from the courtesan household as a part of the transaction. Offended at his actions, the courtesan takes back the cloths of the household, leaving him naked. The misfortune of the client was blamed on him rather than the courtesan.

The Jatakas build up other stories about the courtesan's dharma. In the Gamani Canda Jataka, ¹⁶ a courtesan unable to maintain herself financially, is represented as asking the king's advice on her impoverished condition. The king indicates that her problem was the change in the manner of her profession by turning to the next client without serving the former who paid her. Another story on the similar matter in Kurudhamma Jataka¹⁷ depicts a courtesan reduced to poverty, as the client from whom she had taken money disappeared and she did not entertain any client as it would be against her virtue. The contempt is seen in the violation of the dharma rather than the profession. ¹⁸

It is evident that the *Jatakas* does not provide a stereotyped image of the courtesan and as the stories depicted the courtesan and their occupation was not criticised. The authority or the control of the courtesans, her material prosperity and her dharma was not a matter of apprehension in the society or to the political sovereign.

While turning to *Chaturbhani*, which is mainly from the perspective of a *vita*, it is seen that the picture of both the *ganika* and her profession highlighted the contrast in the representation in the *Jatakas* in many ways. The reference of a courtesan Anangadatta's secret dalliance with an impoverished lover, in *Ubhayabhisarika*, ¹⁹ gives the idea of the stigma attached to a relationship with a poor man within the profession which was against their *dharma*. But on the other hand it

is indicated that the social contempt that follows the profession is removed by the mere association of the courtesan with a poor man as it was the courtesan's custom of draining and then discarding the client that brings the disgrace in the profession. The *Dhurtavitasamvada*'s²⁰ representation of a father's anxiety over his son visiting a courtesan and the eventual ruin that would bring upon the family, gives the similar idea of the disapproved attitude of the society towards the institution. Yet the son continued his secret visits to the courtesan quarters.

Another case showing the contempt for the institution is represented in *Padmaprabhritaka*²¹, where the client, a judge's son, is in secret liaison with a courtesan and claims to be a man of pure conduct. He is called indecent as he is in association with dishonest people, lowborn *vita* and courtesans. In *Dhurtavitasamvada*²² a view regarding the courtesan's pretentious nature, some members of a *gosthi*²³ comments that the entertainment of the courtesan does not fit the good people. There is similarity in the perspective which depicts the relationship with a courtesan as misconduct.

Even more interesting is the mention of a courtesan, in *Ubhayabhisarika*²⁴, belonging to the third sex, a eunuch, named Sukumarika, whom the *vita* meets in the road and tries to avoid as he considered it inauspicious to even see her. It was due to her gender that even the *vita* had certain anxiety towards her. Similarly, in *Padataditaka*,²⁵ the Yavana or Greek courtesan has acquired more criticism probably due to the total unawareness of the foreign customs and their craft of love. There is a greater degree of unease with the woman of a foreign origin.

As referred to earlier, the members of a *gosthi*,²⁶ in *Dhurtavitasamvada*, reveals the anxiety and attitude towards the courtesans and their profession. They had doubts regarding the trustworthiness of the courtesans and the fear of being deceived was obvious for which they sought knowledge regarding the art and craft of love from the *vita*. They probably aimed to gather the knowledge in order to control the situation during their amorous activities with the *ganikas*, which normally was under the control of the latter.

The *Padataditaka*²⁷ presents a situation where the courtesan Madanasenika kicks her paramour, Visnunaga, on his head while intoxicated, which was taken as a great insult by him who later goes to the Brahmins for reparation of the deed. Here it is seen that the act of the courtesan heightened his anxiety and the insult to his gender and status which he obviously considered superior to the courtesan.

Yet in another context in which the attitude and the apprehension of the society towards the institution of the *ganika* are noticeable is the confinement of the courtesan quarters to a specific area in the city, where it is situated in a cluster.²⁸ The limitation of the household to a specific area suggests moral regulation. However such kind of cluster of courtesan quarters does not find any reference in the *Jatakas*. This forming of a particular district was not only limited to the *ganikas* houses but

also to the flag-prostitutes (pataka-vesya) of low class who had their dwellings in the forest.²⁹

To some extent these anxieties are replicated in the *Dasakumaracarita*, where the sage Marici indulges himself with the courtesan, Kamamanjari, and after being deceived, laments his deed while blaming it on the *ganika*.³⁰ There is also another representation of a son of a merchant who after being drained of wealth by Kamamanjari became a Jain monk.³¹ Here again Kamamanjari as a *ganika* is stereotyped and the contempt associated with it is highlighted.

And the stigma attached to the profession is further symbolized by the refering of Ragamanjari, the sister of Kamamanjari and daughter of a courtesan, as ganika,³² despite the fact that she did not start the profession and did not intend to. It is observed that Ragamanjari is represented as considering the profession not virtuous and neglects her family dharma. This very neglect of the dharma of the profession was an occasion of contempt in the Jatakas whereas in the later texts its disregard removes the stigma from the profession. The representation points out that women related to the ganika household were considered prostitutes or courtesans, though the men related were mostly represented as clients and vita.

It is evident that, unlike the *Jatakas*, the courtesan tradition in *Chaturbhani* and *Dasakumaracarita* has been illustrated with condemnation and in judgemental terms.

II

The gradual development of the ganika tradition in the urban society also led to the increase of the associates involved with the profession. Among them it was the mother figure that was the supreme authority. The difference in the gender equation of the household³³ was also a challenge to the patriarchal norms of gender division within the household. Returning to Dasakumaracarita,34 where in this context the mother of Kamamanjari relates her duties towards the training of the ganika. She sees to her learning of all kinds of arts, teaches the complex game of seduction and refusal without the genuine loss of control, advertising about her through specialists, art of keeping the paramour impassioned enough to supply her money and material possession till he is financially broke and discard him. The Dhurtavitasamvada³⁵ suggests avoiding of prostitutes having mothers from a distance as they are like river lodged with aquatic monsters. Yet in Dasakumaracarita, 36 Ragamanjari's mother is shown concerned for her daughter's safety from becoming an object of exchange between a vita and a client. It is interesting to note that in the Jatakas the mother figure remained absent from the courtesan household, as when the courtesan needed advice on her decline in trade in the Gamani Canda Jataka³⁷she sought advice from the king rather than the mother or kuttani, like in the texts of later centuries.

The associates of the courtesans were limited to the attendants. *Chaturbhani*³⁸ and *Dasakumaracarita* give the typecast description of the mother, as old and ugly, and the greedy nature is emphasised as well. Yet as a strategy to deceive the client, the greed of the courtesan was blamed on the mother.³⁹ The picture provided of the mother hints the concern over her authority over the household which places it as an alternate to the patriarchal household.

Along with the mother, the female messengers (*duti*),⁴⁰ attendants,⁴¹ *vita*,⁴² and *dindis*⁴³ were the associates who helped in operating the profession, mainly to acquire and dispose of a paramour. Gendered hierarchy within the profession is noteworthy, as the follower of the matrilineal format, the mother came on top. However this hierarchy is not visible in the *lataka* references.

In the *Jatakas*⁴⁴, as mentioned above, it is presented that the courtesan's *dharma* was to serve the client from whom she has received payment, while the *Dhurtavitasamvada*, states as a rule of *dharma* that the client was suppose to make adequate payment to the courtesans after obtaining pleasure, and the failure to do so would be an ungrateful act. Such rule about payment in return of the pleasure was probably held in strict regulation in the profession. In *Padataditaka*, the mother of a courtesan is shown dragging a paramour to the court for non-payment of the fees. A *dharma* of relative equality seems to have maintained between both the sides. However the equality probably was limited to the economic transactions. The clients of all age and appearance visited the courtesans, but the courtesan's professional career was restricted to the young and beautiful ones. And this trait in the tradition is constituted in all the texts.

It is seen in the texts that, the relationships of the *ganika* with the clients were often long term or as long as they could pay the courtesans their fees or continues to give them gifts. As depicted in *Padmaprabhritaka*,⁴⁷ the courtesan even though tired of her paramour, who was a grammarian, continues her affair for profit.

Moving on, it is observed that the *Jatakas* is comprised of several references to the category of dancing girls or *natakitthis*⁴⁸ forming an important part of the king's court.⁴⁹ However direct reference to courtesan's association with the king is seen in *Dasakumaracarita*,⁵⁰ where Kamamanjari along with other eminent courtesans were seen with the king and other prominent citizens at a pleasure garden passing leisure time. The king's intervention in the household affair of the courtesan was also sought by the mother.⁵¹ An image of close association between the king and the courtesan is perceived from the *Dasakumaracarita*.

The complex nature of gender equations between the client and courtesan is apparent and has continued to be represented in all the texts. However in the case of the associates there have been changes since the *Jatakas* as the institution seems

to have been more established and the network of the associates had spread with the passage of time.

III

In the textual tradition of early India, the *ganika*s addressed with various epithets such as *nagarasobhani, bahya, kulata*, etc. gives an idea of the attitude of the society towards the public woman. However the reflections of the social relations acquired from the various literatures cannot be altogether used as data without critical analysis. The early Indian literature surveyed in the paper throws considerable light on the courtesan culture and on the continuities and changes in the institution. The irony in the anxiety towards the courtesan is projected from the fact that the lure and obsession of the courtesans was much greater than the fear for the institution. And the gender equations though differed from the patriarchal one was not defined in contrast to it, but was a complex one. And such complexities define the variety of information provided in these texts.

Notes

- ¹ Courtesan or courtesanship is roughly defined as 'the social phenomenon whereby women engage in relatively exclusive exchanges of artistic graces, elevated conversation, and sexual favors with male patrons'. Martha Feldman and Bonnie Gordon, eds. (2006) *The Courtesan's Arts: Cross Cultural Perspective*, New York: Oxford University Press , p. 5.
- ² *Ibid*, p. 6.
- ³ The term 'ganika' according to Srinivasan points to the additional way for attaining insight into the reasons for her prestige. Ganika is derived from the term gana to which the feminine suffix 'ika' is added. The meaning for gana range from 'group, troop' etc. to 'company, association, or corporation'. Doris M. Srinivasan, "The Mauryan Ganika from Didargani(Pataliputra)", East and West, Vol.55, No. ¹/₄, December, 2005, pp. 348-347.
- ⁴ All references to the *Jataka*s are from *The Jataka or Stories of Buddha's Former Births, Vols. I-VI*, ed. E.B.Cowell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1895-1907).
- ⁵ Kumkum Roy (2012) *The Power of Gender and the Gender of Power*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 115, 290.
- 6 Jataka Vol. I, p. viii.
- ⁷ Kumkum Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
- ⁸ All references to the *Chaturbhani* are from *Chaturbhani*, trans. Manmohan Ghosh, (Calcutta: Manisha Granthalaya Private Ltd., 1975); *Chaturbhani or Srngarhata: A Collection of Four Sanskrit Bhanas*, trans. and eds. Motichandra and V.S. Agarwal (Bombay: Hindi Grantha Ratnakar Private Ltd., 1960);
- ⁹ All references to the *Dasakumaracarita* are from Dandin, *Dasakumaracharita or The Ten Princes*, trans. Arthur William Ryder (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960).
- ¹⁰ N.Q.Pankaj (2002) Dasakumaracarita: A Cultural Study, Kala Prakashan, Varanasi, p. ii.

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11 Ibid, p. i.
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- ¹² The Law Code of Manu, trans. Patrick Olivelle(2009) Oxford University Press, USA, 5. 147-149.
- ¹³ Kanavera Jataka, No. 318.
- ¹⁴ Sulasa Jataka, No. 419.
- ¹⁵ Takkariya Jataka, No. 481.
- ¹⁶ Gamani Canda Jataka, No. 257.
- ¹⁷ Kurudhamma Jataka, No. 276.
- ¹⁸ Kumkum Roy, op. cit., p. 122.
- ¹⁹ Ubhayabhisarika, pp. 6-7.
- ²⁰ Dhurtavitasamvada, pp. 30-31.
- ²¹ Padmaprabhritaka, pp. 79-80.
- ²² Dhurtavitasamvada, p. 55.
- ²³ In this case *gosthi* refers to a meeting of the *vita*s in a club-house.
- ²⁴ Ubhayabhisarika, pp. 13-14.
- ²⁵ *Padataditaka*, pp. 156-157.
- ²⁶ Dhurtavitasamvada, pp. 42-55.
- ²⁷ *Padataditaka*, pp. 107-110.
- ²⁸ Dhurtavitasamvada, p. 35.
- ²⁹ *Padataditaka*, pp. 144-147.
- ³⁰ Dasakumaracharita, pp. 69-77.
- ³¹ *Ibid*, p. 78-79.
- 32 Ibid, p. 88.
- ³³ Shalini Shah (2009) Love, Eroticism and Female Sexuality in Classical Sanskrit Literature: Seventh-Thirteenth Centuries, Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, p. 132.
- ³⁴ Dasakumaracarita, pp. 70-72.
- ³⁵ Dhurtavitasamvada, p. 51.
- ³⁶ Dasakumaracarita, p. 89.
- ³⁷ Gamani Canda Jataka, No. 257.
- ³⁸ Padataditaka, p. 120.
- ³⁹ Ubhayabhisarika, pp. 16-18.
- ⁴⁰ The female messengers were an important part of the courtesan's professional requirement. In *Ubhayabhisarika*, p. 3, they were represented moving about carrying messages of the courtesans and their paramours. *Dasakumaracarita*, p. 89, presents a Buddhist nun as a female go-between who is the chief among the Kamamanjari's female messengers.
- ⁴¹ The maids or attendants have found reference with the courtesans in almost all the texts of early India. All the *Jataka* stories giving reference to courtesans have referred to the attendants as well and sometimes in quite an exaggerated number. *Sulasa Jataka*, No. 419, represents the courtesan Sulasa being attended by a train of five hundred attendants. The *bhanas* of *Chaturbhani*, too were filled with references to courtesans being waited upon by her attendants while preparing for her dalliance with her paramours, preparing the house to welcome the clients. In *Padmaprabhritaka*, p. 97, the maid named Priyavadinika was a close

confidant of her mistress. It is also evident that certain maids or attendants acted as the female messengers between the lovers.

- ⁴² *Chaturbhani*, pp. 112-113. Here the *vita* is described to be associated with some kind of trade, enjoys the pleasures of courtesan's company, boasts about their property even though poor, protector of friends and confidant of the courtesans. In *Padmaprabhritaka*, p. 80, the *vita* is described as a cheat. He is also represented as a married man. *Ubhayabhisarika*, p. 4.
- ⁴³ The *dindis*, referred to in Padataditaka, pp. 131, 133, were another band of men associated with the prostitutes, who were described as low and vulgar characters.
- ⁴⁴ Gamani Canda Jataka, No. 257; Kurudhamma Jataka, No. 276.
- ⁴⁵ Dhurtavitasamvada, p. 58.
- ⁴⁶ Padataditaka, p. 141.
- ⁴⁷ Padmaprabhritaka, pp. 78-79.
- ⁴⁸ Kumkum Roy, op. cit., p. 118.
- ⁴⁹ In the *Kamasutra*, 6. 6. 50, the dancing girls or the *natakitthis* were a category of prostitutes. But no such reference is made in the *Jatakas*. As stated by Kumkum Roy, the dancing girls inclusion in the *Jatakas* with the ministers, Brahmins, gahapati, as well as inhabitants of the town in the royal court, can be understood either as a recognition of their social standing or as a claim to social recognition, Kumkum Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 127.
- ⁵⁰ Dasakumaracarita, p. 76.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 89. The mother of Ragamanjari, asked the king to convince her daughter to follow the family profession. The king though gave his advice to Ragamanjari to follow the family tradition, yet she was reluctant to follow her decision. It also shows that the king's words to the courtesan daughter were not orders but merely advice, which she rejected politely.

Inter-state Women Migrant Workers' Human Rights: Indian Experience

By

Pradipta Mukherjee*

Introduction

"In the nineteenth century, the central moral challenge was slavery. In the twentieth century, it was the battle against totalitarianism. We believe that in this century the paramount moral challenge will be the struggle for gender equality around the world." Although we are in 21st century living in democracy still we have to concern about gender equality. Women are at a halt assumed to be the home maker. It is patriarchal pattern of society that hammers women into this shape (in a constructed view point). Although the share of women labour force into the production sector is truly high. In India this picture is also same. Concerning migrant women worker, inter-state migrant women workers constitute more than one third of total number of migrant workers, still most of the study on migrant worker's human rights remain gender blind.

As the first sentence of the universal declaration of Human rights states, respect for human rights and human dignity "is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." The greatest need today is to amplify awareness about human rights because every conscious individual ceases to be a potential violator and instead becomes a potential protector. When it comes about the protection of migrant women workers' human rights, we see women migrant worker floated in an endless sea without any saviour. A small number of global arrangements to protect the rights of migrant women workers' are there, however only some countries are there to implement those arrangements. In India, women constitute more than one third of total number of migrant worker but their wages less compared to men. Male dominated in skilled jobs and women do unskilled jobs.

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Having a close look into these situations this paper is seek to understand the Human Rights conditions of Indian inter-state women migrant worker and Indian Government policy approach to protect the Human Rights of inter-state women migrant worker. For these data is collected mainly from secondary sources like books, journals, periodicals and also from primary sources like census, news paper etc. The paper is critical in nature in concern of policy analysis.

Migration Scenario

A variety of factors such as globalization, emergence of gender specific labour market, extreme poverty, mechanization of agriculture, environmental degradation etc. are responsible for increasing the growth of females migration termed as 'feminization' of migration.3 During 2001 census, migrant people constitute 30% of India's of 309 million migrants based on place of last residence; female migrants constitute a staggering 218 million while it is 91 million for male. In context of population male and female migrants constitute 18 percent and 45 percent respectively. Most of the women migration registered under the category of intradistrict migration, which is 139 million. It outlines a significant number of women movements from their place to other locations because of marriage. At the same time, work migration was one of the major reasons for these movements. Census of 2001 shows that the number of inter-state migration in all duration is 41166265 of them the number of work employment migration is 10865197 and number of business migration is 816572 and marriage migration is 12233530. It is quite staggering that the percentage of inter-state migrant women worker is near about 65. Ninety two percent of the 20 million domestic workers are women and children and 20% of these females are under 14 years of age.

