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Inscriptions from Pāṭaliputra

(From the Earliest times up to the 6th century C. E.)

Uma Shankar Azad

Abstract

Many archaeological remains, including inscriptions, have been found in Patna's environs. Their dates range from the Maurya period up to that of the later Guptas. Like other archaeological remains, inscriptions from within the city also are of great historical importance. Unfortunately, hardly any attempt has been made to analyse them thoroughly, and their significance was unrecognised. The historical literature says that Pāṭaliputra was one of the most important learning centres, and Chinese sources testify that the city's palaces were full of inscriptions and also say that some famous pillars of Aśoka in the city had inscriptions. Notwithstanding these claims, no such inscription has been traced so far. The present article's theme is to analyse those aforesaid inscriptions, which have been found from various sites of Patna, thoroughly regarding all aspects so that as much information as possible regarding their history could be extracted. The paper will also discuss the attempts, barriers and results of archaeologists to find out those famous inscriptions that Chinese travellers mentioned.

Keywords: Pāṭaliputra, Inscription, Educational centre, Seal and sealing, Monastery, Emblem, Hospital

Introduction

Inscriptions are one of the most valuable sources for reconstructing the history of Ancient and Early Medieval India. A galaxy of inscriptions of various types is found throughout the country, which provides invaluable information regarding multiple aspects of history such as politics, administration, religion, economy, society, culture, lineages of

dynasties, bureaucrats, etc. Many historical cities like Mathura, Vidisha, Kanchipuram, Madurai, Allahabad, Junagarh, etc., yield numerous valuable inscriptions for Indian history. But Pāṭaliputra (modern Patna) is not so fortunate in this aspect because it has not been shown to possess any major inscription, even though it was an illustrious city-cum-capital and was undoubtedly the biggest city in ancient India. However, several minor inscriptions having a few words engraved on seals and sealings, potsherds and stone images have been reported. A detailed analysis of these inscriptions is the theme of the article.

Pāṭaliputra was one of the leading centres of learning in the subcontinent from the Mauryan period up to the rise of Nālandā monasteries (3rd century B.C.E. to 5th century C. E.). The journey to becoming the leading centre of learning is closely associated with the development of the Magadhan Empire. Parallelly, the fall of Takṣaśilā (Gāndhāra region) into foreign invaders' hands attracted refugee philosophers and scholars towards the Mauryan capital, where royal patronage, well-organised facilities, and a favourable environment welcomed them. Hence, the city became the leading educational centre for Buddhist, Brāhmaṇic, and Jain scholars.[1] Therefore, Haraprasad Sastri remarks :

> Just at this time Taxila, the centre of Brahmanic learning, languished under foreign dominion; and great scholars there began to resort to the eastern capital.[2]

Other scholars like A. S. Altekar,[3] A. M. Shastri,[4] etc., accept that the city was a leading centre of learning for all religious sects of the subcontinent.

Many ancient foreign and indigenous literature inform directly or indirectly that the city was one of the focal points of education after the decline of Takṣaśilā and before the rise of the Nālandā monasteries. Kuṭṭanī-mata (8th century C.E.) claims that the city was the permanent home of Saraswatī (*Saraswtī-kula-grīha*)[5]. *Kathāsaritasāgara* (11th century C.E.) glorified it by saying that it was the home of Saraswatī and Lakṣmī (*Nāmnā Pāṭaliputraṁ ksetraṁ Laksamī-sarasvatyoḥ*)[6], and home of polished-wits (*Matvā Nāgarika-kṣetraṁ tadvaidagdhyadidṛkṣyā*)[7]. It also

claims that there was a shrine of *Saraswatī*, which was considered the protecting deity of this city.[8] Students and scholars from various parts of the subcontinent, viz., Kosāmbī, Mālavā, Kundina, Māyāpurī, Ujjain, Daśapura, etc., used to visit here to acquire basic and advanced knowledge.[9]

Rājaśekhar, in his *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* (12. century C.E.), quotes that scholars from various parts of the country were examined by a committee of doyens in Pāṭaliputra and scholars who earned the honour of the president in the assembly of poets and philosophers gained the right to evaluate poetry and attained widespread recognition, fame, and fortune.[10] The quotation of Rājaśekhar is confirmed by the story of *Kathāsaritasāgara*. According to the story, a mendicant of Kashmir was proud of his knowledge that he always won in debates; therefore, he set out on a journey to Pāṭaliputra to exhibit his skill in dispute. On the way, he found a student coming from the seat of learning, Pāṭaliputra, and was going to Kashmir to triumph over scholars in the discussion.[11] The Jain Text *Vividha Tīrtha Kalpa* (14th century C.E.) reveals that eighty-four such halls of disputation were built in the city, which pleased the learned.[12] *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* provides a list of legends who were examined in these assemblies, viz. Upavarṣa, Varṣa, Pāṇini, Piṅgala, Vyāḍi, Vararuci, Pataṅjali. It is said that the renowned Jain sage Āryaraksita learnt fourteen sciences here.[13]

During the Gupta period, the city remained a flourishing learning centre. Faxian's travelogue reveals that the city had two great monasteries; one belongs to Mahāyāna and the other to Hīnayāna. The joint strength of the two monasteries was six hundred to seven hundred. Many great Buddhist scholars resided here; among them, Rādhāswāmī and Maṅjuśṛ of Mahāyāna school were the most prominent. The name and fame of these monasteries can be estimated by his quotation:

> Shamanas of the highest virtue from all quarters, and students, inquirers, wishing to find out truth and the grounds of it, all resort to these monasteries.

These monasteries had libraries where rare manuscripts on Buddhism were available, which were hard to find elsewhere.[14] This

influential environment of learnings in the city attracted Faxian here for learning Sanskrit and collecting rare manuscripts.[15]

According to *Vividha Tīrtha Kalpa*, Pāṭaliputra was the home of many famous personalities who were conversant with eighteen sciences; Smṛtis-Purāṇas; seventy-two arts, an expert in the works of the three jewels named Bharat, Vātsyāyana, Cāṇakya; the science of spells, magic diagrams and magic rituals; books on alchemy, ointments that enable one to find treasure, pearls, foot-slaves, the inceptions, of jewels, architecture, the characteristic signs of men and women, elephants, horses, bulls, other animals, and sorcery; and poems.[16]

Pāṭaliputra was the capital of the imperial Mauryas and Guptas, who inscribed plenty of inscriptions throughout their empire. Aśoka, whose edicts are found throughout his empire but in his capital, is missing; however, literary sources say that he installed inscribed pillars here. Chinese sources talk about inscribed pillars in Pāṭaliputra. A Chinese officer gathers information on Pāṭaliputra from a man who returned from India between 222 CE to 280 C.E. and says that "all the palaces are covered with sculptured inscriptions."[17] Faxian saw two inscribed Aśokan pillars here. One pillar was fourteen or fifteen cubits in circumference and more than thirty cubits high and had a proclamation, "Aśoka gave the Jambūdwīpa to the general body of all the monks and then redeemed it from them with money."[18] Another inscribed pillar was in the centre of the newly founded city called *Ni-li* (*Nilai*), was also more than thirty cubits in height, and had a lion on its vertex. The inscription contained a historical record of the successive events connected with the newly built city *Ni-li*, with the corresponding year, day, and month.[19] It was installed in the precinct of this new city, which was around one km south of Pāṭaliputra.[20] Xuanzang also noted the same pillar inscription in the first half of the 7th century C.E. It was the time the city fell into ruins, but the pillar was still standing. He saw a mutilated inscription on the pillar. He described the main content of this mutilated inscription for which the pillar was installed, which was:

> Aśoka-raja with a firm principle of faith has thrice bestowed Jambūdwīpa as a religious offering on Buddha, the Dharma and the

assembly, and thrice he has redeemed it with his jewels and treasure, and this is the recorded thereof.[21]

It is a point to be noted that he neither describes the city of *Ni-li* nor the inscribed pillar which Faxian saw in the royal precinct, which indicates that the city, along with the inscribed pillar, had disappeared or had lost its importance.

Cunningham was one of the first who tried to locate monuments described by Chinese travellers and successfully identified a few of them but could not trace those inscribed pillars.[22] However, he reported numerous coins, seals, and sealings annually found in the dry bed of the Gaṅgā.[23] Waddell, an amateur archaeologist, explored and excavated some sites of Patna and identified several Mauryan monuments, but the mystery of those inscribed pillars remained unsolved. He was very much curious to trace Mauryan remains and the inscribed Aśokan pillars described in Chinese accounts. On his first visit to Patna in 1892, he identified many monuments described by Chinese travellers.

After identifying the site as Palibothra of the Graeco-Roman accounts, the government sanctioned a sum to explore the Pahārī area under the supervision of Fuhrer, but the excavation proved fruitless and considered the destruction of an archaeological site. This operation recovered no inscribed object.

In March 1896, the government again sanctioned an amount to explore some sites of the city under the supervision of Waddell, but he was not personally available during excavation, so he appointed C. A. Mills to excavate sites.[24] He excavated sites of Kumrahār, Bulandībāg, Bahādurpur, Rāmpur, Sandalpur, Pṛthupur, and Pahārī between 1896 to 1899, where uncountable fragments of Aśokan pillars were recovered, but all efforts for discovering those inscribed pillars remained in vain. However, he received an attested report on an eight feet long fragment inscribed pillar, which had been situated in the Sandalpur area till thirty years before his investigation. The inscription was popularly said to be Chinese by locals, and an annual religious fair used to be held there. But later, the pillar was removed by its possessor and the fair was given up. Waddell inquired about the pillar

from the owner, but he denied the existence of any pillar and his hope to discover the inscribed Aśokan pillar remained unsuccessful.[25] Another trace of an inscription from a later period was found on a Buddhist railing which he considered the most primitive type. But it was also worthless for him because letters which mostly resembled medieval Devanāgarī and shell characters, were weathered over the ages and were quite illegible to read.[26] He found two other inscriptions of shell characters of the Gupta period on stone pillars at Dargāh Śāh Arzān, but the script is yet to be deciphered.[27]

It is to be noted that Waddell nowhere mentioned minor objects, and we have no information that he found any seals, sealings, and potsherds. In fact, he aimed to recover Mauryan monuments and inscribed pillars found in Chinese accounts, and so his explorations and excavations were utterly dedicated to the recovery of lost Mauryan monuments. Therefore, the above-mentioned minor antiquities remained unrecorded.