Census 2001 provides 7 reasons for migration, i.e. Employment, Education, Business, Marriage, Moved after Birth, Natural calamities, Moved with household and others. The percentage of employment migration was 4.19, while business migration and education migration was 0.33% and 2.16% respectively. But the percentage of marriage migration was staggering 58.80 and the percentage of moved with household was 21.50. Although after getting marriage and moved with household one can get into job. May be this sound quite odd but whether they should judge as migrant worker or not is a debatable question. At the same time women worker who moves temporarily for specific assignments are also subject to be judged as migrant worker.

Census 2001 also provides data regarding worker participation rate of migrant and non-migrant people. The percentage of total migrant worker was 43.35 and non-migrant worker was 34.85. Amongst male migrant worker the percentage was 59.75 and non-migrant was 47.54 and amongst women migrant worker the

percentage rate was 36.47 and the non-migrant worker percentage was 14.80. So it is found that the women migrants are more economically active compared to males. At the outset, it bears mention that the employment survey that was conducted in tandem with the 2007–2008 migration survey had revealed that between 2004–2005 and 2007–2008, some 13.3 million women had been eliminated from the paid+unpaid workforce, and around 1.8 million from the paid workforce. Even more were to be eliminated by 2009–2010.4

Human Rights Condition

For a large section of the world, human right is related to food, shelter, education, employment and health. Naturally, it is essential to increase true awareness about human rights amongst people, to address gross human rights violations; especially in case of migrant workers. The human right situation is even more dismal in case of migrant women workers' who are vulnerable to challenges, aggravating adversity on their way to struggle for existence; yet there is a dearth of adequate arrangements to protect the rights of such women workers'.

Sectors like construction, textile, mining, brick kiln, poultry, plantation, agriculture, tea leave plucking, stone quarries, cotton ginning, apparel, rubber plantations have been the favourite employments provides for the migrant women workers. In all these sectors women migrant workers face various kinds of violations like –

- 1. unequal wage,
- 2. domestic violence (faced by women migrant worker who lives with their family or husband like in brick kiln),
- 3. rape,
- 4. sexual harassments,
- 5. prostitution and trafficking,
- 6. pornography,
- 7. Custodial violence etc.

Significantly, 23% of women surveyed reported being subject to threats, violence and forced labour in their places of work, 75% of which was perpetrated by the initial contractors, principal employers or supervisors (as opposed to fellow workers or the police).⁵ Women are not provided with any extra facilities to take care of their children while they are on work.⁶ At the same time, there seen many more violence against migrant women worker, like – traditional practices (dowry, income distribution related etc.), female genial mutilation, sexual assault within marriage, son preference and many more.

National labour laws do not cover female migrant workers who time and again work in unencumbered informal sectors as domestic workers and entertainers.

While migration, poverty alleviation and labour come within the ambit of a number of existing laws related to work, discrimination against women, and human rights, the legislation is not effectively applied and hardly ever in the case of women migrants, most of whom are not officially recognized as workers. There is evidence in the research to suggest, for instance, that women migrant workers are more vulnerable to violence and exploitation in the workplace than their male and non-migrant counterparts. Migrant women routinely lack access to social services and legal protection and are subjected to abuses such as harsh working and living conditions, low wages, illegal withholding of wages and impulsive cessation of employment. The worst abuses force women into sexual slavery. Most women work as domestic helpers while others are categorized as entertainers. The entertainment industry is a euphemism for prostitution, wherein sometimes certain countries require women to undergo cultural training but end up in bars and the like. There are also cases of human trafficking and white slavery where women are forced to work as prostitutes while being duped to engage in other kind of work.

Indian Government and Inter-state Women Migrant Worker

The Government of India made an enactment in 1979 in the name of "Inter-state Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act 1979". The Act lays down that contractors must pay timely wages equal or higher than the minimum wage, provide suitable residential accommodation, prescribed medical facilities, protective clothing, notify accidents and causalities to specified Authorities and kin. The Act provides right to raise Industrial Disputes in the provincial jurisdiction where they work or in their home province. The Act sets penalties including imprisonment for non-compliance. At the same time, the act provides an escape route to principal employers if they can show that transgressions were committed without their knowledge. Needless to say, that the Act remained only on the paper. The record of prosecutions or dispute settlement is almost zero. The problem faced by Women Migrant workers is further compounded by the fact that they are both workers and migrants. It is not surprising that the working and living conditions of the women migrant workers relegated as a secondary matter.

The Government of India do take necessary steps to secure the wage patterns of different type of workers, like the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act of 1970; the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act of 1976; and the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act of 2008. The National Rural Employment Guaran-fee Act (NREGA) of 2005 provides for 100 days of work per household in rural areas and is aimed at addressing issues of livelihood and survival in rural areas. These Acts should cover migrant worker, irrespective of Gender

differences, which could help to protect the Human Rights of women migrant workers.

There are several other legislations that addresses discrimination against women and their rights, includes the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976; the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961; the Hindu Succession Act, amended in 2005 (additional amendments are under consideration with regard to matrimonial property); the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights of Divorce) Act of 1986; the Domestic Violence Act; and the Supreme Court guidelines of Vishaka1997 with regard to sexual harassment at the work place. These legislations, if properly implemented, would help women migrant workers to protect their Human Rights. However, in practice the distribution of wages women's proportion differs from men. It is still believed in some rural and in some semi urban areas of developing countries that women are born to manage family under the authority of men. Therefore, the question of protection of women migrant workers' human right is still remains unanswered.

The lack of sincerity on the part of the Rulers and Policy Makers in ensuring bare minimum accounts for the sorry state of migrant workers. There is absence of adequate structures and institutions to address the basic issues, concerning migrant worker relations, leave aside, addressing the whole gamut of worker relations. The reasons are obvious. The Indian Judiciary occasionally comes to the rescue of the Women Migrant worker and makes pronouncements and observations to fill the gap in the justice delivery system. Despite, the Rulers and Policy makers conveniently ignore and bypass with impunity Legislation failed, because, Regulatory mechanisms were over stretched, inadequately structured, work force deficient and resource crunched.

Women Migrant workers are yet to be organized sufficiently to lobby and form a pressure group. There is lack of support from civil society. One noteworthy enactment to address seasonal migration is National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which guarantees 100 days of employment in a year. The rate of daily wages is, as per the Minimum Wage applicable to that territory. Though the Act announced with much fanfare, it did not really take-off the ground, as there is neither political will nor social commitment and hence it largely remains on paper. It is implemented successfully only in a very few places which is a miniscule. In most cases, the funds are channelized to stakes. Added to it lack of organizational structures, awareness, desire on the part of the trade unions and Civil Society Organizations permit such deprivation and exploitation.

The Government continues to encourage external migration for remittances and internal migration for cheap labour to meet the profits of finance capital. The problem of Women migrant worker is too huge and requires cooperation and coordination between trade unions and other social actors. Trade unions with their

organizational structures, organizing skills can take on the employers, Policy makers and governments for a better deal to the Women Migrant Workers and contribute for social harmony and sustainable growth. It is high time, that, they take up the Women Migrant Workers Rights and address the causal aspects of the "cause and effect relationship" of migration.

Concluding Observations

It is observed that time and again research on women's migration has been neglected in relation to remittances. A number of factors including the emphasis placed on existing economic theories of migration where migration is seen as motivated by economic opportunities i.e. male migration for economic reasons and female migration for social and family-related reasons rather than economic considerations, is been attributed for that negligence. Several researchers have concluded that migration of females is largely caused by marriage or as dependents.⁸ Women's migration for employment also remains under-reported due to cultural factors, which emphasize social rather than economic roles for women. Women migrants, especially those in lower-end informal sector occupations, remain invisible and discriminated against in the workforce. Female migrants are less well represented in regular jobs and more likely to be self-employed than non-migrant women.⁹ Their lack of education, experience and skills leaves them vulnerable to exploitation from illegal placement agencies and touts.¹⁰ Due to this male-centric preference, the dynamics underlying female migration remains unexplored.

UNNESCO in a recent publication on 'Social inclusion of Internal Migration in India' intended for some policy inclusion that might help to protect women migrant workers Human Rights. According to the document, "There is an urgent need to fill knowledge and research gaps to incorporate gender-sensitive realities and to capture multiple reasons for women's migration. Gender-sensitive approaches need to be mainstreamed into migrant support initiatives, including collection of sex-disaggregated data and adoption of gender budgeting, besides increasing awareness of the rights and entitlements of women migrants, and promoting and facilitating safe migration. Though India is a signatory to international conventions and protocols for the prevention of gender-based discrimination and trafficking in transnational migration, similar legislation needs to be put in place for internal migration of women in India."

The newly form National Coalition of Organizations for the Security of Migrant Workers, comprised by close to 30 Civil Society Organizations across the country, is team up for lobbing of better services, protection and security for the crores of underserved migrant workers in India. They are presently engaging in numeral initiatives such as drafting a national policy on migration, ensuring

extension of social security for migrant workers and increasing state level visibility and recognition of the migration issue and its impacts. This might help to lift the voice of women migrant workers to collaborate and initiates for the protection of their basic Human Rights. At the same time Government of India should initiates a holistic approach to deal with the problems of Human Rights violations of women migrant workers. I believe Trade Unions and Civil Society Organizations should include women migrant workers into consideration to protect their basic rights and a little consideration and humane on their and also Government's part would help these uprooted people find ground below their feet and rebuild their lives of amid hopelessness.

Notes

- ¹ American journalist, author, op-ed columnist, and winner of two times Pulitzer Prizes Nicholas Donabet Kristof said in "Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide", by N. D. Kristof & Shreyl WuDunn, (eBook), Sep 8, 2009, Vintage.
- ² Preamble; The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.
- ³ Mahapatro. Sandhya Rani, The Changing Pattern of Internal Migration in India: Issues and Challenges retrieved from http://epc2012.princeton.edu/papers/121017 (accessed on 24th September 2014)
- ⁴ Indu Agnihotri. Indrani Mazumdar. and N. Neetha (October 2012), 'Gender and Migration in India' in UNESCO UNICEF National Workshop on Internal Migration and Human Development in India, Vol. II: Workshop Papers Published by the UNESCO House and UNICEFIndia Country Office, New Delhi, p-143
- ⁵ Migration, Gender and Social Justice: Connecting Research and Practice Networks Policy brief no 8, This policy brief has been prepared within the IDRC, Published in February 2013, Retrieved from
- http://www.iss.nl/fileadmin/ASSETS/iss/Documents/Research_and_projects/IDRC-MGSJ/PB-08_INDIA-with_credits.pdf (Accessed on 29th September 2014)
- ⁶ Sudhershan Rao Sarde., Migration in India; Trade Union Perspective in the Context of Neo----Liberal Globalisation, Regional Representative, IMF-SARO, New Delhi
- ⁷ Migration, Gender and Social Justice. Feb 2013, op. cit
- ⁸ Mahapatro. Sandhya Rani, The Changing Pattern of Internal Migration in India: Issues and Challenges retrieved from http://epc2012.princeton.edu/papers/121017 (accessed on 24th September 2014)
- ⁹ Marina Faetanini, and Rukmini Tankha,(ed) (June 2013) Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India, Internal Migration in India Initiative, Published by Dept of Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO, New Delhi, p-26
- ¹⁰Marina Faetanini, and Rukmini Tankha,(ed), June, 2013 op cit, p-27
- ¹¹ Marina Faetanini, and Rukmini Tankha,((ed), June, 2013 op cit, p-27

Higher Education of Women in India: Position and Possibilities

By

Radha Ghosh*

Introduction

Since time immemorial, women enjoyed a significant status in Indian Culture. They have been worshipped in the form of mother Goddess. Great personalities like Shri Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda had encouragement and initiation from their mothers. Swami Vivekananda said – "To educate your women first and leave them to themselves, they will tell you what reforms are necessary."

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "If you educate the man, you educate the person but if you educate the women, you educate the nation."

So, women are part of our socio-economic system. They uphold our rich cultural and traditional values as they have a strong bond with the society. Their progress has often been equated with the nation's progress and therefore, their participation in development activities of the society is always a concern.

During the course of civilization, women lost her prominence and accepted secondary status to men. Though women constitute about 48% of the total population, they lost their status due to socio-cultural discrimination as competence, pragmatic attitude, skill and wisdom of women remained neglected for years.

Empowerment of women is strongly associated with the level of education. Higher the level of education, greater the empowerment of women as knowledge on family planning programmes, protection of girl child, rearing healthy and productive children are all closely associated with education of women. So education is a must for women.

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Women are a backbone of a family playing multiple roles. By nature, she has dynamic source of power. So by educating women the process of development of a nation can be accelerated. This paper attempts to present the scenario of women in the field of higher education in India and also recommend some suggestions for the betterment of women through higher education.

Historical Review

History bears testimony to the fact that after a lot of struggle the University gates were opened for the women. Cambridge University permitted women students to appear for the examinations from 1872, London University in 1878 and Oxford University from 1884. Similarly in India, Calcutta University from 1877 followed by Bombay University in 1883. So, women had to wait for years to enter into higher education. Up to the middle of the 20th century society accepted social and economic dependency of women.

Soon after Independence, a number of historical and social forces made way into the lives of people in general and women in particular. The University Education Commission (1948-49) made recommendations for higher education in the country. It included recommendations for women higher education also. But women's higher education remained restricted due to conservatism and prejudice to such an extent that government had to create legal validity for the cause of education by making a constitutional provision for it in the country. So it became obligatory on the part of the states to promote women's education as part of the National Policy.² The Committee under the chairmanship of Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh was appointed to give impetus to women's higher education. In fact, the decade of the sixties was characterized by a series of committees which recommended programmes for uplifting women education. Such as Emotional Integration Council in 1962, followed by Hansa Mehta Committee in 1964 and Bhaktavatsalam committee in 1965 and Kothari Commission in 1964 -65.³

It was only since 1950 that the movement for women empowerment took its roots with the establishment of the first Women University in Maharashtra in 1951, publication of 'Women and Economic Development' of Easther Boserup, publication of the status of Women's Committee Report (Towards Equality-Dec.1974), declaration of 1975 as the year of 'International Women's Year' and and declaration of the years – 1975 – 1985 as 'Women's Decade', followed by Programme of Action -1986 and 1992, drafting of National Perspective Plan for Women (1988 – 2000), followed by inclusion of empowerment of women in primary objectives of Ninth Five Year Plan (1997 – 2002), followed by National Policy for Empowerment of Women – 2001 and other activities such as publication

of books and reports and National and International Conferences on Women Studies contributed a lot to bring women to the present position.

Present Position of Women

Women Universities Table No. 1

| S1 no | Name of the University | Establishment |
|----------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Smt. Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University, Mumbai, Maharashtra | 1951 |
| 2 | Sri Padmavati Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Tirupati , Andhra Pradesh | 1983 |
| 3 | Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, Tamilnadu | 1984 |
| 4 | Karnataka State Women University, Bijapur, Karnataka | 2003 |
| 5 | Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya University, Sonipat, Haryana | 2007 |
| 6 | Jyoti Vidyapeeth Women's University, Jaipur, Rajasthan (Private) | 2008 |

Source – UGC Annual Report

Women Colleges

Table No. 2

| Year | 1970- | 1980- | 1990- | 2000- | 2010- | 2011- |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 71 | 81 | 91 | 01 | 11 | 12 |
| Total | 3604 | 4722 | 7346 | 12806 | 33023 | 35539 |
| Colleges | | | | | | |
| (No.) | | | | | | |
| Women | 412 | 609 | 874 | 1578 | 3982 | 4266 |
| Colleges | | | | | | |
| % to total | 11.43 | 12.90 | 11.90 | 12.32 | 12.06 | 12.00 |
| Colleges | | | | | | |

Source – UGC Annual Reports

Women Enrolment and Total Enrolment Table No.3

| Year | Total Enrolment | Women | Percentage |
|---------|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Enrolment | |
| 1950-51 | 396793 | 43126 | 10.87 |
| 1960-61 | 1049864 | 170455 | 16.24 |
| 1970-71 | 3001292 | 689086 | 22.96 |
| 1980-81 | 2752437 | 748525 | 27.19 |
| 1990-91 | 4425247 | 1436887 | 32.47 |
| 2000-01 | 8000935 | 3012367 | 37.65 |
| 2010-11 | 16974883 | 7048688 | 41.52 |
| 2011-12 | 20327478 | 8672431 | 42.00 |

Source – UGC Annual Reports and CPS Chauhan⁴

Faculty – Wise Women Enrolment – 2011 – 2012 Table – 4

| SL | FACULTY | Women | % to total |
|----|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Enrolment | Enrolment |
| 1 | Arts | 3634876 | 41.91 |
| 2 | Science | 1662128 | 19.17 |
| 3 | Commerce/Management | 1414804 | 16.31 |
| 4 | Education | 428660 | 4.94 |
| 5 | Engineering / Technology | 959105 | 11.06 |
| 6 | Medicine | 350301 | 4.04 |
| 7 | Agriculture | 24808 | 0.29 |
| 8 | Veterinary Science | 6979 | 0.08 |
| 9 | Law | 107825 | 1.24 |
| 10 | Others | 82945 | 0.96 |
| | | | |
| | TOTAL | 8672431 | 100.00 |