P. C. Mukharji, the next archaeologist following the instructions of Waddell, excavated more than a dozen of sites like Bahādurpur, Bulandībāg, Bhikhnā Pahārī, Dhanukī, Dāud Bīghā, Jamunā Dīh, Jogīpurā, Kumrahār, Lohānīpur, Mahārajkhaṇḍ, Nayā Ṭolā, Rāmpur, Sandalpur, Savaī Tank, Tulasī Maṇḍī, etc., and recovered many fragments of Aśokan pillars on several sites, but did not get success in tracing the inscribed pillars.[28] Other than monuments, he provided some information on the minor antiquities found during his excavations, like coins, beads, glass objects, iron implements, and potsherds,[29] but in the case of minor inscribed objects like potsherds, seals and sealings, he has not given any information.

The city was again explored under the supervision of D. B. Spooner from 1912 to 1915. He, like his predecessors, aimed to find Mauryan monuments and inscriptions, but the pillar remained a mystery. However, in his first report on Kumrahār excavation, he described minor inscribed objects like seals, sealings, and stone slabs.[30]

After Spooner, archaeologists gave up the aim of tracing Aśoka's inscribed pillars and became busy in solving issues based on earlier

findings and also introduced many fresh objectives to unfold the untold chapters of the city. Ghosh, who re-excavated the wooden remains of Bulandībāg in 1922-23, aimed to understand the nature of the wooden palisades found by Spooner. He found a few inscribed objects in his small area excavations, like earthen pots and glass sealings.[31] After Ghosh, archaeological operations were stopped for nearly three decades; however, small-scale excavations were conducted in 1935 at Sandalpur[32] and in 1937 at Lohānīpur,[33] but no inscribed object was reported. Apart from archaeological excavations, minor antiquities were often recorded from various parts of the city while digging the earth for multiple purposes like drainage construction, house construction, etc., but the finds of inscribed objects remained minimal.

A. S. Altekar and V. Mishra conducted a large-scale systematic excavation at Kumrahār between 1951 to 1955. His aims and objectives were based on Spooner's excavation, who explored Mauryan monuments like pillared halls and wooden platforms, and left many problems and unresolved questions, like the actual size of the pillared hall, wooden platform and their destruction, the flood and sinkage theory, etc. He did a systematic excavation with detailed documentation of major and minor antiquities, which provided valuable descriptions of the inscribed antiquities found during excavations.[34]

In 1955-56, B. P. Sinha and L. A. Narain excavated four other sites of the city. Unfortunately, due to the dense population, he was unable to explore extensive areas, so he just operated six trail trenches at four sites, Mahābīrghāt, Begum kī Hawelī, Gulzārbāg Press Playground, and Śāh Kamāl road. His main objectives were to understand the cultural sequence of these sites, past building activities, and locate the palace complex of the Mauryan period.[35] Many potsherds of various kinds viz, NBPW, Black and Red Ware, Black Ware, Red Ware, and Grey Ware of different periods are found, but no potsherds produced any inscription. Seals and sealings are also surprisingly missing in these sites. These four sites are located in different places within the city; three of them (Mahābīrghāt, Begum kī Hawelī, Gulzārbāg Press Playground) are highly prosperous in terms of

material remains which continued from the pre-Mauryan period up to the decline of the Gupta dynasty. Unfortunately, no antiquities of these sites produced any inscription.

After Sinha, two sites, Kaṅkarbāg in 1970[36] and Dāk Bungalow Square in 1991,[37] accidentally revealed antiquities, so trial trenches were taken to understand the nature of those sites. Kaṅkarbāg unearthed vestiges of wooden palisades, while Dāk Bungalow square unfolded Mauryan habitation area, but they did not yield inscribed antiquities.

Thus, nearly fifty sites have been recorded that have produced antiquities, but Kumrahār is the only site studied extensively and comprehensively. Many sites are found rich in antiquities, but many obstacles deprived them of proper excavation. The dense population of the city is the primary barrier to archaeological activities. The actual boundary of Pāṭaliputra is still a puzzle, which always creates confusion among archaeologists in selecting an appropriate site which could be productive in material remains. Waterlogging, underground water, monsoon, and the objection of landowners are other interruptions for excavation works, and nearly all archaeologists who did excavations here faced these obstacles. Thus, these interruptions put barriers in the archaeological progress in Patna, and no archaeological operation was planned after Sinha.