Source – UGC Annual Report

State – Wise Women Enrolment: 2011 – 2012 Table No – 5

| Sr. | State | Total Enrolment | Women Enrolment | % (W E to |
|-----|--------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Goa | 27792 | 16760 | 60.31 |
| 2 | Kerala | 508931 | 298324 | 58.62 |

| 3 | Meghalaya | 44006 | 23849 | 54.19 | | |
|-------|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|--|--|
| 4 | Himachal Pradesh | 144023 | 73676 | 51.16 | | |
| 5 | Punjab | 511678 | 254194 | 49.68 | | |
| 6 | Nagaland | 24207 | 11882 | 49.08 | | |
| 7 | Sikkim | 12757 | 6126 | 48.02 | | |
| 8 | Mizoram | 15848 | 7583 | 47.85 | | |
| 9 | Assam | 279243 | 133461 | 47.79 | | |
| 10 | Tamil Nadu | 1854740 | 861494 | 46.45 | | |
| 11 | Delhi | 296837 | 137524 | 46.33 | | |
| 12 | Jammu & Kashmir | 205039 | 94339 | 46.01 | | |
| 13 | Karnataka | 1009972 | 462707 | 45.81 | | |
| 14 | Haryana | 486569 | 214727 | 44.13 | | |
| 15 | Maharashtra | 2413713 | 1059590 | 43.90 | | |
| 16 | Manipur | 36958 | 16144 | 43.68 | | |
| 17 | Gujarat | 1093124 | 475714 | 43.52 | | |
| 18 | Tripura | 47440 | 20068 | 42.30 | | |
| 19 | Uttar Pradesh | 2911104 | 1201146 | 41.26 | | |
| 20 | Uttarakhand | 302326 | 302326 | 40.97 | | |
| 21 | Odisha | 563102 | 230460 | 40.93 | | |
| 22 | West Bengal | 1238799 | 505674 | 40.82 | | |
| 23 | Andhra Pradesh | 1998541 | 797992 | 39.93 | | |
| 24 | Jharkhand | 431829 | 166708 | 38.61 | | |
| 25 | Rajasthan | 1244018 | 479421 | 38.54 | | |
| 26 | Madhya Pradesh | 1165173 | 441405 | 37.88 | | |
| 27 | Chhattisgarh | 386514 | 143690 | 37.18 | | |
| 28 | Bihar | 930544 | 344026 | 36.97 | | |
| 29 | Arunachal Pradesh | 20254 | 7431 | 36.69 | | |
| Unior | Union Territory | | | | | |
| 1 | Daman & Diu | 949 | 561 | 59.11 | | |
| 2 | A & N Island | 3637 | 2123 | 58.37 | | |
| 3 | Pondicherry | 48027 | 24744 | 51.52 | | |
| 4 | Chandigarh | 67235 | 33867 | 50.37 | | |
| 5 | D & N Haveli | 2120 | 996 | 46.98 | | |
| 6 | Lakshadweep | 429 | 175 | 40.79 | | |
| (| Grand Total | 20327478 | 8672431 | 42.00 | | |

Source – UGC Annual Report

Stage Wise Women Enrolment in Percentage

Table No. 6

| Year | 1950- | 1960- | 1970- | 1980- | 1990- | 2000- | 2002- |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 51 | 61 | 71 | 81 | 91 | 01 | 03 |
| Graduation | 11.10 | 13.40 | 19.90 | 27.20 | 32.30 | 37.50 | 39.93 |
| Post-grad. | 13.60 | 15.60 | 23.80 | 28.20 | 34.20 | 39.50 | 42.04 |
| Research | 9.70 | 15.10 | 18.50 | 27.30 | 36.70 | 36.10 | 37.95 |
| Dip./Certif. | 5.60 | 9.80 | 24.00 | 21.90 | 25.50 | 37.70 | 33.74 |

Source – 1. UGC Annual Reports 2.CPS Chauhan⁵

Proportion of Women Faculty to Total Faculty (2002 – 2003) Table No. 7

| Category | % in Colleges | % in University | Total |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------|
| | | Departments | |
| Lecturers | 43.68 | 4.91 | 48.59 |
| Senior Lecturers | 12.42 | 2.55 | 14.97 |
| Readers and | 18.67 | 5.25 | 23.92 |
| equivalent | | | |
| Principal and | 5.17 | 3.49 | 8.66 |
| Professors & | | | |
| equivalent | | | |
| Others (Tutors, | 3.43 | 0.43 | 3.86 |
| Demonstrators, | | | |
| Assistants etc.) | | | |

Source - UGC Annual Report

If we consider the tables, we can understand that considerable progress has taken place in respect of higher education of women. After Independence Government established separate women universities and women colleges. In the last six decades women colleges increased about ten times but percentage of women colleges to total colleges remained more or less the same about 12%. During Independence the enrolment of women in higher education was about 10% and now it has crossed 40%. This shows that awareness about higher education of women in the society has increased considerably. From table six we can see that enrolment of women in each stage has been rising steadily. Table No. 4 indicates women still prefer to go for traditional courses in Arts, Commerce and Science (more than 77%), mainly in the faculty of arts. The reason behind this is that higher education in these faculties is easily available even in rural areas with less cost. If we

consider the professional faculties, Engineering and Technology faculty has more women enrolment. If we consider the state and union territory wise analysis, it shows that after more than 65 years of Independence in 7 states, women enrolment in higher education is below average. Only three small states – Goa, Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and four Union Territories Daman and Diu, Andaman and Nicobar Island, Puducherry and Chandigarh crossed 50% enrolment ratio.

Participation of women in professional faculties has not improved much. Proportion of women senior lecturers, readers, professors and principal are low in this faculty. But there are considerable number of women lecturers.

Some Suggestions for Better Prospects in Women Education

Higher education can play a significant role in empowerment of women. It adds more strength to the movement of women empowerment. Some suggestions can be made in this direction.

Inclusion of Gender study and Social Justice Study in the Curriculum

Students in college should learn about gender inequality, values of life and social discrimination so that the young generation becomes mature enough and in turn benefit society at large. The subjects relating to this study should be integral part of undergraduate study.

Inclusion of Various Courses Relating to Skill of Women

There should be provision of add – on courses together with degree courses in the Universities and Colleges. Courses in Fine Arts, Fashion Designing, Costume Designing, Food Preparation and Preservation Technology, Sewing, Weaving and many more can promote self employment. These courses should run simultaneously with traditional degrees awarding University certificates as it ensures more job guarantee. Universities and colleges have already started with these courses but it is necessary to widen the scope of these courses and opening up new courses catering to the needs of the students.⁶

Linking Training with Vocation

To make women economically self-dependant it is necessary for them to earn a sustainable income. For this to happen add on courses should be market oriented. So , only job oriented courses are not sufficient but proper guidance regarding

market availability, customer identification, counseling and negotiating with customers should also be provided as the college girls do the courses but in practice they do not apply the skill they acquire because they don't have the knowledge of market requirements, market status and marketing skill.

Alternative Courses/ Vocational Courses/ Distance Courses

The girls, mainly from rural areas are not sent to colleges due to socio – cultural condition, as a result a major portion of the women population is away from higher education. So the responsibilities lies on the Universities to design vocational and distance courses that would help them in getting traditional degrees and skill oriented courses on vocational and distance mode. Open Universities are doing this job but are not so spread to remote areas like formal education system. ⁷

Concession in Fees and Provision of Learning Resources

We know that poverty is the main reason of drop-outs of girl students. In most of the families preference is given to education of male students than female students. So girl students of economically backward classes should be given concession in fees and learning resources should be provided to the students either free of cost or at concessional rates.

Promotion of Research in Women Studies

Universities should promote studies regarding women. Research and Project grants should be provided for such studies and conclusions and suggestions should be communicated to the policy makers at state and national levels which will suggest new ways and measures for empowerment of women.

Information Cell or Career Guidance Cell

An information cell should be established in every Women College and a senior lecturer should be appointed as an officer in charge whose duty would be to provide and publish information regarding various courses available in the college, nearby colleges and University and also details about the courses such as fees, qualification, duration of the course and benefits of the course. The officer in charge should also give details about job availability after completion of the course, government subsidies and procedures of obtaining bank credit for self employment and should be in contact with the business organizations where placements are available.

Development of Women Entrepreneurship

Over the years women have proved that there is no job, business or profession which they cannot take charge of. In every field they are shouldering responsibilities and accepting challenges. So higher educational institution can promote women entrepreneurship through establishing specialized institutes and imparting education and training on development of entrepreneurship, reserving admission quota for women in technical and professional courses and networking with professional institutes. ⁸

Linkage with Ministries, NGO'S and others

Most of the girl students should be made aware about the various schemes of the Government for women upliftment as they are unaware of it. Various Ministries and Non – Government Organizations have been trying and helping women for empowerment. So institutions of Higher Education should be linked with such organizations that would help them for empowerment of women.

Conclusion

Women do most of the World's work but earn one tenth of the World's income and one hundredth of the World's asset. So women have to be made empowered. It is possible through self – help, confidence, being daring, knowledgeable and skillful and this can be possible only through education especially higher education as education is the pathway to reach the goal i.e., Empowerment. So, improving access to higher education and improving quality of education at the same time is the most rewarding investment a country can make. Investing in higher education of women accelerates the country's economic and social development by enhancing human capital, slowing population growth and alleviating poverty.

Notes

- ¹ Dr Pratima Taxak (2013), "Women Empowerment through Higher Education", International Indexed and Refereed Journal, Vol-iv, No-40, January 2013, pp 13.
- ² Hemlata Talesra, (1989) *Higher Education among Women*, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989,pp 12
- ³ Hemlata Talesra,(1989), opcit, pp 13
- ⁴ CPS Chauhan,(1990) Higher Education in India, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi,1990, pp 59
- ⁵ Ibid, pp 27

 $^{^6}$ Dr Nandkumar Laxman Kadam, (2014) "Women in Higher Education : Position and Prospects", Wamayug Research Journal , March 2014, pp 6 7 Ibid pp 6 8 Ibid pp 7

Married to Mortal: The Cases of Temple-Women from Epigraphs of Andhra (10th - 13th Century CE.)

By

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Introduction

In early-medieval India, the tradition of temple-building activities received wide support in texts and epigraphs alike. The factor of legitimization led the new ruling dynasties to seek the support of brahmanas by giving land grants and to construct and patronise temples which were mainly managed by the brahmanas. The new Puranic Brahmanical ideology absorbed the local cults and there was a tendency of those cults being integrated into royal cult. Likewise, the identification of the king with the deity in shrine led to the replication of the culture of court into the temple. And, lastly, the ideology of Bhakti introduced a concept of devotion and loyalty to the god and the king alike. This process resulted in the large-scale construction of temple in peninsular India. Probably, in order to popularise the Puranic sects among the people, the recitation of temple myths and legends, their portrayal in the temple sculpture and the visual performance of dance and music were resorted too.1 The temple employed the ladies for the last purpose though later their duties gradually came to be encompassed a variety of works except artistic performances in early-medieval period.

The single or multi-temple centres grew into administrative, commercial and cultural centres alike. Many of them emerged as prominent urban centres too. At the same time, temple absorbed the features of court as well as the features of local shrines. A wide range of social group was ready to patronize the abode of deities situated in urban areas, on the banks of rivers and

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located in fertile tract. With the temple building activities increasing to a large scale leading to the spurt of temple and greater scope of patronage, the number of temple-women rose also. Our idea about those temple-girls is that they were dedicated to the temple, given in marriage with the deity and not with any human being and the rest of their lives evolved around temple.

Marriage of the Daughters of Temple-Women

We generally fail to notice that they were not a homogenous category and these temple women do not share out and out similar characteristics everywhere and show regional, locality-level and temple-wise specialities. Sometimes we find such information which contradict the established conception about them. In the epigraphs of Andhra, we find several evidences about their marriage with men. This feature, seen in the temple-inscriptions of Andhra from the 11th to the 13th century CE., indicates a different approach of society towards them. We will see in what kind of society this feature can be germinated and nurtured and if it had anything to do with the condition of women in Andhra as a whole.

Several epigraphs of Andhra region have depicted the temple-girls as well as the daughters of temple-women too as married. Our first reference of marriage of a girl belonging to the family of temple-women comes from Srikakulam in Andhra. This land grant charter was issued by the Ganga king Vajrahasta in the later part of the 10th century CE.2 Apparently, it was not very different from usual copper plate charters. It records the donation of a village in Kalinga-mandala by the king. But, the speciality lies in the names of the donees here. The grant was made in favour of the family of Nanninayaka and his wife Devanava. The identity of Devanava is astonishing. She has been mentioned as coming from the ganika-vamsa belonging to the temple of god Alatesvarabhattaraka (Siva) described as Trimurti-Tryambaka-Paramesvara. The donee and his family resided in Alatavattaka, which was probably the house of Alatesvara. Now, what is significant here is that the ganika-vamsa (the family of the ganikas) was associated with the Saivite temple which undoubtedly proves that they were actually the devaganikas (ganikas attached with the deity) or the temple-women. Secondly, the generation procreated by them was recognized as a vamsa which again indicates that it was not unnatural in the state of temple-women to have progeny where their male partners were given not a very significant position. Thirdly, it was also not a rule that they could not marry. It is unclear whether Devanava actually disassociated herself from the temple after her marriage. As she resided with her husband after her marriage in the same palce where the very Saivite temple was located, it seems that

she probably did not. And, lastly, their marriage did not face any opposition from the society and was not unsupported by the king for Nanninayaka was praised in high esteem in the charter and he was given land too.

The feature can even more be exemplified by showing another epigraph of the Velandandu Chodas (AD 1000-1200). Their kingdom comprised the Tenali and Repalle talukas of Guntur. From this inscription we come to know that Sokkama (Sokkara), the daughter of Pota, lord of Dubavada, who suppressed Rambha, Urvasi and Menaka in beauty, was in the service of the god Pandisvara of Tsandavolu. Her daughter Kamidevi was the queen of Gonka II and her two sons Komma and Saranaya was in the king's service.³ So here we find the marriage of a daughter of temple-woman in the elite section of society.

Married Temple-Girls

Now we will discuss the incidents of marriage of those ladies who were temple-women themselves. In Andhra, the temple-maids were known as sani or gudi-sani. One evidence from Mukhalingam situated in Srikakulam mentions about the marital status of a sani. It is dated AD 1127 and refers to gudi-sani Nangama of the Madhukesvara temple who was the daughter of Vennama peggada and Erakamma and the wife of pasaita Komminayaka. The lady concerned was the daughter of a general or pergada and the wife of a pasaita or an official.

Simhachalam in Vishakhapatnam in Andhra also yields one evidence of this nature. In the 13th century CE., the temple-women Mandamma-sani donated lamp and cows in the temple of Narasimhasvami. She was the wife of minister Prolaya-peggada of Bharadvaja gotra of Oddadi, also situated in Vishakhapatnam. She had a son named Talla-peggada. 5 So, here the son of the sani got the designation of his father. The evidences coming from the Srikakulam-Vishakhapatnam region points to the fact that these girls hailing from the category of temple-women were not looked down upon and the son of one of these two sanis added his father's designation after his name.

The temple of Draksarama in the East Godavari district also yield similar evidences. Kamasani, wife of a palace-servant donated cattles in 1180 CE.6,in 1263, Aitasani, the daughter of a temple-*sani* and the wife of Upendradeva of Raparti donated the village Visvanathapatam to the deity⁷, and Pedapotamasani, wife of Valluri Potana Charya donated land in 1292 A.D.8

Medasani, the wife of Bhimanayaka donated cash to the Bhavanarayana temple at Bapatla in Guntur in AD. 1145 9 and Kamasani, the

wife of a minister also donated cash to the same temple in 1155 CE.¹⁰ Vantala Kamasani, the palace attendant, gave cattles to the Amaresvara temple at Amaravati in Guntur. Her husband was a servant of king.¹¹ Gokasani, wife of a general donated lands¹² and cattles¹³ to the Chodesvara temple at Mopparu in 1170 CE., Ponnavasini, wife of a Tantrapala donated cattle to the Kalahasti temple at Chittoor.¹⁴

The practice existed in the interior part of Andhra too, during the time of the Kakatiyas of Warangal in the 13th century CE. Kamisani, the wife of the Viriyala chief Erra helped the Kakatiya chief Beta I in acquiring probably Anumakonda-*visaya* as a fief from the Chalukya king. 15 So, this temple-woman even entered into the field of politics. Mallasani and Gangasani, wives of the treasurer of the queen Rudramadevi donated land to five temples constructed by them. In 1280 CE. 16 Itasani, the wife of Namireddi 17 and Erasani, the wife of the Racherla chief Beti reddy 18 donated land to the Pillalamarri temple.

One may tend to think that these cases actually indicate the association of married ladies with temple and not the marriage of temple-women. But we must remember that the 10th century inscription referring to the *ganika-vamsa* makes it clear that Devanna was a temple-girl who married later. It is apparently surprising that the persons like chief, minister, general, palace servant, attendant and the *reddy* or *sudra* category married temple-girls.

The Position of the Temple-Women in Andhra

The temple-girls of Andhra enjoyed somewhat different position than their counterparts in other areas of peninsular India. As noticed by M.Krishna Kumari, the donation/dedication of ladies to the temples is not referred to in the inscriptions of Medieval Andhradesa like that of the Karnataka region. And she has also pointed out that apart from one literary work Bhimesvara Purana, where the donation of 600 ladies by Indra to god Bhimesvara (housed at Draksarama) is mentioned, "we do not come across such kind of information either from the epigraphs or the literary sources of the medieval times relating to Andhra"19, though she has also referred to several examples of gifting of girls to temples by kings. 20 Krishna Kumari has noticed that unlike some of the Tamil records of Tamil Nadu which refer to the practice of sale of women to be trained as dancing girls of the temple, the inscriptions of Andhra do not refer to such practice. And, the regularly wedded wives dedicated themselves to the temples as dancing girls to fulfill some of their vows 21. According to A.Padma, however, most of the lady temple professionals of the temple appear to be married though certain

services of *Rangabhoga* required "elaborate and intensive training from childhood through a dance-master, for which purpose they are generally dedicated to the temple-service unmarried and young." ²² C.V.Ramachandra Rao has expressed the view that the *sanis* lived independently, married, but were employed by the temples on a part time basis. ²³ Davesh Soneji also mentioned about the fact that in the Telugu-spoken regions, most women were not dedicated to temple-deities.²⁴

Actually, the number of married women attached to temples was a small one and another interesting thing which so far has not been pointed out is that all of the temple-women who are shown as married in the epigraphs of Andhra, figure as donors to temples and not a single case is found where an employee of temple receiving land, salary or *prasadam* for a particular service assigned to her is mentioned as the wife of so and so. Does it imply that when a temple-girl married, she ceased to be an employee of the temple at all though she could continue her association with it as a *samî*? The two factors i.e., the instances of their marriage and less availability of the custom of dedication (except without specific purposes) can be connected to form an obvious conclusion: as they were not dedicated to temple, there was no obstacle in their marriage with a mortal.