Currently, the city does not produce major inscriptions but yields small records consisting of one to five words that are mainly found on seals, sealings, potsherds, stone slabs, and stone images. Kumrahār is the site which mainly produced inscribed objects. Spooner reported more than 20 seals and sealings; among them, 9 are matrix, and nearly half are readable,[38] while Altekar found one seal and fifty sealings, wherein twenty-six are readable while the remaining are either uninscribed or legends in indistinct condition.[39]

Many pots and potsherds are found at various sites, but only one pot and eleven potsherds are inscribed. The inscribed pot of the Mauryan period was found at Bulandībāg. All potsherds are found at Kumrahār by Altekar; among them, one belongs to Śuṅga-Kaṇva or early Kuṣāṇa era, and the remaining could be confined to the period between 300 C.E. to 600 C.E. No other site of Patna yields any inscribed

sherds. Thus, Kumrahār alone produces more than fifty inscribed objects ranging from the Mauryan period to the later Gupta period. Therefore, it is suggested that it was monastic-cum-commercial area. Another prosperous site Bulandībāg also yields some inscribed objects from Mauryan and post-Mauryan periods.

Presently, sixty-three inscribed objects are available, but their significance is limited for the historical reconstruction of Pāṭaliputra because these seals consist of one to five words representing the individual's name, mostly by which extracting historical data is a challenging task. Notwithstanding, some inscriptions on seals, sealing, and on potsherds are so worthy, not only for Patna but also in the Indian context, as a sealing from Kumrahār inscribed with *Śṛārogyavihāre bhikṣusaṁghasya* (Seal of the monastic community in the sanatorium-monastery)[40] informs that hospital-cum-monasteries functioned in the Gupta period. It is probably one of the earliest epigraphic references of a hospital in India. Some other inscriptions also have good historical value, and these inscribed antiquities have been divided into three periods for a comprehensive study: -

1. Inscriptions of the Mauryan Period
2. Inscriptions of the Post-Mauryan Period
3. Inscriptions of the Gupta Period

Inscriptions of the Mauryan Period

Only a few sites, such as Kumrahār, Śāh Kamāl Road, Mahābīrghāt, Begum-kī-Hawelī and Gulzārbāg Government Press Playground, were thoroughly excavated and documented. All among them except Kumrahār[41] are rich in archaeological materials, indicating that these were the prominent cultural zones of Pāṭaliputra dating to all periods, and antiquities reported here go from the pre-Mauryan era up to the Guptas.[42] Other sites like Bākarganj, Kadamkuān, Bhikhnā Pahārī, Musallahpur, Golakpur etc., yielded several Mauryan terracotta figurines.[43] At present, nine inscribed objects from the Mauryan periods are available, wherein seven are on seals and sealings, one on a stone slab, and one on a steatite disc.

Cunningham found three inscribed seals from the bed of the Gaṅgā in front of Patna but did not provide any details except their drawings with the caption 'seals found in the Ganges' (Fig. 3 F).[44] Paleographically these seals can be correlated to the Mauryan era. The first seal is roughly square-shaped,[45] having a legend *Nandaya/ Yadan* (Fig. 3 F1) and a symbol (perhaps Buddhist) under the letters *Nan*. The second seal is oval-shaped. The upper part of this has a symbol *Nandī pada* or *Triratna*, and the lower part a legend *Agpalaśa* (of Agrapāla) and between *Nandī /Triratna* and the legend is another symbol which is perhaps a plough (Fig 3 F2). The third example is rectangular with the legend *Sēlaya* (Sans. *Śailaka*)[46] (Fig 3 F3).

Some inscribed sealings and potsherds of this period are reported from Kumrahār. Spooner has found an inscription on the *Triratna* slab with three letters just beneath the wheel of law, but its script, language and period are unclear. It was read in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī (in Kharoṣṭhī gra-da-sa, in Brāhmī va-da-sa[47]), but neither provided a proper meaning. They may be dated to either the Maurya or the Śuṅga periods.[48] He finds another inscription on the same site on a round and flat terracotta matrix of the 3rd century B.C.E. with the legend *Sīlakasa* (seal of Sīlaka).[49] Ghosh reported two inscribed artefacts from Bulandībāg. One was a glass seal measuring ½ inch in diameter and engraved with the name *Devalakhitaśa* (Fig. 3 A), while another inscription reading *Ānade* was on an earthen pot (Fig. 3 E).[50] Both were inscribed in the Brāhmī script of the Mauryan period. The language of the two inscriptions mentioned above is pure ancient Magadhī. One ends in the case termination 'sa' (Devalakhita**śā**),and the other in 'e'(Ānad**e**) is the Prakrit form of the nominative singular bases ending in 'a'. These two peculiarities demonstrate a state of language differing considerably from that revealed in the Edicts of Aśoka.[51] An oval-shaped seal or token of dark green glass with an indistinct legend of old Brāhmī script also reports from the site.[52]

A Matrix of clay having a legend of early Brāhmī Characters in three lines: *Dīghavata, Palama* and *Sa[ṁ]ghasa* was reported in

Kumrahār, which Spooner read as of the *Palama* – the congregation of *Dīghavata* or *Dīrghavata*[53] which needs a re-think. Here, *Dīghavata* (Sanskrit – *Dīrghavata*) – might be the name of an organisation of Buddhist monks; also, *Palama* (might be a Māgadhī-Prākṛt form of *Parama*[54]) – the ultimate, absolute, or supreme, and *saṁghasa* – of the congregation or community. Thus, the translation would be "seal of *Dīrghavata*, the supreme congregation." It must be one of the biggest *saṁgha* of Buddhist monks, which issued clay tablet identity cards for its members. The meaning seems reasonable, as the city was transformed into the focal point of Buddhist activities in Aśoka's time, where he built *stūpas* and *mahāvihāras* where great numbers of monks used to live.