This factor combined with other characteristics in the society of Andhra probably facilitated the development of this phenomenon. It is mentioned before that the temple-women in Andhra were usually mentioned as sani. This term has been derived from svamini, meaning female leader or respected lady. 25As far as the epigraphic sources are concerned, some of them mentioned their parentage, and sometimes even stated the names of their grand-fathers and brothers too. Even being employed in temple, some of them were very much part of a family. In the 14th-15th centuries, more templegirls mentioned about their parentage. This feature was not seen in contemporary Tamil Nadu. Leslie C.Orr has pointed out that "Temple women in the Chola period were not commonly identified with reference to their relatives; they appear in fact, more frequently in the identifications of other individuals." ²⁶In Tamil Nadu, the temple-ladies were "generally identified in terms of their mothers and only very occasionally in terms of their fathers."27 In Karnataka, temple courtesans identifying themselves in terms of their father only happens in the Halebid temple records of the 13th century CE. 28

In Andhra, the temple-maid communities or groups enjoyed certain independence. As shown by the 13th-15th century epigraphs from the Srikakulam-Vishakhapatnam sector, some of them were included in *sampradaya* or musical troupe. Moreover, they formed several temple-maid communities

headed by any prominent male or female personality of temple (who can be a *sani* too) and sometimes their communities came to be attached with a particular locality instead of temple. Lastly, the emergence of their guild-like organizations such as *sani-munnuruvuru* or *sani* 300 in the temples of the Krishna-Godavari sector in the 12th century CE. and the *sani-samayamu* in the Srikakulam-Vishakhapatnam region in the 15th century CE. and participation in the administration of donations and other activities by these bodies are definitive indicator of their enhanced power and prestige.

Some Characteristics of the Andhra Society

Another factor was the position the patriarchal society gave the concubines. The concubines were mentioned as *bhogasatis* in epigraph.²⁹ The expression conveys the meaning that they were faithful to their male partner. Though she was represented as an object of enjoyment, the declaration about their faithfulness is unique. Andhra was such a place where the bhogamahisis or concubines of the kings chiefs and nobles were treated with respect and evidence is not wanting that their sons attained high positions in administration. And, we have the evidence from Bhimabharam to show that a bhoga-mahisi was accorded the status of mahadevi or chief queen. This inscription dated 1201 CE. states that Erakama-mahadevi was a bhoga-mahisi of the chief Sammangi-raju who had a son by her called Sanikyaraju and who held Pottapi-nadu region in the east Godavari district as his vritti. 30So, the progeny of a concubine was not looked down upon in society. Here we notice the similarity between the position of a temple-woman and a concubine. And, in Andhra, there are evidences to show that the concubines (lanjhiya) and public women (vilasini) were employed in the temple.31

A ruler's marriage with a concubine was continued even in the 16th century CE., when we find the case of Ramabhadramba who was a courtesan and consort of Raghunatha Nayaka of the Nayaka dynasty (1600-1634 CE.) and composed Raghunathabhyudaya in Sanskrit. And, Rangajamma composed Mannarudasa Vilasamu celebrating the marriage of king Vijayaraghava Nayaka and courtesan Kantimati.³² Therefore, the practice was given an acknowledgement in the literary world of Andhra too.

The Cases of Married Temple-Girls from Other Parts of Peninsular India

The practice of maintaining concubines was prevalent in Karnataka too. The brahmanas associated with agraharas were frequently related to women

qualified by the term *nangai* (mistress or companion, generally from the courtesan class) who are described as their wives (*akamutaiyal*). The Banapur inscription (T.Narsipur taluk, Mysore district) of 12 th century C.E. records the gift of three *gadyanas* by Nangaichchhani, the *akamutaiyal* of Somavedibhattan of the Madhurantaka chaturvedimangalam *agrahara*. Malini Adiga has mentioned about the fact that the *nangai* was a *chhani* or *sani*.³³ Though she has taken the terms *nangai* and *sani* as having similar connotations, it is not improbable that the lady was a concubine, consort and a temple-woman at the same time. Does it mean that the marriage of a *sani* was not utterly unknown in Karnataka too?

From Kerala, we come up with the evidence of a married sani too. She was Kandiyar Tevadichi (devadasi) Unni Kaltram, married to Virasekhara Varma who ruled Venadu or Malavar around 1225 AD. And as the region of Kerala was not unconversant with the practice of marriage of concubines in elite section of the society as reflected in the Sivavilasamu of Damodara composed in 1400 CE. which is based upon the theme of the marriage of Ravi Varma, the yuvaraja of Perumpatappu with a damsel and courtesan,³⁴ it is not unnatural that the contemporary society of Kerala would give its consent to that. A record of 1218 from Kandiyur temple refers to Devadichchi Unni, wife of Ravi Kerala Varma, king of Venad. "She is said to have participated in the Kalasam ceremony of the renovated temple in Kandiyur. The function was gone through after proper deliberation in which Rai Kerala Varma, king of Venad, Raman Kota Varma, king of Odanad, and the devadichchi took part." 35

The practice of a temple-maid getting married existed into the Tamil region too. Leslie C. Orr has shown that several inscriptions of the Chola period speak of temple-women, tevaradiyl or tevanar makal as wives or queens (akamutaiyal or devi) indicating that "marriage and temple woman status were not incompatible." ³⁶ And another very important factor he has pointed out. It is that there is no evidence of temple woman getting married to God in the Chola period and even in the Vijaynagara rule. The first evidence he found about the marriage of temple woman to temple deity dates from the 17th century CE. And he has come to the conclusion that "If the identity of the temple woman in recent history was tied to her status as the wife of Godever auspicious because her husband was immortal-this was not the case for her counterpart of earlier times." ³⁷

So, the feature of the marriage of temple women was not exclusively present in Andhra. But, at the same time, it is also true that the number of epigraphs referring to the married temple girls is very small when compared to the total number of inscriptions (found from Andhra and also in respect

of whole peninsular India). Therefore, we may assume that though they could marry, most of them actually did not enter into married life. Probably, there was somewhat unwritten barrier- temple was such a place where the concubines, prostitutes, palace-maids and the ladies dedicated by their relatives came into contact of each other. And if a very small percentage of men showed the courage of marrying temple-women, there was a large number of people who did not accept it. What we get through our evidences therefore is perhaps an extremely partial picture of mutual love and consent which found its way in the then social environment of Andhra. In Andhra, this practice was probably related to and facilitated by some specific criteria regarding the approach towards the women belonging to the class of concubines, the association of the concubines with temples and lesser stress practice of dedication of the girls to temple. Later, the marriage among the temple service groups also contributed to some extent to this practice. But the untold and unwritten barrier which went on through centuries reached its culmination in the beginning of modern age and created the devadasi cult, the demerits of which we have been witnessing still.

Notes

- ¹ M.Krishna Kumari,(1990) Social and Cultural Life of Medieval ANDHRA, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, p. 46
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- ³ Nagendra Kumar Singh, (1997) *Divine Prostitution*, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, p. 65
- ⁴ Snigdha Tripathy, (2010) op. cit., p. 712
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 926
- ⁶ A.Padma, (2001) The socio cultural world of women in medieval Andhra (from 11th to 13th Centuries A.D.), Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, Delhi, p. 190
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 177
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 188
- ⁹ Ibid., p. 203
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 203
- ¹¹ Ibid., p. 194
- ¹² Ibid., p. 181
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 197
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 197
- ¹⁵ Nagolu Krishna Reddy, (1991) Social history of Andhra Pradesh (seventh to thirteenth century: based on inscriptions and literature), Agam Kala Prakashan, Delhi,
- p. 63-64
- ¹⁶ Ibid., p. 186

- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 183
- ¹⁸ Ibid., p. 183
- 19 M.Krishna Kumari (1990), op.cit., p. 44
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 48
- ²¹ Ibid., p. 44
- ²² A.Padma (2001), op.cit.,p. 69-70
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- ²⁷ Malini Adiga, (2013) 'Of Concubines and Devadasis: Prostitution in Early Medieval Karnataka', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress 73rd Session Mumbai 2012*, Indian History Congress Delhi, , p. 151
- ²⁸ Ibid., p. 151
- ²⁹Nagolu Krishna Reddy, op.cit., p. 76
- ³⁰ Ibid., p. 77
- ³¹ Ibid., p. 72
- ³² Davesh Soneji, (2012)op. cit.,p. 241
- ³³ Malini Adiga,(2013) op.cit., p. 147
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- ³⁵ Nagendra Kumar Singh,(1997) op. cit., P. 70
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New Styles, New Challenges, New Identities: Actresses in Bengali Theatre of the 1920s and 30s

By

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The stormy entry of the actress on the Bengali stage in 1873 continued in the early decades of the twentieth century to swirl the dust in the society of Bengal. The leading ladies of Bengali theatre through their sheer brilliance managed to etch out a niche in the world of performance. Despite varied problems, the gutsy ones persevered, while others faltered and moved away from the limelight in search of financial security. The first generation of actresses as expected had a more difficult environment in which to adapt and there was always in the minds of the critics and viewers a contradiction between their public performance and their private lives. Gradually however with the realization that the actress was there to stay greater professionalism came both on the stage and beyond it.

The actresses who came in five decades later had other challenges to face. Different patrons, different theatre ethics, different plays reflecting changed tastes, a new audience demanding more from them and the worst nightmare confronting the theatre- the challenge of the moving picture. The actress would have to confront all these challenges or perish into oblivion. In this article I have tried to highlight the continuities and change in the lives and careers of the actresses, after fifty years of public theatrical performances in Calcutta. Some of the actresses of the previous decades like Tarasundari still dominated the stage and continued to put up a spirited fight for survival against a number of talented young women lile Charushila, Probha and Konkaboti. Others like Krishnabhamini, Niharbala, Sushilabala and Angurbala who were starring in various roles in the four main theatres Star, Minerva, Mitra and Natyamandir in 1926, were gradually overshadowed by the towering personality and presence of Sisir Kumar Bhaduri and his glittering troupe of leading ladies Charushila, Prova and Konkaboti. All the various tricks that were employed by the

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different theatres in the period between the two greats of Bengali theatre Girish Ghosh and Sisir Bhaduri and the lesser known Amarendra Nath Datta were found to be illusory, being desperate attempts to retain audience presence and fight the ever-growing popularity of cinema. These three actresses who were trained and nurtured in the new style inaugurated by Sisir Bhaduri became in the 1920s and 30s the faces of the new *nati*.

New Acceptance of the Nati

The 'Nati', personified by legends Binodini, Tinkadi, Sukumari, Tarasundari had by the 1920s become entrenched in the vocabulary of the polite society. Even the "Nat" as a respectable professional became acceptable to the middle class. It is undeniable that it was the presence of the "actress" in the theatre that raised questions regarding the respectability of the profession though it was in the public theatre that acting actually became recognised as a profession. Before that in the amateur theatricals taking place in the houses of the rich and prominent families, all the actors were male and from mostly similar background. Public theatre which brought the theatre within the reach of anyone who paid the price of a ticket also made the theatre free from middle class moral constraints while bringing condemnation on it. The first four decades of public theatre in Calcutta saw the actresses being condemned as "fallen" and those associated with them as tainted. In 1926, one can see realization of a changed outlook. The editorial of Nachghar in 1926 testifies to that when it says that "today the actors and actresses (nat and natis) of the theatre are no longer objects of hate. Today the country has learnt to give them due adulation... The educated and respectable youth are no longer afraid to join the theatre because the country has extended respect to the profession. Many leading men of the city are connected to the theatre in different ways and respectable intellectuals are openly sympathetic towards the theatre. The profession of acting is no longer looked down upon and they are no longer ostracised in society." 1 In that year, Sisir Kumar Bhaduri was given a reception by the "highly educated" students of Hardinge hostel where a Citation was given to the actor by the students in the presence of a number of leading intellectuals of Calcutta, the editor of Sabuj Patra, Pramatha Chowdhury, historian Rakhaldas Bandopadhyay, Sunitikumar chattopadhyay writer Hemendra Kumar Roy and poet Narendra Dev and singer Dilip Kumar Roy.2 In his acceptance speech, instead of laments and counteraccusations, Sisir Kumar Bhaduri pointed out that there were certain logical reasons why the performers in the theatres were deserving of the respect of the society. First, since leading a life of unbridled dissipation would destroy the voice of the actor/actress they would avoid doing so. Secondly, since there is the possibility of open congregation of actors and actresses in the theatre, both sexes become so used to it that they are no longer tempted by the novelty. Thirdly, every theatre group has its own discipline which every actor has to follow making the possibility of his leading a bohemian life very slight. Finally, on the contrary the atmosphere of the theatre helps the performer to reach new heights as a human being as he has found out himself. ³ Nachghar of course hotly debated these points raised by the talented actor in the same issue but there is no doubt that Bhaduri's educated and respectable background and the fact that he exchanged his academic career for that of a professional actor-director brought in fresh life into the moribund fortunes of the theatre. A similar situation can be seen in the protest editorial in Nachghar by Hemendra Kumar Roy, against Sarala Debi who in one of her speeches held the theatre of Calcutta as responsible for the downfall of the youth because they apparently concentrate on the physical appearance of the actresses when they watch a play. Even without discussing the veracity of her claim, Nachghar expressed outrage at the irresponsibility of the statement of such a revered person.⁴

Even in these changed circumstances, there were no radical changes in the lives of the actress. All of the leading actresses of the time were brought into prominence by a famous actor/director, all of them acknowledged their patron's position and contribution in their success and all of them had to mould their life and career choices according to the wishes of the mentors. One can see that in the most famous actresses of the time- Charushila, Probha and Konkaboti.

Changing Styles of Performance: A New Excitement

The novelty of a woman performing in a female role had passed off and the falling sales att he box office showed that something new had to be introduced if the audience was to be attracted to the public theatre. The problem was that the public theatre was no longer financed by a rich educated bhadralok who patronised theatre out of love for the arts. Theatre was a business and was financed and run by businessmen some of whom were not even well versed in Bengali language, literature and culture. Also theatre had a huge investment in the actors and actresses who unlike former times were not sponsored by rich men who were their patrons without ulterior motives. Over and above the expenses of production and regular maintenance of the theatre and its staff there was also the need for profit which drove the owner who considered theatre to be a business proposition. This huge financial commitment had to be extracted from the sale of tickets for which the audience had to be attracted. The success of the Parsi theatre was attributed to showy costumes, glittering backdrop and profusion of songs and dances. Many experiments were made by the directors at this time to find a way to lure the public to the theatres. I have discussed elsewhere this clash between the theatres and their supremos⁵ and will simply indicate some of the innovations that were introduced by

Amarendranath Datta in a desperate attempt to arrest dwindling cash registers. Giving of "free passes" at every performance by all performers to private friends to ensure that the hall was full. The objective was that these people would then spread the word of their good performance. b) Experimentation with show timings and starting of the Wednesday show in addition to the weekend. He introduced a new play on Saturday and once it was successful he moved it to the Sunday matinee. In 1926, only Star had resisted the matinee show on Saturdays which was hailed by Nachghar as good because for working people matinee shows on both Saturday and Sunday was not convenient and for women an evening show was more suitable.⁶ c) Frequent change of plays. Every time there was reduction in sales of tickets he would change the plays. Within five months Classic performed 10 plays.⁷ Initially at least his strategy paid rich dividends and people always rushed for the new plays. d) Another of his innovations was in the field of advertisement. Instead of the staid and respectable language of the older theatre groups Star, Emerald, City, Minerva, Amarendranath used racy and dramatic language to arouse the interest of the audience. His handbills unlike those in use before began to use good quality 'ivory finish' paper and many coloured writing with attractive pictures of actors and actresses.8 Not only were there long descriptions in the elaborate advertisements of the first and last scenes, there were often snide comments against his rivals who he claimed used song simply as ploy to draw the audience. In one advertisement, taunts were also made to previous immature dramatisation of great dramas. The audience was invited "to come, learn how novels should be transformed into plays suitable for performance." e) Aparesh Mukhopadhyay, actor and director of the 1920s also attributes Amarendranath's success to the interactive audience. According to him, the audience who were so long forced to maintain a formal decorum at the other theatres were able to "breathe a sigh of relief" at the freedom to "pass comments, blow whistles, crack rude jokes" during the performances of Classic at Beadon Street. That was why when Classic ran packed, Star faced empty seats." 10 f) Amarendranath was able to lure away all the best stars from the various theatres to his Classic by giving them salaries eight times higher than what they received as well as providing them with bonuses of not less than a thousand rupees and other benefits. This created a sense of anticipation in the audience since unlike the other theatres where the same stars performed in all plays. In Classic they were always surprised by new faces. In fact Amarendranath himself was a refreshing change from all the aging stars of the time, Girish, Mahendralal or Amritalal. "He was", in the words of a dramatist of the time, Bhupendranath Bandyopadhyay, " good looking, pleasant behaved with a melodious voice". 11 g) He used another ploy with great success- combining a film show (bioscope) with a play. All these measures paid rich dividends and Amarendra Nath Datta's plays Alibaba and Bhramar were unique cases in Bengali theatrical history for the sheer number of audience. With Bhramar started a new era for backdrop and stage props. Amarendranath as Govindalal in the play entered the stage on horseback and near-real sets had such a deep impact on the audience that at any time of the day there were "house-full" signs at the counter. But Amarendranath Datta's strategies too played themselves out and soon he and his theatre were in dire straits.

Others too followed the trend in the hope of stunning the audience with their innovativeness. In 1927 in a small comedy *Bande Mataram*, in Star theatre, Nachghar announced that for the first time a car was brought on the stage. There was also a paan shop recreated on stage which was very realistic and interesting. There was even a bear dance performed on stage during the play.¹²

But the sense of realism and aesthetics that Sisir Bhaduri brought in performance soon swept the theatrical scene away. His background of academic excellence and his shunning a stable yet lucrative teaching career for the uncertain and "unrespectable" profession seemed like a fairy story to most. While some theatrical groups clung to their own styles and positions in their own theatres, others realised that this was a new dawn and did not lose the opportunity to join Bhaduri when he was creating his own team. All the three actresses- Charushila, Probha and Konkanti recognized the genius of Sisir Kumar and were quick to pick up and perfect the new restrained style of acting that Bhaduri taught.

In Bhaduri's style the most important aspect was the use of the same style of acting and dialogue delivery throughout the play. Other aspects were the end of use of footlights as illumination and use of lights from above and side to create natural light, the use of music appropriate to the situation and songs instead of concert music. There was also creation of realistic sets instead of painted backdrops and the entry and exit were through real doors. Not only in the case of music, it was ensured that the dance styles too were time and age appropriate. For the first time there was copying from temple architecture to choreograph dance poses. All this was unprecedented in Bengali theatre. The dresses like the sets were to be appropriate to the time and locale of the play unlike previously when the ornamentation and richness of the dresses were directly proportionate to the fame of the actor or actress no matter what the role demanded. In fact under the Madan Theatricals one of the main points of discord between the management and Bhaduri was that they insisted on everything gorgeous- the sets as well as the costumes -as the key ingredient to success of the play whereas for Bhaduri the sets needed to be as realistic as possible. Bhaduri insisted that all his troupe performers should understand their roles and dialogues and modulate their voices accordingly. He also insisted on another aspect of acting which had been totally ignored for so long. That was the training to be expressive and attentive on stage even when another was delivering his dialogue and show an appropriate reaction.¹³

The Prima Donnas of the New Age

Though a number of actresses were successful in this period in the different theatres I am concentrating on three actresses who set the Calcutta stage on fire under the guidance of Sisr Kumar Bhaduri. They were brought into his dramatic troupe, trained dedicatedly by him and as was his style Bhaduri threw artistic challenges at all the three and they successfully rose to them. Only one of them, Konkaboti was armed with academic degree but all the three actresses were able to understand and adapt to the new realistic style which was recognised all over the world bringing Bhaduri's theatre and its performers world fame. Though the three actresses started the race not all of them ended in the same way. Charushila had been a successful ballet girl of 16 when she was picked out by Ardhendu Sekhar for acting in roles where there were a lot of singing and dancing. Later Girish Ghosh noticed her and trained her in Minerva where she was a success in a number of plays in bit roles. But the dream of a lead role eluded her till in 1922 when Minerva was destroyed by fire she was forced to look for newer options. She had of course heard about the experiments that Sisir Bhaduri hoped to make in theatrical style and thought that providence guided her when she heard that Bhaduri was recruiting his troupe. Though Tarasundari the reigning queen of theatre was in the lead role Charushila was fortunate to get a smaller role in the first play Jana in 1925. She was fortunate that in this role she was Navika opposite Bhaduri who was Probir, her lover. Their love scene where her sweet voice complimented his deep tones became an instant hit.¹⁴ Charushila had to undo her training under Girish Ghosh when she performed with Bhaduri and became so finely tuned to his style that many criticised her that she had lost her originality and become his clone.¹⁵ But Charushila was proving herself in many ways. She excelled not only in singing parts but in parts of pure acting as well and Bhaduri himself praised her, saying that she had conquered her greatest drawback -her diction. She was an excellent queen Gunabati in Bisarjan (1926) as well as a perfect male Uttar, the prince of Birat in Pandaber Agyatabas. (1926) or in a comic role as Kshantamoni opposite Bhaduri in Shesh Raksha in 1927. At this time she was already sharing her stage presence with Probha who soon became the iconic leading lady of Bhaduri's plays and Charushila continued with character roles of significance.

Probha under the guidance of the established actress Tinkadi learnt singing and dancing under Lalit Kumar Goswami and joined Minerva at the age of eight where she the parts of young boys and then of sakhis, female companions of the heroine. At this juncture she was spotted by the Madans, a Parsi business family which having made a name in films, were now venturing into theatre. They roped in Sisir Bhaduri who had already made his mark in amateur theatricals and wanted him to form his own group. Under the expert training of Sisir Bhaduri, Probha was

transformed into a prima donna. A set-back occurred when Sisir Bhaduri left Madans due to irreconcilable artistic differences with the Madans while Probha was still tied to them. She tried to adapt to the new style of the new director Nirmalendu Lahiri but she longed to be with Bhaduri and be a part of his theatrical journey. Luckily Probha's dream of joining Sisir Kumar's group was fulfilled when she left Madan to rejoin Bhaduri as Sita in 1923-4. Initially in the performances Sita was played by Charushila but from the 96th and 97th performance from 20th June 192516, Probha made the transition effortlessly as Sita and won high praise for her performance and melodious singing. Nachghar claimed that the subtle calm and heartrending performing style of Probha was unprecedented in Bengali theatre..¹⁷ She also won praise for her golden voice which she skillfully used in the portrayal of different characters. It is not as if Probha had the luxury of being the unchallenged in Natyamandir. Bhaduri, a shrewd man of art knew that the audience always had to be kept surprised with novelty and therefor despite Probha's phenomenal success in Sita and Pashani, Bhaduri brought in the legendary Tarasundari out of semiretirement and launched her as Jana in Jana with Charushila in the supporting role. Even later despite the great success of Draupadi in Pandaber Agyatabash, Probha was not cast as Draupadi in Nara Narayan and first Charushila and then Konkaboti performed the role.¹⁸In early 1927 Probha's name does not feature in the cast list of Prafulla, Shodhobar Ekadoshi or Shoroshi where the lead was by Charushila. But in the later productions Probha became entrenched as the leading lady of Bhaduri productions.

From the play Digvijayi in 1929, Kankaboti entered Sisir Bhaduri's theatrical group. The entrance of Kankaboti Sahoo to the world of theatre was as dramatic as any play she ever performed in was. She was born in Muzaffarpur to an actress mother and a zamindar and honorary Magistrate father, Gadadhar Sahoo who was enlightened enough to educate his daughters and teach them music. He sent his daughters to Calcutta to pursue further studies but was liberal enough to be supportive when one daughter Chandraboti joined films and the other Kanakaboti joined theatre. Kankaboti became a graduate from Bethune College where she realized her potential in fine arts and music and decided not to continue with the post- graduation she had started. She signed a three year contract with Art Theatre that she would undergo a compulsory training for some months and only then would she be eligible for performing in a play and earn a salary. Soon posters were put up around the town that a new graduate actress Kankaboti would be performing in a new play. During this time she had come into contact with Sisir Bhaduri and was impressed by his training. Sisir started a poster war with Art theatre saying that Kankaboti Sahoo, B.A. had joined Natyamandir. Inevitably Kankaboti was subjected to a lawsuit by Probodh Chandra Guha of Art Theatre. A veritable drama occurred in court when Sisir Bhaduri appeared along with Kankaboti and the case

after many twists and turns was settled out of court. But Kankaboti was instructed to complete some more months at Art Theatre before she could join Sisir Bhaduri. At this time many of the theatre critics were unhappy at the thought of the actress playing one theatre against another and reaping undeserving benefits as well as support from an actor who was so respected in the society for having singlehandedly made acting a respectable profession. Everyone waited with baited breath as to which play and in which theatre she would make her debut in. Finally Sisir Kumar too realizing that it was necessary strategically, in order to seal their victory in the case, to bring her into the limelight as soon as possible. They waited till her term at Art theatre ended and then she could legally make her appearance. There were many unkind statements being made in the newspapers of the time questioning whether it was worth for two established prestigious theatres to fight over an actress who was yet to prove her worth though the newspapers spoke about her singing ability which had impressed even Tagore. Finally in 1929, February, Kankabati emerged from the shadows to perform as Bharatnaari in Digvijay, directed by Bhaduri. Later she became his wife.

The Changing Fortunes

The only certain thing about theatre is its uncertainty. The tremendous success and adulation that Bhaduri and his theatrical group got did not in the end prevent the decline. Many reasons have been identified by the biographers of Bhaduri for the failure of Natyamandir, majority of them blaming the financial ineptitude of Bhaduri and the inhuman demands for profit of the business like owners, the Madans, of Cornwallis theatre. But one biographer of the actresses has raised two other points which need to be probed further- one is the charge of favouritism which allowed the favoured ones to misbehave with the others in the theatrical group and the other was the corruption of the self- seeking individuals who had gained prominence in the troupe. 19 Financial distress and the refusal of Madans to renew the lease of Cornwallis theatre led to Natyamandir theatrical group being without a theatre. This meant there was no hope of regular payment of salaries of the performers and others associated with the theatre. In this gloomy situation a ray of hope appeared with an invitation by an American impresario to Bhaduri to bring a troupe to the US for performance. It was at this time cracks appeared within the trio who were the leading ladies of the group. Hardly had the exultation of the announcement of the invitation to perform at the New York died out came the startling revelation in Advance that the actress Charushila had charged Sisir Bhaduri for non-payment of dues. On 26th August 1930, a report on Theatrical artist in trouble- Bhaduri not to go to America?, said that "at the Calcutta high Court, before Mr. Justice Costello, Mr. Sudhir Roy, made an application on behalf of the plaintiff Srimati Charusila Dassi, an actress, for issue of a writ of arrest against the defendant, Sisir Kumar Bhaduri, a well known actor and for an injunction restraining him from leaving the jurisdiction of the court. It was alleged that Rs.2188-9-0 was due to her from the defendant for arrears of salary which the defendant failed to pay. She also claimed Rs 157-8-0 as damages for wrongful dismissal." The case not being resolved the court ordered the defendant, Sisir Kumar not to leave the city before the next hearing which was the scheduled to be held the week after that. This was specified because it was established in court that he was about to leave for America in mid September to stage several Bengali plays.²⁰ On 29th August, a report was made that Judge "Panckridge had disposed of the rule issued on behalf of Charusila Dassi calling upon Sj. S.K.Bhaduri to show cause why an injunction should not be issued restraining him from proceeding to America." S.C.Roy on behalf of the applicant said that she had not prayed for a warrant but wanted that the defendant should furnish security before leaving India so that the execution of the decree might not be delayed. Mr. S.M. Bose for Sj. Bhaduri submitted that "there were no circumstances showing that his object was to delay the execution of the decree. He was leaving for America as he had got an offer... He was going there with his party and was expected to come back after 2 or 3 months. Counsel submitted there was something behind the application." The ulterior motive being jealousy because though some actresses were chosen to go to America with Bhaduri, Charu was not one of them. "His Lordship directed the defendant Bhaduri to furnish security of Rs. 2000 to the applicant to the satisfaction of the Registrar. If he failed to furnish the security, warrant might be issued against him and the interim injunction would continue till the security was furnished." 21 Advance does not clarify whether Sisir Kumar actually paid the security but the fact that he sailed for America on 8th Sept makes one presume he paid Charushila the security. Thus Sisir Bhaduri who in Kankaboti's case was able to turn the case around was not quite successful in this case. However he did try to outwit Charushila when he filed a case against her and the trustee of Minerva Upendranath Mitra in the High Court for breach of contract. He claimed that she had joined Minerva while still bound by contract to Natyamandir. He therefore demanded Rs 15,000 from them as compensation and that the court declare and injunction on Charushila so that she would not be able to perform in Minerva till her contract period was over. Charushila in retaliation presented a list of the creditors to whom Sisir Bhaduri owed money and claimed that once Natyamandir closed down she was not bound by any contract. She also alleged that it was to escape his financial burden that Sisir Bhaduri was escaping to America.²² Charushila joined Ahindra Chowdhury at Minerva and continued performing successfully there but soon left due to extreme rowdiness of the audience. Her last performances were at Natya Niketan.

Probha and Konkaboti on the other hand remained loyal to Bhaduri though of course one must, to be fair to Charushila, remember that both ladies had close family ties to Bhaduri and were probably the alleged 'favourites' who travelled with him to America in the hope of making their fortune there. It is another matter that it was a disastrous campaign and probably the lack of acumen which had sunk the troupe into financial distress also plagued them in America, due to Bhaduri's injudicious handling of the American invitation. Konkaboti as Bhaduri's life partner was true to her vows till the end and tried in the absence of Charushila to perform in all her roles creditably. Probha was married to Bhaduri's brother Tara Kumar Bhaduri and along with Konkaboti performed in all the plays in Nabanatyamandir established by Bhaduri in Star theatre after their return from America.

The new style of realism that Bhaduri introduced and which was faithfully adopted by the actresses he trained, stood in good stead in their performance in the films. As a critic pointed out Prafulla was a greater success in the cinematic portrayal than as a play because realism is better expressed in films.²³ Probha and Konkaboti both performed in cinema in Sisir Bhaduri productions and excelled in that medium as well. Neither however were ever able to move out of Bhaduri's shadow and despite Probha's added literary skills in writing songs²⁴ published in leading Bengali magazines of the time, neither achieved immortality or even merited discussion except in a discussion on Bhaduri and his training excellence. Even there, their presence appears only incidentally. In the popular modern play Nishango Samrat on the life of Sisir Bhaduri based on a book by Sunil Gangopadhyay, Probha is present but Konkaboti does not even exist. Konkaboti's presence is minimal in the biographical work Natyacharya Sisir Kumar by Sankar Bhattacharya where she is mentioned once to say that Bhaduri's tragedy was the loss of his first wife and Konkaboti was never able to bring order to his undisciplined life. She is said to have expressed regret at her own death bed that she was unable to control his drinking.²⁵ At the end of the chapter the writer acknowledges that Bhaduri neglected Konkaboti and never truly appreciated her worth.²⁶ Probha's songs were quite well received in the journals expressing her thoughts and feelings in the popular tunes of the time, some by Tagore and some by Nazrul. But even she faced doubt and accusations of plagiarism which she refuted brilliantly in an essay called Rahasyer Chabi.²⁷ It is tragic that all the three actresses without whose brilliant performances not a single play would have been memorable never got their due from posterity and is largely forgotten today.

Notes

¹Natya Jagat, *Nachghar*, 3rd year, 34th samkhya, 28th Magh 1333, (1926) ² ibid

- ³ Natya Jagat, *Nachghar*, 3rd year, 35th samkhya, 6th Phalgun, 1333,(1926)
- ⁴ Natya Jagat, *Nachgha*r, 3rd year, 42nd Samkhya, 25th Chaitra, 1333,(1926)
- ⁵ See Sarvani Gooptu,(2015) The Actress in the public theatre of Calcutta, Primus Books, New Delhi
- ⁶ Nachghar, 3rd year, 4th samkhya ,1333 BS (1926)
- ⁷ Ramapati Datta,(2004) Rangalaye Amarendranath, edited by Debjit Bandopadhyay, Dey's Publishing, Calcutta, p. 152
- ⁸ Aparesh Chandra Mukhopadhyay,(1972) Rangalaye Trish Bochhor, Granthan Publications, Calcutta, pp.56-57
- ⁹ Advertisement handbill of adaptation of *Kopaal Kundala* by Girish Ghosh in Classic with Amarendranath Dutta as manager, quoted by Ghosh, Ajit Kumar Ghosh,(1991) *Natyatatva O Natyamancha*, Dey's Pub.,Calcutta, 1991, pp. 77-78
- ¹⁰ Aparesh Chandra Mukhopdhaya (1972), opcit, pp 56-57.
- ¹¹ quoted in Ramapati Datta,(2004) opcit, p.158
- ¹² Natya Jagat, *Nachghar*, 3rd year, 22nd samkhya, 3rd agrahayan, 1333 (1926)
- ¹³ Sankar Bhattacharya(1970), Natyacharya Sisir Kumar, D.M.Library, Kolkata, p. 114
- ¹⁴ Sisir, 23rd Samkhya, Jaistha, 1332 (1925)
- 15 ibid
- ¹⁶ Nachghar, Vol 2, 16th samkhya, 6th Asad, 1332 (1925)
- ¹⁷ Nachghar, Vol 2, 10th samkhya, 26th Asad, 1332 (1925)
- ¹⁸ Sankar Bhattacharya(1970) opcit, p. 134
- ¹⁹ Amit Maitra, (2004), Rangalaye Banganati, Ananda Publishers, Kolkata, p. 694
- ²⁰ Advance, Tuesday, August 26th 1930
- ²¹ Advance, Friday August 29th 1930
- ²² Ramen Gupta,(1970) Green room theke court room, Calcutta, D.M.Library, pp.103-109
- ²³ Gurudas Chattopadhyay, Theatre Achal hoy keno, *Nachghar*, 3rd year, 21st samkhya, 26th Kartick 1333 (1926)
- ²⁴ Published regularly in journals like *Nachghar* and later published as a book *Gitayan* by Haridas Chattopadhyay and sons in 1931.
- ²⁵ Shankar Bhattacharya (1970), opcit, p. 223
- ²⁶ Ibid p. 227
- ²⁷ Probha Devi, Rahasyer Chabi, Nachghar, Vol 5, 43rd Samkhya, 29th Chaitra, 1335 (1928)

Social History of Science and Medicine in South Asia and Beyond

Medical Initiatives of Serampore Mission and Serampore Mission Hospital, 1800-1840

By

Amrita Mondal*

Healing the indigenous souls was a part of missionary activities in India from the eighteenth century onwards. Started with philanthropic zeal, medical activities of missionaries later became a tool to spread 'God's word' among the indigenous people. While healing people, missionaries read Bible to the patients so they could understand that their salvation lay in the acceptance of Christianity. Initially, in this process they faced less resistance from indigenous people. Following this trend Serampore missionaries also started healing practices before the establishment of Serampore mission in 1800 and finally established Serampore Hospital in 1836. Besides, these missionaries also used their knowledge to make the indigenous souls conscious and rational about health issues.

Before Serampore mission, few missionaries in southern India had already started to heal people from the sixteenth century onwards. Among them, few missionaries also acknowledged the indigenous medical knowledge. For instance, in sixteenth and seventeenth century, Jesuits of Goa used both indigenous herbs and western medicines at the Goa Royal Hospital to heal the indigenous and Portuguese patients. Moreover, the Jesuits also cultivated these herbs within the hospital premises. Timothy D. Walker identified this interaction between western and indigenous medical knowledge as a process of 'Hybridization' of colonial medical sphere.¹

The founder of the Serampore mission, William Carey, took initiatives to heal the people much before the establishment of the Serampore mission in 1800. William Carey came to India in 1793, as a part of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) and John Thomas, a medical evangelist and the first medical missionary in India, accompanied him. Unlike John Thomas, who already visited India before as a Company's medical surgeon, this was Carey's first visit to India.

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Due to the British East India Company's restriction on missionary activities and financial crisis forced Carey and Thomas to leave Kolkata and moved to Mudnabati. Carey took a job in an indigo factory at Mudnabati. There they started missionary and philanthropic works. Besides, Thomas started to heal local people by distributing medicines. While reporting this incident to the BMS, Care wrote that Thomas saved many lives; however, their stock of medicine was insufficient. Thus, they needed at least half a hundred pounds of Jesuit's- Bark³. Further, Carey also mentioned that local people respect them.⁴

After the closing of Indigo factory in 1799, Carey moved to Serampore, a Danish Settlement near Kolkata and established Serampore Mission with the help of William Ward and J. C. Marshman. Along with preaching these missionaries also continued with healing practices. During that time lepers were identified as cursed and people burnt them.⁵ Thus, Serampore missionaries raised voice against this vicious practice. To save the lepers, Carey established a Leprosy hospital in 1819 at Kolkata.