Kadamkuān, a prosperous area of the Mauryan period, revealed plenty of materials, such as remains of a *stūpa*, punch-marked coins, stone sculptures, pottery, terracotta objects, etc. Here, an inscription on a steatite disc (toy wheel) found 14 feet below the surface bears the name *Viśākhaśa* (of *Viśākha*), which is said to be the oldest form of Aśokan Brāhmī (Fig. 3 G).[55]

Table I : Inscribed Matrices and Sealings of the Mauryan Period

Sl. No.	Material	Object	Upper Half (Symbol)	Lower Half (Legend)	Shape	Size
1	Terracotta	Matrix	No Symbol	*Sīlakasa*	Circular	½″
2	Glass	Matrix	Data Not Avail able (N/A)	*Devalakhitasa* (Fig. 3A)	Circular	½″
3	Terracotta	Matrix	No Symbol	*Dīghavata Palama Sa[ṁ]ghasa*	Roughly Circular	¾″
4	N/A	Sealing	Buddhist Symbol	*Nandaya/Yadanan* (Fig. 3 F1)	Square	2.8″
5	N/A	Sealing	*Nandipada/ Triratna and Plough*	*Agapalaca* (Fig. 3 F2)	Oval	3.2″ x 2.5″
6	N/A	Sealing	No Symbol	*Sēlaya* (San. Śailaka)	Rectan- gular	3″ x 3.5″
7	Glass	Sealing	N/A	(Fig. 3 F3) *Indistinct*	Oval	N/A

Courtesy: (4-6) Cunningham, 1882, (1, 3) ARASI 1912-13; (2) ARASI 1926-27; (7) Kuraishi, 1931.

Inscriptions of the Post-Mauryan Period

Ten inscribed objects of this period have been found; three are on sealings, two on matrices, two on glass discs, two on life-size stone images, one on a potsherd, and one on a terracotta matrix. Spooner found a large irregular piece of terracotta from the 1st century B.C.E., having six impressions of two different kinds, shapes, and sizes of seals (Fig. 3 D). The bigger seal (1.12" X 0.75") is oval-shaped and has three complete and two incomplete punches. They have symbols like *śaṅkha*, *triśūla*, wheel, and *swāstika* with a legend in four letters reading *Gopālasa* (of Gopala). The smaller impression measuring 0.62 inches, is circular-shaped and has only a complete impression. It has no legend but has a large triangular symbol or letter.[56] Sealing the exact imprint on a single-sealing in more than one place is unique. It may be possible that the clay, as Spooner mentions, was not an actual seal but an irregular piece of terracotta that would be a raw material used for testing the quality and clarity of the impression of seals.

A clay sealing probably of the Śuṅga-Kaṇva or Kuṣāṇa period has four letters in a single line in fragmentary condition, which read *Subhāva(vā)śa(sa)* (auspicious dwelling) (Fig. 1 B8).[57] One sealing datable to the Kuṣāṇa period (100-300 C.E.) is considered a unique one because the upper half of the sealing has a plan of a building, and the lower half has a legend *Saghasa* (Fig. 1 A1).[58] It perhaps indicates that the council of monks approved the plan of the monastery before implementation, or the Buddhist-*Saṁgha* circulated such sealings as their monogram.[59] Another clay sealing of the period has three letters in a single line with the legend *Roha(i)ni(nī)* (Fig. 1 B5).[60] It would be the name of a *nakṣatra* or a woman. Suppose it is a woman's name; in that case, it indicates that some women were participating in commercial activities and issued sealings with their names during the commercial zenith. A potsherd with an incomplete inscription reading ...*upanaśa* is dated to this period, though its palaeography creates doubt about its specific period (Fig. 2 A3).[61]Two discs of glass

(oval and roundish) having the same legend *Aśīgrabī* in early Brāhmī in relief have been discovered from Kumrahār.[62] A matrix of baked clay with the legend *Buddharakhitasa* (of Buddharakṣita) was also unearthed. The letters are said to be the most primitive form of Brāhmī, but it belongs to the post-Mauryan period.[63]