After John Thomas, legacy of healing indigenous peoplewas also continued by Carey's son, Felix Carey. He was influenced by Dr. Taylor, a missionary doctor at Serampore⁶ and obtained medical training from Calcutta Hospital. While visiting Rangoon in 1907, Felix introduced the *vaccine inoculation*. Besides, he wrote an encyclopedia and with the help of Sanskrit words he translated an English anatomy book into Bengali, named *Vidya-Harabali*. It was the first Bengali anatomy book and published in two volumes. First volume described different internal parts and anatomy of human body as well as the anatomy of some animals like cow and dog. Second part discussed on chemistry, medicine and surgery.⁹

Moreover, the Serampore mission also used printing technology to spread health related awareness among the people.1818 onwards Serampore Mission started two newspapers, *Samachar-Darpan* and *Friend of India* and published several articles on health issues. Besides, they also informed people about the illicit practices of quake doctors. On 25th December, 1819, *Samachar-Darpan* published news of a quake Brahmin doctor of 'Mokam Noliya' village who tried to make people fool of curing them by shouting the name of 'God Hari'. However, the news failed to gain confidence people from going to that Brahman.¹⁰

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Cholera and Small Pox took the shape of pandemic in Bengal. The two newspapers gave a wide coverage to this news. On 27th March 1819, *Samachar-Darpan*had notified the spread of Small Pox in Kolkata and tried to convince people for the anti-pox vaccination while giving reference from a Hindu medical book which justified the necessity of the anti-pox vaccination. Later, *Samachar-Darpan*publishedupdated news of the spread of Choleraalong withthe statistics of morality rate in Kolkata due to cholera.¹¹

Besides, through the newspaper the Serampore mission arise also gave suggestion to the Company Government to establish a medical college and trained 'native doctors' in western medicine so they could to assist the western doctors to heal cholera patients. ¹²After the establishment of Serampore College in 1818, Carey also tried to introduce medical course and appointed a medical professor at the college, ¹³but his initiative failed. Another report of *Samachar-Durpan*, published on 18th March, 1820, had notified the publication of a book by Dr. Jemison on healing Cholera. While giving a good review *Samachar-Durpan*hoped that this book's information would also helpful in the prevention of Cholera. These cholera reports on *Samachar-Durpan*have highlighted facts like, reorganization of indigenous medical knowledge by the Serampore missionaries. Secondly, the Serampore mission arises kept informing people about the outbreak of Cholera and tried convinced the Company Government to train native doctors in western medicine.

In 1836 Serampore Missionaries founded Serampore Hospital with the help of several renowned people of Serampore and its vicinity. The initiative was taken by Dr. Marshman. Later a working committee was set up for the hospital. Dr. Voigt, a famous doctor of Serampore, was appointed as hospital's medical officer. ¹⁴The hospital provided both indoor and outdoor facilities which gradually improved and required medicines were supplied by the British Government. ¹⁵ The first report of the Serampore hospital mentioned that missionaries planned to establish a female ward and collected four thousand one hundred and fifty three rupees donation for that. Further, the hospital authority invested five hundred rupees on the purchase of medicine and medical instruments. Poor in habitants of Serampore and British territory came to this hospital. ¹⁶

The hospital report of 1839 has showed that the hospital provided medicine and check-up facilities for different diseases like Syphilis, Rheumatism, Chronic Diarrhoea, Ulcers, Fevers, Abscesses, Ophthalmic, Dysentery and Cholera. Besides, it also mentioned that from 1836 to 1839, at least three thousand three hundred eighty people had benefited by the medical facility of Serampore mission hospital.¹⁷ Among them almost two thousand one hundred fifty nine patients had come from the British territory. Table no 1 is showing the names of the diseases along with the number of patients attended by Serampore hospital, between 1st June, 1836, to the end of 1838. Besides, the table also shows the success rate of the hospital's treatment.

Table no. 1

| Dispensed medic | ines to 1084 out | door patients, of whom 721were from the British | | | |
|--|------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Territory. ¹⁸ | | | | | |
| Medical and surgical class treated in Serampore Hospital from its opening on the 1st June, | | | | | |
| 1836, to the end of 1838. ¹⁹ | | | | | |
| | | 114 (4 partially cured.) | | | |
| Syphilis | | 109 | | | |
| | | 89 (died 4. 1 ran away before he was completely | | | |
| cured.) | | | | | |
| Chronic Diarrhoe | a | . 72 (died 18, of whom several a few hours after | | | |
| Their reception, I | | | | | |
| | | 68 (died 1. One expelled for theft.) | | | |
| | | 32 (3 but partially cured, because they would stay no | | | |
| longer.) | | · 1 | | | |
| Wounds | | 27. | | | |
| Ophthalmia | | . 25 (3 had no patience to stay till they were cured.) | | | |
| | | . 19 (died 9, all having suffered from a | | | |
| complication of di | | , , | | | |
| Fractures | , | 19 | | | |
| Cholera | | 18 (died 2.) | | | |
| Spleen | | 18 (died 2.) | | | |
| Dysentery | | 13 (Died 2.) | | | |
| Bruises | | 12 | | | |
| Blennorrhoea | | 8 | | | |
| Sool | | 7 | | | |
| Cotaneous Diseas | es | 7 | | | |
| Sprains | | 4 | | | |
| Ĥemorrhage | | . 3 | | | |
| Chronic Hepatitis | S | 3 (1 not cured.) | | | |
| Oceana nasal | | 3 | | | |
| Cough | | | | | |
| Palsy | | . 3 (1 not cured, 1 considerably relieved.) | | | |
| Dislocations | | . 3 | | | |
| Cholerine | | . 2. | | | |
| Consumption | | . 2 | | | |
| Colic | | | | | |
| Patrid Sore Throa | t | 2 (died 1) | | | |
| Hydrocele | | 2 | | | |
| Difficult parturition | on | . 2 (died 1) | | | |
| | | 1 (much relieved) | | | |
| Apopiexy | | . 1 (died.) | | | |
| Abortion | | . 1 | | | |

| | 4 |
|------------------|---|
| Ambustion | 1 |
| Pleuritis | 1 |
| Locked jaw | 1 |
| White Swelling | 1 |
| Hygroma | 1 |
| Seirrhus | 1 |
| Cancer mammae | 1 (not cured) |
| Strangury | 1 |
| Rupture | 1 |
| Mumps | 1 |
| Contracture | 1 |
| Nervous debility | 1 |
| Imanlly | 1 |
| | |
| Admitted in all | 707 (of whom 440 from the Britain territory.) |
| Discharged | 646 |
| Died | 43 |
| | 689 |
| | |
| Remaining | 18 |

Health Care and Indigenous Response

While healing the indigenous people, Serampore Missionaries mostly received positive responses from the indigenous people, however, these were heterogeneous in nature. Carey's writing shows that initially the Serampore Missionaries received good indigenous response to their medical initiatives as local people came to John Thomas for treatment and accepted medicines from him.²⁰

Besides, in spite of using print technology, the Serampore missionaries became partially successful to make people aware of health related issues and the deceitful practices of quake doctors because of wide spread illiteracy. Although, a statistic of *Friend of India* shows that good numbers of people came to the Serampore Mission Hospital, but the hospital authority was disappointed by the indigenous responses. The Hospital report mentioned that due to the apathy of the sick persons to leave their home and suspicion about the western medical treatment, most of the indigenous patients kept them away from the hospital. Despite this fact, few people came to the Serampore Hospital from Serampore and neighborhood. The hospital's reports mentioned that most of the patients became cured. Sick persons were taken care of by the hospital authority with proper diet, check-up facilities and medicine. However, still patients ran away from the hospital.

Contrary to this response of the mass, the opulent and educated Bengalis were cooperative with the Serampore mission's initiatives. While establishing the

leprosy hospital and Serampore mission hospital, the Serampore missionaries received financial help from these opulent people. Babu Raghuram Goswami, an inhabitant of Serampore, lent his house to the hospital for the use of two years. Renowned opulent, like Dwarkanath Tagore, Baboo Raja Krishna Deb, had donated to the Serampore hospital fund. The donor list of 1st January, 1838 of Serampore Hospital, published in *Friend of India* on 7th February, 1838, shows fifteen Indians donators. Another list of donations, published on 7th February, 1839 in *Friend of India*, had showed names of eight indigenous people of Hooghly and Serampore. Thus, it can be said that local people became gradually interested in the hospital's activities and donated a certain amount of money according to capability. The Following list shows the donators along with a donation to the hospital fund which published on 7th February, 1839.

Table No: 3

| Contributions to the Saramagra Native Hamital from | Lanua | m 1020 | to Innuary |
|---|----------|-------------|------------|
| Contributions to the Serampore Native Hospital from 1839. ²⁵ | i Januai | ry 1636, | to January |
| 1039.24 | | Co.'s | Rs As. P. |
| Ma I Dalan | | Co. s 10 | 00 As. P. |
| Mr. J. Baker | | - 0 | |
| W. H. Belli, Esq. Hooghly, | | 25 | 00 |
| BissumberDutto, | | 12 | 00 |
| H. Bonnevie, Esq, Rungpore | | | 80 |
| Cossier, Esq, Hooghly, | | 10 | 00 |
| Mrs.Dent, | | 12 | 00 |
| Mr.Dunbar, | | | 00 |
| F. E. Elberling, Esq | | 75 | 00 |
| Through Mr, Elberling | | 15 | 00 |
| A Friend through J. Marshman, Esq | | 30 | 00 |
| A Friend through J. Marshman, Esq | | 50 | 00 |
| N. J. Gantzer, | | 12 | 00 |
| Mrs.Geisler, | | 100 | 00 |
| GourMohunGossain | | 50 | 00 |
| Government of Serampore, | | 533 | 54 |
| HurronathChatterjee, Hooghly | | 2 | 00 |
| JoykrishnoMukhopadya, Hooghly | | | 00 |
| IshenchunderBundopadya, Hooghly, | | | 00 |
| JuggomohunDutt, | | 12 | 00 |
| Judmatt Sing, | | 3 | 04 |
| Mrs.Dr.Marshman, | | 100 | 00 |
| Modoo Sudden Shah | | 4 | 00 |
| C. Ochterlony, Esq., Hooghly, | | | 00 |
| PranKistoRoy, | | 43 | 00 |

| Rev. Mr.Pickance | | 10 | 00 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|----|
| RadhamadubDutto | | 3 | 00 |
| The Hon. Col. J. Rebling | | 31 | 14 |
| E. Samuells, Esq., Hooghly, | | 32 | 00 |
| Serampore Ladies Benevolent Society | | . 300 | 00 |
| SebllukSepoy | | 5 | 69 |
| SebikKhodabux | | 8 | 06 |
| W. Stopford, Esq , | | 18 | 00 |
| Mr. G. Surita, | | 12 | 00 |
| Suamasundery Deby | | 24 | 00 |
| Mrs. Turner, | | 8 | 00 |
| | | | |
| | Total | 1594 | 85 |

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be said that though the Serampore missionaries started the process of healing indigenous people as a part of their missionary work, but slowly they tried to make people conscious about health issues. In this process, they took the help of print media and vernacular language. As a result, perceptions of a certain group of people about different diseases had changed. Further, the missionaries tried to convince the colonial government about the necessity of providing training to native doctors. Besides, they contributed in the development of medical knowledge in India by translating an English anatomy book into vernacular. Establishment of Serampore hospital provided medical facility to a number of people at suburb; thus, his initiative of missionaries needs special concern. Several social restrictions stopped patients to come to the hospital; therefore, Serampore missionaries were being unable to stop people from visiting quake doctors. Despite this fact, several opulent natives tried to help Serampore missionaries financially in medical initiatives. However, it needs to investigate the responses of the indigenous society more critically along with the perception of Serampore missionaries about Ayurveda.

Notes

¹Timothy D. Walker, (2011) 'Supplying Simples for the Royal Hospital: An Indo-Portuguese Medicinal Garden in Goa (1520-1830)' in Laura Jarnagined. (2011) (ed.) *The Making of the Luso-Asian World: Intricacies of Engagement*, The Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, p. 23.

² George Smith (1909) Life of William Carey, Shoemaker and Missionary, J. M. Dent & Co., London and E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, p. 43.

³Jesuit'sBark: Bark of a tree used to make quinine.

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<sup>4</sup> Letter from Carey to Society, Hooghly River, 10 January 1799,inTerry G. Carter ed. (2000) (ed.) The Journal and Selected letters of William Carey, Smyth and Helwys Publishing, USA, p. 189. <sup>5</sup> Smith, p. 214.
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⁶ChittabrataPalit (2006) Scientific Bengal, Kalpaz Publication, Delhi, p. 48.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸Letter from Carey to Fuller, 20 April 1808 in Terry G. Carter, op.cit.

⁹Carey, FelixCarey (1820) Vidya-Harabali, Vol. I, Serampore Mission Press, 1820, p. 3.

¹⁰Samachar-Darpan, 25 December 1819.

¹¹Ibid, 25 April 1820.

¹²Ibid., 13 June 1818.

¹³The Christian Observer, Vol.23, 1824, p. 656.

¹⁴John Clark Marshman (1859) *The Life and Time of Carey, Marshman and Ward*, Vol.2, Longman Brown, Green, Longmans & Roberts, London, p. 495.

¹⁵"Serampore Hospital", Friend of India, 8 February 1837, p.74.

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¹⁷ "Serampore Hospital Report", Friend of India, 7February 1839, p. 87.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 88.

 $^{19}Ibid.$

²⁰Letter from Carey to Society, Hooghly River, 10 January 1799 in Terry G. Carter, op. cit.

²¹Samachar-Darpan, 25 December 1819.

²²"Serampore Hospital Report", Friend of India, 7 February 1839, p. 87.

 $^{23}Ibid.$

²⁴Samachar-Darpan, 5 May 1836.

²⁵"Serampore Hospital Report", Friend of India, 7 February 1839, p. 87.

Changing Perspective of the Society in 19th Century Bengal with the Coming of Western Medical Science – Contribution of Calcutta Medical College

By

Sutapa Mukhopadhyay*

In spite of its severe exploitative, aggressive and destructive character the colonial rule in India became, perhaps unknowingly, a tool in the hands of history in helping a stagnant medieval society groaning under inhuman social customs and institutions to come out in the light of modernism Rationalism, liberalism and the spirit of enquiry, the fruits of rising capitalism in England threw a flood of light on the medieval Indian society and created a great upsurge with the revivifying touch of the new learning and the progressive spirit of the western education came the great awakening in 19th Century Bengal. From the same intellectual watershed two divergent stream descended – an essential spur to progress with the western education as vehicle and simultaneously a passionate yearning to conserve the best in our cultural heritage & to base our social structure on the foundation of a spirit essentially Indian. On the whole the new mood was not frustrating but stimulating.

In India the science of medicine however was remarkably well developed since the ancient period. Western science was indebted in many respects to the oriental knowledge for its origin of many theories. Inspite of the scientific developments the activities of the pre-British days were not as significant as in Europe. In 18th century, education in India was mostly confined within the periphery of the upper castes and was kept limited within the orthodox system. A few centers of learning under the temporal or

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royal patronage kept them satiated in educational activities based on classical literature, logic, religion & philosophy. In colonial Bengal, Ram Mohan Roy can be regarded as the founder of modern scientific education. As early as in 1823 he openly emphasized that the western science were the only solutions for the countries material development. He insisted on spending the proposed fund of Rs. 1 lakh granted in the charter Act of 1815 on the development of scientific education.

If we focus our study of science in medicine we can notice that the method of treatment in colonial Bengal was Abadhautika (esoteric methods of treatment) which was absolutely depended on the individual capacities of the Kaviraj. The famous book of Ambikacharan Gupta named Chikitsakalpalatika contained five methods of treatment — Abadhautika, Totka or quackery, Baidya or Ayurvedic, Hakimi, Homeopathy. The contemporary evidence regarding the physicians system of cure is extremely scanty. Rajnarayan Basu in his Atmacharit tells us that to bring down temperature in fever the Kaviraj started with a purgative of a very archaic type. Indigenous system of medicine did not work with several virulent diseases like cholera, T.B. etc. The cholera patient was denied of water. Small-pox known as basanta was left alone by the Kaviraj to the mercy of the much dreaded goddess Sitala. The rate of mortality increased with the growth of habitation in Calcutta.

Humid atmosphere and marshy vegetation in and around Calcutta produced an unhealthy atmosphere. The congested buildings without any proper opening and lack of facilities for removing dirts gave birth to contagious diseases and ultimately to epidemic. Initially East India Company showed no interest in facilitating black town with medicine. Gradually it was perceived that the disease that broke in the native quarters could create problem in white town also. Foundation of the P.G. Hospital was meant only for white people. But people like John Owen and Dr. Martin felt the need for establishing a native hospital. The efforts of the individual beneficiaries ultimately took shape in the foundation of Mayo Hospital. The first maternity hospital known as the Calcutta Lying in Hospital was set up in 12 June, 1814. Still a fully equipped hospital for the native was a far cry.