Two short inscriptions are found on two life-sized *Yaksha* figures, probably near Agam Kuān, which are now preserved in the Indian Museum, Kolkata. Cunningham read both as *Yakhe Acusatīgīka* or *Sanīgīka* (Fig. 4 A) and *Yakhe Sanatananda* or *Bharata*[64] (Fig. 4 B). On palaeographical grounds, he dated the inscriptions to the 1st century C.E. Jayaswal contradicts Cunningham's date of the sculptures and inscriptions and suggests that they belong to the pre-Aśokan era. He says the letters found on both images did not match with letters of any period yet known to Indian Epigraphy and identifies them as the Magadhan rulers Udayan and Nandivardhan and read the engraved inscriptions *Bhageachochhonī' dhīśe* as 'His gracious Majesty Aja king [lit. over-ruler of the land (or earth)]' and *sapa-khate Vama Nandi*' of complete empire (dominion), *vartanandi*.'[65] Criticising Jayaswal, Chanda adds that letters of the inscriptions tally with the Brāhmī letters of the Kuṣāṇa period. He recognises them as *Yakṣa* images and reads both inscriptions as *Bha(?)ga Achchhanivika*, "the owner of inexhaustible capital," which means the king of *Yakṣas*, i.e., Vaiśravaṇa and *Yakha Sa (?) rvaṭanaṁdi*.[66] Majumdar accepts the dates of the inscriptions given by Chanda but differs from his reading and suggests that the inscriptions are written in an alpha-numeric form whose last letter (s) are numerals. He reads both inscriptions as *Gate (Yakhe?) Lechchhaī (vi) 40, 4*, "the year 44 of the Lechchaīs or Lechchhavīs having elapsed", and *Yakhesaṁ Vajināṁ 70*, "the image of a Yakṣa made in the year 70 of the Vajjis."[67] Sircar agrees with the date suggested by Cunningham but reads them as [*Yakhe*] *Acachanīvīke* (= *Yakṣaḥ Atyakṣayanīvīkaḥ:*) and *Yakhe* [*Sa*] *vaṭananḍe* (= *Yakṣaḥ Saṁvṛtanandaḥ*; *Yadwā – Saṁvartanandaḥ*; *Yadwā – oānandaḥ*) respectively.[68]

Table II : Inscribed Matrices and Sealings of the Post-Mauryan Period

Sl. No.	Period	Object	Symbol	Legend	Shape	Size
1	100 BCE - 0 C.E.	Matrix	*Śaṁkha, Triśūla, Wheel, Swāstika*	*Gopālasa*	Oval	1.12″ x 0.75″
2	150 B.C.E. - 100 C.E.	Sealing	No Symbol	*Subhāva(vā)śa(sa)* (Fig. 1 B8)	Oval	0.6″ x 0.3″
3	150 B.C.E. - 100 C.E.	Matrix	No Symbol	*Buddharakhitasa*	N/A	N/A
4	100 C.E. - 300 C.E.	Sealing	*Plan of building*	*Saghasa* (Fig. 1 A1)	Oval	1.45″ x 1.3″
5	100 C.E. - 300 C.E.	Sealing	No Symbol	*Roha (i) ni (ṇi)* (Fig. 1 B5)	Oval	0.6″ x 0.4″

Courtesy: (1) ARASI 1912-13, 1916; (3) Kuraishi, 1931; (2, 4, 5) Altekar & Mishra, 1951-55.

Inscriptions of the Gupta Period

Forty-four readable inscribed objects of the period are known, of which thirty-three are on sealings, ten are on potsherds, and one is on a stone-slab. Most of them are engraved with individual names, while a few are related to Buddhism. All these inscriptions are reported at Kumrahār.

Spooner found four sealings having a *dharmacakra* in the centre and two deer on either side with incomplete legends *Bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, and *Śṛ-suapī-bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*[69] (seal of the community of monks belonging to the great monastery of *Suapī*). The term *bṛhad* or large alludes that it was a great monastery.

Three sealings reported at Sārnāth of the Gupta period also have wheel-and-deer emblems with the legends *Śṛ-Saddharmma-cakre Mūla-gandhyakuṭyām* (In the *Mūlagandhakuṭī* of the Exalted one in the illustrious *Saddharmacakra* or the wheel of the good law)[70] and *Śṛ-Gupta-Siṁhasya*. The legend on the third sealing became indistinct.[71] A sealing preserved in Lucknow Museum also had a *dharmacakra* in the centre and two deer on either side with the legend *Śṛ-Dvītavanārāma-mahāvihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghsya* (Of the community of reverend friars belonging to the great Convent of *Dvītavanārāma*) of early Gupta period.[72] Nālandā also produced the wheel-and-deer

device with the legend *Śṛ-Nālandā-Mahāvihārīyārya-bhikṣu-saṁghasya* of the post-Gupta period.[73] At Antīcak (Bhagalpur district, Bihar), two seals with the wheel-and-deer symbol with two monasteries' names are found. One sealing (9th-10th century C.E.) has a legend in three lines that reads *Śṛ-Rājayagrara(ha)-Mahāvihāre-(bhikṣu-saṁghasya)* seal of the great monastery of a Royal house. Another sealing (12th century C.E.) was found in a fragmentary condition, and the deer on the right side of the wheel and legend are partially lost; however, with reconstruction, the legend can be read as *Śṛ-mjjaya or (rājjaya)-vihāra-(bhikṣu-saṁghasya)*.[74]

Sealings with the same device were also recovered from Kasiā (Kuśīnagar) with different legends of the period between 600 C.E. to 900 C.E., viz., *Śṛ-Mahāparinirvāṇa-vihāriyārya-bhikṣu-saṁghasya* (Of the community of the reverend friars belonging to the great Convent of the blessed Great Diocese), *Śṛ-Bandhan-Mahāvihāreārya-bhikṣu-saṁghasya* (Of the community of reverend friars belonging to the great Convent of the sacred Coronation), *Śṛmad-Īraṇḍa-mahāvihāriyārya-bhikṣu-saṁghasya* (Of the community of reverend friars belonging to the great Convent of Īraṇḍa).[75] Here, the point is to be noted those sealings have legends *Śṛ-Mahāparinirvāṇa-vihāriyārya-bhikṣu-saṁghasya* found the period ranging from the 6th-7th century C.E. to the 10th-11th century C.E., but the Guptan sealings with the same legend do not have the wheel-and-deer device but have a coffin between two śāl trees.[76] The wheel-and-deer symbol appeared on it in the post-Gupta periods on Kasiā seals.[77]