With the coming of Lord William Bentick as Governor General in 1828, an ideology of governance with liberalism gained ground. With this utilitarian outlook, a committee was set up to look into matter of founding a native hospital. NMI was abolished & medical classes at the Sanskrit College and the Madrasa were discontinued. With the Government order of 20 Feb 1835, the Calcutta Medical College was established. From the very beginning CMC was patronized by the Calcutta elites. The limited number of company

surgeon & private practitioners could not cope with the demand of treatment for the people. Along with the foundation of hospitals need for training local people with western medicine was felt. Before the foundation of medical college, medical education was provided in the first native medical institution opened in Calcutta in 1824; with the enthusiasm of Bengal intelligentsia institutionalized medical education was there before the foundation of the CMC. At the end of 1831, a small hospital was established in Calcutta for the treatment of patients as well as for imparting clinical instructions to the students of the Native Medical Institution. Ramkamal Sen took a very keen interest in the development of medical education from the very beginning. However the establishment of CMC was a major landmark in the development of medical education. In the first year sixty seven students were admitted there. Among them all were Hindus mostly of upper castes except one Christian. The purpose of educating native students was to assist the white surgeons in Calcutta & the military and civil stations of the hinterland. It was a public health policy in name but in practice never meant for Indian public in general. Native doctors were needed for mass communication & controlling the epidemics. The enclaved nature of health service limited its growth and potential from the very beginning. Despite the limitation certain milestones can be noticed in the history of the CMC. The most momentous of them happened in 28 Oct. 1836 when Prof. Goodeve led first team of Indian apprentices to the dissection of the dead bodies. This event was described by Bethune as epoch - making event. Second important matter was that Dwarkanath Tagore in the year 1844 instituted scholarships of Rs. 2,000 per year for three students. Dwarkanath Bose, Bhola Nath Sen, Gopal Chunder Seal and Surjee Coomar Chukerbutty were sent to England with the financial help of Dwarkanath Tagore, Prof. Goodeve & partly of the Government. Three of them passed the MRCS in 1846 & Surjee Coomar became the first Indian to pass the examination for the Indian medical service.

Due to the presence of eminent teachers in the CMC, scientific projects were undertaken on a large scale. A regular experimentation was undertaken by the research scientists of CMC which proved to be fruitful. – The case of malaria can be cited. Famous scientist Ronald Ross received help from scholars and discovered germs of malaria. Among earlier scientists of cholera, names of N.C. Macnamara & D.P. Cunningham should be mentioned. Mcleod Professor of surgery discovered the disease of epidemic dropsy (beriberi). Kedarnath Das was the first Indian doctor who started specialized practice in midwifery. Upendranath Brahmachari, explorer of Kalajar, was famous in an initial exponent in medical research. In 1850,

Medical College had on its roles – 80 Hindus and 9 muslim students. Though only 8 Students became successful, the general progress of scientific research went on an unhindered way. Ist M.D. of CMC was Chandra Kumar Dey, 1st caesarian section took place as early as 1856.

The Indian colonial state became involved in providing medical care for its subjects from the early nineteenth century. The administrative involvement in improving access to western medical care for the subject population began with the decision to provide funding for a network of dispensaries. This medical care for the Indian population represented 'public' medical care. From the early modern period, the philosophy of mercantilism stressed the importance of the population of a state to its prosperity. To ensure a productive labour force and plentiful military conscripts, absolutist states sought to boost population numbers. The term medical police and state medicine and the foundation of health administrations over the 18th and 19th century in Europe was related with such concerns. Government regulation of the health of the population from the 18th century has been characterized as 'biopolitics' by Foucault. For Foucault, biopolitics involved both the disciplining of individual bodies as a machine but also the regulation of the health of the state's population by focusing on the preservation upkeep, and conservation of labour force.² In 19th century Britain, private practitioners provided medical care for those who could afford to pay, medical care provided in voluntary hospitals stressed on the treatment of curable diseases to allow patients to return to work. The British medical system put emphasis on maintaining the labouring power of the poor. This has been characterized by Michel Foucault as labour force medicine'. Foucault narrated this system as the representation of making the poor more fit for labour and less dangerous to the wealthy classes. In 19th century Britain medical care was provided through private initiative and considerable opposition of state funding was there. Private philanthropic effort was considered the proper motor for the maintenance of voluntary hospitals in 19th century Britain. But in India the idea of British tutelage of Indian subjects guided the medical policy of the ruler in 19th century. The theoretical justification for state initiative was provided by the ideas of liberal philosophers like John Mill. It acted as the stimulus to generate a public associational culture in Indian society. During the 30s of the 19th century discussion on the improvement of sanitary states of Calcutta was going on. The introduction of hospitals & the government involvement with these institutions marked them as public institution medical care provided by the British administration was an expression of imperial benevolence. This justified the colonial domination with the idea of superior

western practices to the colonised. To underline the backwardness of colonial subjects and to discipline them, science & medicine became an important tool in the hands of the British imperial government which made the colonial rule appear beneficial.

Gender played a very important role in the area of medical practice in India. James Mill constructed the Indian woman as a victim of her uncivilized society. Rescuing Indian woman from their plight continued to be seen as a necessary precondition for modernizing India and a tool for legitimizing colonial rule. Providing opportunities for higher medical education for Indian women was felt by the indigenous society. The practice of purdah prevented the entry of male medical men for the treatment of female population. Middle class British women in support of the helpless Indian women stood beside the Dufferin Fund in 1885 which was meant to provide care to the suffering Indian females patients. Prior to that a large female hospital was constructed in the grounds of the Calcutta medical college by public subscription gradually the number of patients increased over the year. Still in comparison to the number of male patients the ratio of admission of female patients was low. A clear thought was given regarding the aversion of female patients to be treated by the male physician. The need for providing higher medical education to the women was felt. Madras took the leading role in introducing medical education for women. In 1874, Mary Scharlieb, who became the Gynecologist, persuaded authorities to allow women students' entry in the Madras Medical College. In Bengal need for women physician was felt. Initially the reformers supported female education which would make them a good wife & good mother. Calcutta elite's supported the spread to western science from the belief that it was an important modern thing force. Their support for female education was partly prompted by an urge to prove the Indian society as civilized. Mid 19th century saw the progress of women education in Bengal. Radical Brahmos wanted to provide opportunity for women in the field of education. Kadambini Basu and Chandramukhi Basu became the first recipients of B.A. degree in 1882 from Bethune College. Mid 19th century also saw the urge of the Brahmo reformers to open the door of Medical College to the female members of the family. In 1875, Neel Kamal Mitra submitted a petition seeking admission for her granddaughter at the Calcutta Medical College. But it did not happen. The newspaper report stressed on the need for women medics for women patients. Colonial administration in the mid 19th century was not totally against the admission of women to the Calcutta Medical College. But there was ambivalence both in Indian society & imperial governments' policy. In 1882, with the approach of Abala Das to

Director of Public Insitruction in Bengal to get admission at CMC was a landmark in the history of Medical College. But the aversion of the Council of the Medical College led her to move to the Medical College of Madras. In 1883 Lt. Governor of Bengal Rivers Thompson supported the cause of admission of female students at CMC. He did not like the idea of denying women entry into medical institution which would in turn encourage social narrowness. But the contemporary society did not wholeheartedly support the issue. In 1883 with the entry of Kadambini Basu at CMC as a student opened a horizon in the medical history of Bengal. Scholarships were granted by the colonial administration to encourage female medical education in Bengal. Between 1884-86 private donation came for the female medical education at CMC. In 1885, Maharani Swarnamayi of Cossimbazar donated one and a half lakhs of rupees for building a hostel for female medical students.

State implemented its medical administration through hospitals. Auckland administration in the 1840s tried to provide employment to indigenous men trained as medical subordinates in the CMC. The success of the CMC was largely depended on its ability to attract students. M.J. Bramley, the first principal of the CMC, had proposed a system of dispensaries associated with hospitals which would provide immediate employment to its students. Students trained in the CMC were expected to act as ambassadors for European medical science who would promote the practice of western medicine in indigenous society. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya in his Financial Foundations of the Raj PP. 41-7 argued that the colonial government adopted the principles of Gladstonian finance which emphasized minimum levels of public expenditure. In this form of finance state investment in medical care was limited. Arnold Characterized Indian Colonial public health as a consequence of colonial imposition than public demand.3 The colonial state with the aim of making colonial rule beneficial & proving the western science & medicine as superior to Indian ones did not serve the medical need of the vast population of Bengal society. Still the foundation of Calcutta Medical College served as a landmark in the progress of the Indian society.

Notes

¹ Julian Hoppit 'Political Arithmetic in eighteenth Century England', ECO Hist Review, New Series, Vol. 49, No. 3, 1996 pp. 516-40.

² Michael Foucault, 'The politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century', in M. Foucault, Power, ed James D. Faubion, trans, Robert Hurley et al. Essential works of Foucault. 1954-84, p.95

³ See Harrison – Public Health in British India, p.166-7. See David Arnold 'crisis and contradiction in India's public Health, in Dorothy porter (ed), The History of Public Health and the Modern State (Amsterdam Rodepi, 1994), p. 353.

Northeast India: History, Polity and Contemporary Dimensions

News Coverage on North East India from Late 19th Century to Present

By

Neeta. M Khandpekar*

An attempt has been made in this paper to highlight information on northeast India as covered by news papers from time to time. Sources such as Bombay Guardian (BG, 1851-1905), Young India (YI, 1919-1931) weekly and Times of India (TOI) have been extensively used for this purpose. Missionaries touched upon Assam as they found it fertile for the propagation of Gospel and made it their permanent home. There is mention of tour by Rev. H. Rylands to planting districts around Darjeeling and his work among the Lepchas of Kalimpong. BG mentions about Opium cultivation, addiction and measures taken to suppress opium consumption. One equally finds elaborative write-ups in YI by C F Andrews against consumption of Opium. After the formation of seven sisters we see a dramatic change in information from this region. TIO (2012) talks of promotion of sports in north east which could bridge the gap between the region and rest of India. Nikita Rana's article Cowrie Shells and other tales in TOI talks about ancient traditions of the Nagas. Also there is a mention of cultural activist Sentila Yanger who narrated several amusing folk tales of Naga men and women that had, down the years, translated into design shawls.

The present paper is divided in to three parts.

Part I deals with news on Assam and Sikkim from the *Bombay Guardian* Weekly. Part II is devoted to how *Young India Weekly* covered news on north east India. Part III is focuses on the present north east dimensions by contemporary news papers like *Times of India, Indian Express* etc.

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Part I

As I was going through the geographical map of the Indian Empire of 1858-1947, I saw Sikkim, Assam¹ and predominantly Burma in the northeast side². Incidentally at the same time I was referring to Christian Weekly News Paper, *The Bombay Guardian (BG)*'and following information about north east could be seen.

A letter to the editor in BG entitled 'The Gospel in Assam' by Issac F Rowe dated 14th January 1889 talks about Rev. G.W. Oxborough of Anglo Indian Evangelization Society who has chosen Assam as his permanent field of labour. The steamer companies and also the railway companies had readily granted free passes for the whole year both for the Rev and his family. Again a letter by Issac Rowe in BG (April 27, 1889) highlights that Rev. G.W. Oxborough has been well received in Assam and finds a great and needy field there. The letter also mentions about touring by Rev. H. Rylands to planting districts around Darjeeling.

A very interesting mission work chiefly among the Lepchas (Interesting work at Kalimpong, *BG*, September 14, 1889) says that Rev. H. Rylands Brown of Darjeeling is going on at Kalimpong and in the surrounding district. Christian's are cultivators living in *Bastis* scattered about these hills. Rev.W.S. Sutherland's contribution in Kalipong is mentioned. BG played a very important role against opium addiction and trade. Tibetan pioneer Missions Gnatong(state of Sikkim) covered on p 11 BG june 29 1895

The WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODIST (PRESBYTERIAN) MISSION established in 1840 with a staff of 40 missionaries, 950 Indian Workers, occupies stations in Assam in the Khassia and Jaintia Hills, the Lushai Hills and at Sylhet and Cachar. The Khassia language has been reduced to writing the Bible translated and many books published in that language by the mission. A large amount of literature has also been produced in the Lushai language.³

Small News - A railway collision occurred on January 2nd 1900 near Hill Station on the northern section of the Eastern Bengal State Railway between the up Assam mail and a down goods train. The engines and some carriages were seriously damaged. No passenger were killed or seriously hurt, but 3 of the train staff were killed and two were injured.

AN APPEAL⁴ FOR A LOCAL MEMORIAL TO THE CHILDREN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE LATE DARJEELING DISASTER

In view of the unprecedented calamity which befell Darjeeling and its neighbourhood last September(1899), by cyclonic storm and floods, many of the residents and others have felt that some permanent local memorial should be

erected to the memory of the ten European and American children who perished on that dreadful night.

All the above children were members of the Sunday School, in connection with the Union Committee of that Church that it is right and fitting that they should take the matter in hand and ask the co-operation of sympathizers generally in order that the public may share in giving expression to the feeling, which was world-wide at the time of the catastrophe, but which has necessarily been most keenly felt by persons more or less connected with Darjeeling.

A General Committee of 11 members was formed to carry out this scheme comprising MR A Earle, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, Rev H Rylands Brown and others.

The Committee feel it to be of the first importance that the memorial to be erected should be of a useful, suitable and permanent nature. It was proposed to call the memorial hall "THE CHILDRENS MEMORIAL HALL,"—

It was to be pan denominational in character.

The above writeup talks of organized Sunday School for European children in Darjeeling. The place being increasingly recognized as a Sanatorium for children, and a centre for their education.

A New Publication⁵

A Story of Triumph

"The Darjeeling Disaster: Its Bright Side", is the title of a Volume which cannot fail to touch the hearts of parents and children the wide world over. Its commencement, telling the history of the awful Darjeeling landslip is written by Rev F.W. Warne, but the life stories of the six Lee children is written, tenderly and sweetly by their mother.

We believe the book will fulfill more than one purpose. Mr Warne says in his preface "The Lee Children in their religious life were exemplary and their mother has told the story so as to reveal the secret of their training in such a way that it can be understood, and may be imitated by other parents."

This secret of training is one that many desire to learn. A missionary spirit breathes throughout the little work in Mrs. Lee's salvation of the Bengali Girls for whom she and Mr Lee are still nobly working.

Many beautiful engraving, including portraits of the faces of the six dear children make the book of greater value and "The Children's Letters", some of them brim full of fun and live, and others telling of high aims and noble purpose, help to make the book as useful present for children as for adult readers. The above volume was printed and published at Methodist Publishing House Calcutta.

Part II

Young India (YI) weekly news paper which was edited most of the time by M K Gandhi from 1919-1931 covered articles related to Opium from 1921 to 1931. In the July 3rd issue of YI⁶ a big writeup by C.F. Andrews 'Assam and Opium' can be seen. He talks of curse of Opium in Assam district, when he asked the Assam leaders to tell on what subject they wanted to speak, they all hesitatingly said Opium. He further added that Assamese agricultural labour in addition to daily wage demanded daily dose of Opium. A big writeup Excise and what it means? with statistics shows revenue from drugs in thousands of rupees. Opium in seers in various Indian provinces (including Assam) shown from 1901 to 1912.

Opium in Assam⁷ deals with the Opium inquiry committee appointed by the Assam P.C.C. examining witnesses at Sibagar. YI⁸ mentions the opium habit is worst in the villages and least in towns. A copy of the Assam Congress Opium Report (by C.F. Andrews)was ready in Dec 1925.⁹

Cover page of YI¹¹ shows a table showing Congress Province and the proportion in hundreds of thousands to be collected by it for the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund

| No. Province | Population In millions | Proportion of subscription in thousands |
|--------------|---------------------------|---|
| 20. Assam | 4 | 130 |
| 21. Burma | 12 | 390 |

The Assam Coolies¹¹

It talks of labour trouble in Assam which according to the report of Mr Das and Mr. Andrews is purely economic. It concludes as If the Assam planters are not sustained by the exploitation of Indian labour, they have nothing to fear. A time is certainly coming, when there will be no more unconscionable dividends. The profits of big concerns must bear relation to the wages of the workers.

A big write up A Planters Letter¹² written to Mr Gandhi and others connected with the non- co-operation movement.

The writer's tone of letter is very bold and against the non-co-coperation movement "Coolies in Assam are very well looked after by all Europeans on European-controlled tea gardens, but even on such gardens, I regret to say that the desire on the part of your own countryman to extort money by unfair means from the poor coolie, is more prevalent than it should be. The wages on tea gardens are distinctly good. My coolies earn on an average for men Rs 10-3-8, for women Rs.6-12-8, for children Rs 4-15-9(Sept 1920 Government Return). In addition to these

I want to see in Assam,

- 1. Free Labour. Liberty is wealth
- 2. That every Indian can travel to any part of India from famine area to plenty without any restriction.
- 3. Legislation, the same for the poor and the rich, the same for the Indian and the European
- 4. Legislation for the protection of Indian women and their Eurasian children.
- 5. The Panchayat as a legal powe on every tea garden, of which the manager must be president, and if the Indian can be tried by Panchayat, so can the European (My coolies have permission to try me)
- 6. Payment of sick allowance to coolies compulsory.
- 7. Restriction of coolie marriages abolished.
- 8. Confinement allowance to pregnant women compulsory for six months.

You will admit, all these suggestions are for legislators, not for non-co-operators; therefore agitate, co-operate, legislate and Love "Mobut" Dayal: Mia" Beechar. M.K. Gandhi's long reply to the above letter published.

YI Sept 1 1921 (p.270) quotes Mr. Allen, the author of the Assam Gazetteer, wrote in 1905 of Kamrup

"Of recent years, the use of imported clothing has been coming into favour,- an innovation which has little to recommend it, as the time formerly spent at the loom is not as a rule assigned to any other useful occupation."

The Assamese, to whom I have spoken, realize the truth of these words to their cost. Foreign cloth to India is like foreign matter to the body. The destruction of the former is as necessary for the health of India as of the latter for the health of the body.

Cover page of YI sept 22 1923, mentioned Of Strikes. The Assam Bengal Railway and the steamer strikes were out of the ordinary, the first attempt, as I have found to have strikes out of sympathy for those outside labour unions. The strikes were therefore sympathetic, humanitarian or political. I had the pleasure of meeting the strikers all over the railway line, but special at Gauhati, Chittagong and Barisal. YI Oct 13, 1921 p324 mentions about one Mrs Sengupta who was a cultured Englishwoman married to a cultured Bengali Mr Sengupta the leader of Chittagong and the soul of the A.B. Railway Strike movement went out to the cloth bazaar in Chittagong to tell the consumers to buy Khadi and avoid foreign cloth.

Gandhi visited Assam in May 26, 1924 and wrote about his visit in YI¹³Assam and Khaddar, I found that unlike other parts of India wherein I had made inquiries, here in the Morth-Eastern corner of India weaving was still an honoured and a dignified profession, which was cherished in every household. Indeed so highly was it honoured that it was considered entirely wrong and a mark of improper education, if a bride on entering a household was discovered not to have learnt the essential art of weaving the clothes needed by the household.

Between 1927 to 1928 no information on North East seen in YI. Agrarian situation in Assam covered especially on repeated crop failures and floods.¹⁴

Part III

A very nice editorial came in *TOI* 24th Aug 2012 entitled Think Northeast Promoting sports could bridge the gap between the region and rest of India. The northeast has long complained of marginalization and negligence. Due to the geographical remoteness of the region, a huge cultural gulf exists between the northeast and the rest of the country. This not only feeds into the sense of alienation that many northeasters feel, but also fuels a lack of understanding among other Indian vis-à-vis the northeast community.

From Dingko Singh and Baichung Bhutia to Somdev Devvarman and Bombayla Devi, M.C. Mary Kom(boxer) the number of northeast athletes representing the country in international sporting events has steadily increased. The Indian contingent to the London Olympics had 10 athletes from the northeast is a case in point.

Utpal Borpujari's article entitled Moments of Myth an integral part of the history of Assam, the Kamakshya temple is wrapped in mythology and splendor of nature.^{†15}

Kamakshya is the seat of Tantrik studies from ancient times, Incredible India's Advertisement entitled India's North East *paradise explored* shows the vibrant culture, colourful festivals, rare traditions. Travel writeup on Majuli the larget river island in the world located in the Brahmaputranin Jorhat Assam.¹⁶ Majuli has been nominated for UNESCO World Heritage tag and is home of the Mising Tribeoriginally a Hill tribe from Northwest China, Tibet and Mongolia- as well as the repository of Vaishnav cultural heritage.

Veteran journalist and author B.G. Varghese 17 who received the 10^{th} UN Brahma Memorial Soldier of Humanity Award in 2013 said that the North-Eastern Council and the Ministry for Development of Northeastern region(DoNER) are

poorly conceived and structured bodies. He added it lacked imagination or capacity to deliver the goods or manage the North-east-Look interface.¹⁸

An inspirational article entitled Arunachal's Monk who teaches kids to live by Madhu Gurung¹⁹ highlights about the special school (Called Jhamste Gatsal²⁰) for abandoned, abused or orphaned kids that Buddhist Monk Lobsang Phuntsok has set up on a five acre piece of land in the isolated village of Lumla in Arunachal Pradesh

Nikita Rana's article Cowrie Shells and other tales in TOI talks about ancient traditions of the Nagas Cultural activist Sentila Yanger narrated several amusing folk tales of Naga men and women that had, down the years, translated into design shawls. In the Ao²¹ Naga tradition, animals and spears, symbols of valour, were created on the body cloth of men when they performed a meritorious feat. A red shawl woven in memory of a 15 year old girl Late Luingamla Muinao from Ngainga a village in Manipur . The girl was assaulted by two army men in 1986, and the red shawl is worn in far-off villages as symbol of resistance.

Micro level coverage on the release of Manipuri rights activist Irom Chanu Sharmila²²from a hospital prison after 14 years of being force-fed and her re-arrest covered in TOI dated Aug 23, 2014.

The paper is more informative and covers various issues like missionary work, opium problem in Assam, recent news on some states of North East. Coverage on Assam is more since it's the host State of IAAPS Conference. I conclude with starting para of a very beautiful poem of great 16th century poet of Assam Sri Shanker Deb²³

Notes

- ¹ The province of Assaam at the far north-eastern corner of India is a museum of nationalities wrote J.B. Fuller in 1909(mentioned in Shibanikinkar Chaube,(1973) *Hill Politics in North-East India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, p.1)
- ² Nagaland(1963), Meghalaya(1972), Arunachal Pradesh (1987) and Mizoram (1987)- were carved out of what was then the composite Assam province. Tripura and Manipur were erstwhile Princely States
- ³ The Indian Year Book and Who's Who 1931,P477
- ⁴ BG, Feb 17, 1900, p.10.
- ⁵ BG, May 5, 1900, p.3
- 6 1924, p.223
- ⁷ YI July 24,1924, p.248

- 8 Oct 16,1924, p.346
- ⁹ YI December 24, 1925, p.450
- ¹⁰ YI April 20, 1921
- ¹¹ YI June 8, 1921, p.179
- ¹² YI June 29, 1921, pp.207-208
- ¹³ June 19, 1924 p.207
- ¹⁴ YI June 11,1931 p.142
- ¹⁵ Indian Express, 8th August, 1993
- ¹⁶ Sunday Mumbai Mirror, January 12, 2014
- ¹⁷ Considered an expert on issues relating to the Northeast.
- ¹⁸ Indian Express, 8 July, 2013
- ¹⁹ The Free Press Journal, August 26, 2012
- ²⁰ Means Garden of Love and Compassion.
- ²¹ One of the 12 major Naga tribes
- ²² For details on her see Deepti P Mehrotra, (2009) Burning Bright Irom Sharmila And the Struggle for Peace in Manipur, Penguin Books, Delhi.
- 23 Due to his influence Hinduism in the NE region has been free from the various caste disabilities prevalent elsewhere.
- ²⁴ Quoted in YI July 16, 1925, p.252

Northeast India: The Fulcrum of India's Look East Policy

By

Shiladitya Basu*

Introduction

"Look East" is just connotations which have been associated with India for a long, predating from the time of pre colonial period. If we go back to our history especially Ramayana we get the names of Java and Sumatra, and also through the writings of George Coedes, Vanleur, F.D.K Bosch, Pierre Dupont , Walters and many more who referred to the Hindu influence or Indian influence in Southeast Asia. Then there are theories like N.J Krom "Kshatriya Theory", 'Vaishya Theory' and 'Bramhanical Theory' of how these people settled in this archipelago. The Hindu religion and also Sanskritization took place in the region which lead to the beliefs of Shiva and Vishnu, and the result of which was Borobodur and Angkor Vat. We also came to know about the rise of many Hindu Kingdoms like the Khmer, Dvaravati, Johor-Riau etc and eventually the rise of the empires like Srivijaya, Majahapit, Malacca etc. In Tanjore inscription we also came to know about the naval expeditions and trade which was carried out by Rajendra Chola I in this Southeast Asian region, which was eventually named Suvarnadwipa and Suvarnabhumi. Then some of Indian historians like R.C Majumdar, Suniti Kr Chatterjee etc believed that Indian had greater influence in this region than any other countries and formed "Greater Indian Society". In the colonial era we saw India's engagement with this region especially with Malaya archipelago because of the British connections, where Indian labourer's worked in rubber plantation and rice mills etc. The famous personalities like Rabindranath Tagore who in 1929 visited 4 Southeast Asian nations and dreamt of Asian unity and nationalism, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who started his INA against the British government laid stone in Singapore.

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Mahatma Gandhi who fought for Burma's independence told the Burmese to follow the model of Swadeshi and boycott the foreign goods.¹

In 1990's when India proposed the "Look East Policy" one of the most important aspect was for the quest of making into the domain of Southeast Asian scenario which went to the lowest point during the period of early 1960's to late 1980's. In 1991 the then Prime Minister Narsimha Rao started the policy of liberalization, globalization and privatization, he initiated the policy of Look East to forge economic and strategic tie with Association of South East Asian Nation(ASEAN). The significance and necessity of the Look East Policy was generated by the myriad by-products factors of Post-Cold war geo-political reconfiguration. In short Look East Policy was aimed at accomplishing greater economic and political tie with countries of Southeast and East Asia.

Northeast India have been the "Gateway of India's Look East", so when the opening of Eastern Gate is concerned automatically the Northeast India region comes to our minds. The strategic locations of Northeast Region have made it one of the important hub of the Southeast Asian connectivity. Northeast India for about the centuries ago served as the economic gateway of India, not only as for trade or trade routes but also with cultural linkages. In recent years we are witnessing drastic changes at not only in regional level but also in global level, and also transformation in not only academics but also in other matters of agriculture and environment and also last but not the least the connectivity. Northeast region has the potential of becoming the most important region of India if proper implementation of development, policies and political leadership takes place. In my paper, I would present about the different perspectives of how Northeast would become the fulcrum of India's look East policy.²

Historical Perspective

In Mahabharata there is the mention of Northeast India when during Arjuna's exile he married to Naga princess Ulupi and Manipuri princess Chitrangada. The cultural relics excavated in Manipur excavated in Manipur and Meghalaya have brought to light telltale evidence indicating that these areas had nurtured an advanced civilisation sometime in early Christian era. In the southern part of Bramhaputra the largest ancient township of northeastern India so far has been found. The spectacular among the discovery was the giant stupa and some 30 small temples within the fortified area. The existence of the temple and stupa alongside point out to the once flourishing coexistence of Hindu-Buddhist cultures in the region. It must be said that perhaps these findings are mentioned in the travelogue of Chinese explorer Hieun-Tsang. In Manipur among other objects many masked skull, sculptured terracotta tiles, handmade pottery and curious brick backs collected from

Saketa indicates the settlement of Christian era or even earlier. From the east of Goalpara and to the west of the south bank of Bramhaputra, rock cut image of Risabhanatha or Adinatha, one of the first Jaina Tirthankaras, was discovered at Sri Surya hill. The image which is in Yogasana posture is flanked by Gomukha Yakha and Cakrasevari, below the Cakra flanked by two seated bulls. Images of Hindu gods and goddesses were also found. Of all there are many numerous architectural and sculptural remains dating from twelfth centuries scattered all over Assam and Tezpur, its vicinity Parbatia, North Guwahati to Golaghat, Dimapur and so further east on both the north and south banks of the Bramhaputra. The excavations from Ambari and Guwahati gave us enough evidences of the early settlements in this region. In addition to these the other important discovery is the Kaolin potteries which have been found in Ambari, Tezpur, Nowgong district and further east at Bhimsaknagar. The kaolin potteries are the important characteristic feature of the ancient Assam culture, kaolin ceramics are indeed rare among ancient ceramics. Thus these gives us the glowing picture of prosperity and splendour in the northeast and also the brisk trade between China and the northeast region.³

Cultural Perspective

According to historians of the racial migration in Northeast India, the Nagas, Jaintia, Kukis, Lushai, Chin and other nationalities migrated through area of Tibet and Yunnan. The Khasis are the first one to be migrated. Yunnan is a multiethnic province of China out of the total 56 ethnic groups as much as 26 are found in Yunnan itself. Northeast region is said to be the most ethnically diversified region of India, as pointed out by J.B Fuller, Northeast India is described as the 'museum of nationality'. The northeast region is the home of 175 Tibeto-Burman and Mon-Khmer speech groups which belong to Austronesian language group. The Yunnan province of China and the Northeast region of India shares more than 1000 kms and have been traditional interactions. The archaeologists are of the belief that most of this ethnic groups would have been settled in the surrounding areas of Erhai and Dianchi lake of Yunnan.⁴

It is being mentioned here that most of the migration took place through the Patkai range of Burma, especially the Ahoms of Assam, known as Tai-Shan followed the old route through Patkai range a branch of it migrated to Bramhaputra valley and settled in Assam and many northeastern states. There also other instances where migration took place from Tibet especially through Chumbi Valley region. Thus we can say Northeast region have a strong cultural linkage between India, China and Southeast Asia.⁵

Agricultural Perspective

In recent past, Indian economy has recorded spectacular growth and in fact is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. However like other countries around the world, this economic growth is not always ensuring the balanced economic development in terms of reducing regional imbalances in some parts of our country. The northeast region is the most prominent in this list, which comprises a bunch of less developed states with poor economic performances. The northeast region representing a district agro climatic zone of the country. Since independence, continuous efforts have been put to forth and in particular during the preceding decade several aggressive policy initiatives has been taken up for all round development of these states. Though there are some success stories but overall the region has to bear the stigma of 'outlays without outcome'. Despite the region having abundant natural resources, and vegetation with huge diversity but simultaneously the region is housing 32% of its population below poverty line. The region accounts of 1/4th of the state GDP through agriculture. Agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood nearly 80% depends on it, but the major cause of concern is the farming activity. The type of farming practiced here is subsistence and shifting cultivation is still an important form, since the sectoral transformation is occurring at a very slow pace which is hampering the economic development. Most of the problems faced by farmers are mainly because of natural causes, this is because of serious soil erosion, degradation of productivity, silting of major rivers the carrying capacity of the soil has also been diminished. The poor farmers are at risk from this method of farming and also shifting cultivation have suffered because of increase of population, due to increase of land pressure the jhum cycle which is the other name have came down from 20years to 4-5 years. Despite these problems there are numerous potentials the abundance of natural resources in the northeast region makes it a very profitable business and investment destinations. There are some ways a) performance of various sectors in contributing to state income and critical assessment of agricultural development status of the region, b) identification of various issues impeding various issues of enhancement of agricultural income and prioritisation of activities for higher agricultural growth, c) exploring scope and opportunities of new areas of investment to increase farm income as well as to attract private investment in agricultural sector. If these policies are followed then this region would cater large amount of agricultural surpluses to regions bordering this region. Crop diversification, organic farming, agricultural markets and farming systems are some of the aspects that would needed special attention, esp with Tea and Rubber industry which would get a huge market in the Southeast Asian region. Thus it can be mentioned here that agriculture might play an important role in the regions "Look East Policy".6

Communication and Tourism Perspective

The trade route to northeast India from China was a long journey thousands of kilometres long, passing through many cities and towns, big and small, some developing into centres of water and land communication, collecting and distributing commodities. Yunnan, the road from Yongchang was historically a gateway to the outside world where merchants from home and abroad traded. Within the boundaries of Burma, Bhamo and Myitkyna were equally important centres of trade as links between India in the west and China in the east. Inside the Bramhaputra valley, one could travel both by land and water routes passing through Sadiya, Kapili, Pragjyotishpura, Hadapeswara and Davaka ie present day Guwahati and Tezpur. Guwahati in the middle reaches of the Bramhaputra was the capital of the ancient powerful kingdom of Kamrupa; it enjoys strategic geographic location. There are substantial evidences that direct trade existed between northeast India and the neighbouring countries. This route was also known as the 'Horse and Tea Route', according to Yang Bin, horse, silver and tea were the main items of exchange between this region. During the time of British, in order to enter the Chinese market this route was established as the overland trade route to China, passing through the Irrawaddy valley to the Ava kingdoms of Northeast and then to China.7

In 2nd world war the Burma, Bhamo, Myitkyna road was later came to be known as the Stillwell road, which later came to be known as the Ledo road. Northeast India has the longest border sharing with Myanmar which is about 1400km, yet except for the Moreh-Tamu sector and also Champhai-Rhi sector none of such physical connectivity have been achieved so far. Guwahati which is the only city that connects the rest of India, is yet to have an international airport, which would actually open up the region to the Southeast region and would take much lesser time, than the other metroes, even if there is twice weekly flight between Guwahati and Mandalay it would not only open up the markets of Laos, Singapore, Vietnam but also open up the entire region of Northeast. The Stillwell road which runs to Kunming even if it is opened upto Mandalay it would facilitate trade in the region. The other sector if the Moreh road is extended upto Mae-Sot in Thailand it would work wonders for the region which is incorporated in the transport sector of BIMSTEC. In 2013 the BCIM car rally which originated from Kolkata and ended upto Kunming traversing to Imphal, Mandalay and Myitkyna, thus connecting entire northeast region. There also plans of rail link from Kalay in the northwest and Thanbuzayat in southeast region, passing through Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon, and is planned to connect it with Singapore-Kunming line.8

Tourism would also be one of the sectors as Northeast region is the ecological hotspot region of India, eco-tourism would be one of the best ways to promote, apart from this northeast region being the ethnically diversified place many tourist from these Southeast Asian region would actually connect themselves with this region. The archaeological excavations of this region would also help in the surge of tourism. Then there is adventure sports like, hiking, trekking and rafting would also provide the tourist with the thrilling experience, so in most ways communication and tourism go hand in hand, and I am quite sure in days to come we can see that there would be actually surge or increase of tourist in days to come from this Southeast Asian region.

Conclusion

Northeast through the ages have played a pivotal part in determining the 'Look East Policy'. Apart from these historical, cultural, agricultural and communication linkages, there are other sectors which there is ample of opportunity to improve the energy sector the hydro-electricity would be one of the important aspect as Myanmar is abundant in natural resources. The Tamanthi Dam hydro-electric project was signed in 2004 which would bring electricity to the region of northeast. Then in education and film industry, we need more such endeavours from the academic institute, for eg Manipur University has the Institute of Myanmar studies, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies have been in recent past is conducting research works in Northeast region. In IIT Guwahati there are atleast 5 students from Myanmar who are actually pursuing PhD; we need more such initiatives from the premier Universities of the region to enhance more exchange programme between the Southeast Asian region for better understanding. The film industry and the music industry would be also one of the important aspect, as we know Manipur have huge following of Korean dramas and film, Thai movies are rage in Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. Burmese movies and music are quite in rage in Northeast region. If the Northeast regions, regional films are being showed in this countries then it would be a huge market and thus it would also help in building a close relation between the northeast region links with the Southeast Asian region.

Notes

- ¹ Arun Dasgupta,(2008)" *Indian influence in Southeast Asia" in* Prachya, Kolkata, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, Kolkata
- ² Thingham Kishan Singh, (2009) 'Look East Policy & India's Northeast: Polemics and Perspectives' Concept Publishing House, New Delhi
- ³ Haraprasad Roy,(2003) " Trade and Trade Rontes Between India and China c.140 B.C-A.D.1500", Progressive Publisher, Kolkata

- ⁴ Rajen SinghLaishram , (2006) "Negotiating Nationalities in Yunnan and Northeast India" in Proceedings of Indian Association For Asian and Pacific Studies, Indian Association of Asia and Pacific Studies, Kolkata
- ⁵ Lipi Ghosh " *Tai Cultural Heritage in Northeast India: A study of the Tai-Ahom*" http://www.academia.edu accessed on 21st Sept 2014
- ⁶ Dutta & Mandal,(2011) "Outlook of Northeast India: An Agricultural Perspective", Academic Foundation, New Delhi
- ⁷ Lipi Ghosh, (2009) "Trade Route between Bengal and China: Review of the Report of Baron Otto des Granges in the context of British Colonial Enterprises", Vol XLIX, Journal Of The Asiatic Society, Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- ⁸ "Delhi Dialogue V: India and Asean Vision and Perspectives" 2014, International Council of World Affairs, New Delhi