All these specimens of different periods, territories, and legends suggest that the emblem, which originally indicates the Buddha's first sermon in the Deer park of Sārnāth, had gradually become a common Buddhist symbol for many Buddhist monasteries in the post-Gupta period. It was introduced in copper plates also, as Bloch found that four or five copper plates of the Pāla dynasty had a wheel-and-deer emblem.[78] Tibetan Buddhist sacred texts contain rules regarding the use of seals by Buddhist monks in which it is prescribed that:

> a man of the religious order must have on his seal or stamp a circle with two deer on opposite sides and below them the name of the founder of the vihāra.[79]

So, Vogel suggests that the rule was first introduced in India. Traces of the law can be seen in a sealing of the Gupta period found at Sārnāth, which has a wheel-and-deer symbol with a legend *Śṛ-Gupta-Siṁhasya* (of Gupta-Siṁha), which seems to be the name of an individual or most probably the founder of the monastery. But, based on seals and sealings found at Patna, Kasiā, Sārnāth, Nālandā, and Antīcak, it can assume that the rule was gone through changes, and by the new regulation, monasteries were prescribed to use the wheel-and-deer emblem instead of individual men of the religious order, and the name of founders of the monasteries was also replaced with monasteries names.

Altekar found three oval-shaped sealings, which have the wheel-and-deer emblem with different legends. The biggest has a legend in two lines in unreadable condition but probably represents the name of a monastery (Fig. 1. A3). Other sealings read *Sarvsya Sambhūti* or (*Sukrītī*) (Fig. 1. A6), *Visvamitra* (Sans. Viśwamitra) (Fig. 1 B13) represent some benedictory formulas or keywords, which must be associated with any conference or event. It seems that monasteries of the city used to organise meetings on specific events, where they issued sealings engraved with the same symbol but different legends, wherein legends most probably represented the themes of conferences.

Altekar and Mishra found one of the most remarkable sealings that have a tree on its upper half and beneath a legend in two lines that reads *Śṛ-ārogya-vihāre-bhikṣu-saṁghasya* (seal of the monastic community in the sanatorium-monastery)[80] (Fig. 1 A5). It is the evidence of hospital-cum-monastery of the Gupta period, one of the earliest epigraphic evidence for a hospital in India. The same trench also produced two inscriptions on two different potsherds with the legends *Ārogyavihāre* (In the Sanatorium-cum-monastery) (Fig. 2 B4) and *(Dha)nvantareḥ* (of Dhanvantari) (Fig. 2 A2). The legend *Dhanvantari* might be the principal physician of the *Ārogyavihāra*, or it would be a post of the head of the physicians.[81] These three inscriptions indicate that a well-flourishing hospital-cum-monastery was active during the Gupta period. Faxian stated that in the Gupta

period, charitable hospitals used to be regulated here by the communities of Vaiśyas.[82] Zysk suggested that this philanthropic hospital was perhaps an *ārogyavihāra* (health house) of the Buddhist monastery, and the inscriptions mentioned above represent the same *ārogyavihāra*.[83]

It also indicates that monasteries did not function merely as religious and educational institutions but also worked as hospitals and dispensaries.Traces of the monasteries served as hospitals and medical centres found in *Vinaya Piṭaka*. It quotes that once Buddha found a sick monk lying alone in his cell, and no one was there for caring him. So, he called upon a meeting and preached to monks :

> Ye O Bhikkhus, have no mothers and no fathers who might wait upon you! If ye, O Bhikkhus, wait not upon the other, who is there indeed who will wait upon you? Whosoever, O Bhikkhus, wait upon me, he should wait upon the sick.

Elsewhere in the text mentions that in Rājagṛha, Jīvak, the well-known physician did treatment to sick monks and lay people in *vihāras*, and monks nursed them and provided food and medicines. The collaborative works of physicians and monks within the *vihāras* complex later might be developed as separate body functioned as hospitals under the surveillance of the monastic community, and the sealing and inscribed potsherds mentioned above are an example of it.

Was there any separate allowance made by any individual or state for hospital and dispensaries existed within the *vihāras* in Buddha's period is not known to me, but medicines or food items like ghee used for curing diseases was not easily procurable for monks, as *Buddhaghoṣa* informed me that a monk died in Aśoka's reign, because he was unable to get a handful of ghee for the treatment of his ailment. The incident brought Aśoka great grief, and to prevent such an incident, he constructed four big dispensaries on the four city gates and granted a sum of one lakh per day for these philanthropic dispensaries.[84] So, there should be no doubt that he also provided medical necessities for health houses managed by monks in

monasteries. These hospitals and dispensaries continued in later periods also, but in the Gupta period, such hospitals were maintained by the Vaiśya families or the wealthy business classes.

Sealing with the legend *Tambolikarmasya* (Fig. 1 B10) could refer to a guild or trade union of betel-sellers.[85] Other inscribed sealings like *Chatrasya*, *Sawarasya*, *Dharmmapr(i)yasya*, *Ṣaṣṭhīdāsa*, *ma-pu-tra-sya-vi(va)*, *ghu-ra-te-ra*[86], *Bhāgasi(ṁ)hasya* (Fig. 1 A4), *Iśwarada(ā)sa* (Fig. 1 A10), *Rāmaswāmī* (Fig. 1 C7), *Śarma* (Fig. 1 A11), *Sidhathasa* (Fig. 1 B6), *Swāmīnāga* (Fig. 1 B3), *Viṣṇunandī* (Fig. 1 A7), *(Nā)gadina* (Fig. 1 B4), *Aṁśumāna* (Fig. 1 B12) represent individual names. A legend *Cero* on a stone fragment of an unknown period was also found.[87]

A distinct oval-shaped sealing with double impressions (1" X .7"& 1.75" X 1.35") was found at Kumrahār. One impression has a humped bull or *nandī* on the upper half, and the other has three devices in which the left seems to be a *triśūla*. Legends of both impressions are blurred. The seal impressions of two and three different authorities on a single-sealing of the Gupta period was found at Basārh on a large scale, representing the name of individuals. Bloch believes these are mainly inscribed with individual names, primarily representing persons belonging to the corporate world or commercial activities. As he says:

> two or even more of the seals of private individuals are found in combinations with each other or with the seal of the guild of bankers, etc., of which evidently most of them were members. It looks as if during those days something like a modern chamber of commerce existed in upper India at some big trading centre, perhaps at Pataliputra.[88]

If Bloch's statement is accepted, and the sealing with multiple impressions is considered, it can be said that the chamber of commerce existed in Pāṭaliputra during the first century B.C.E., which continued in the Gupta period also. B. P. Sinha proposes that:

> the two impressions probably represented two sections of the institution. The letter with which the sealing had to be sent possibly concerned both of the sections.[89]

As discussed earlier, sealings with two or more impressions represent the house of commerce, whose main centre would be Pāṭaliputra, or probably meant two sections of the institutions. There may be another angle to this sealing. As the devices (*naṅdī* and *triśūla*) on it are associated with Śiva, so it might be a religious token representing two religious institutions or expressing the individual's belief in the Saiva sect; and if it was a sacred token, then there is the possibility that in the Gupta period, religious institutions used to work jointly and, during any events, released such types of tokens.

An oval-shaped sealing has a pair of *pādukā* or human feet symbol on the upper half; below it, two parallel lines divide it into two halves, and the lower half has a legend indistinct reading *Ba.dhara* (Fig. 1 B2). Impressions of human feet on sealings were not uncommon during the Gupta period, and sites like Basārh (Vaiśālī) produced many sealings with the same symbol.[90] The occurrence of a similar device on sealings does not specify a particular religious sect because *pādukās* became the emblem for Buddha, Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Jain Tīrthaṅkaras in the Gupta period.

Interestingly, around thirty seals and sealings having individual names ranging from the Mauryan up to the Gupta period have been reported so far, but none of them is engraved with any professional titles; in contrast, many individuals' seals from Basārh, Sārnāth, Kosāmbī, etc. were impressed with their names and professional designations, viz., *prathamkulika*, *kulika*, *śreṣṭhī*, *sārthavāha*, nigam, etc.[91]

A potsherd with the incomplete legend *manyāḥ*(?) is reported from the Gupta layer, which Altekar restored as *(Śra)manyāḥ*(?) and concluded that nuns were used to living in the monasteries of Pāṭaliputra (Fig. 2 B1).[92] The inscribed potsherd bears the legend *Buddhadevālaya nimittam*[93] (for the temple of the Buddha), which indicates the donation tradition for constructing a Buddhist temple during the Gupta period (Fig. 2 B6). Another inscription on a potsherd read *Dhruvanandīsya* (Dhruvanandinah) is found (Fig. 2 B5). A sealing bearing a similar name *Dhruvanandīḥ* of the same period is reported from Vaiśālī.[94]

Table III: Inscribed Sealings (300 C.E. – 600 C.E.)

Sl. No.	Upper Half (Symbol)	Lower Half (Legend)	Shape	Size
1	*Triśūla* with subscript wheel (centre), *Śaṅkha* (left), *Swastika* (right)	*Chatrasya*	Oval	0.75″ x 0.62″
2	Upper half is uncertain, Underneath two parallel horizontal lines with ends upturned	*Savarasya*	Circular	1″
3	Decorated wheel (centre), Small round bosses (either side)	Indistinct	Circular	0.62″
4	Humped bull (left), Long horizontal line (below)	*Dharmmapr(i)yasya*	Circular	0.87″
5	Large standing bull, A short thick horizontal line (below)	*Ṣaṣṭhīdāsa*	Oval	1″ x 0.75″
6	*Dharmacakra* (centre), Two Deer (either side)	*Śrī-suapī-bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*	N/A	N/A
7	*Dharmacakra* (centre), Two Deer (either side)	*Bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*	N/A	N/A
8	*Boddhivṛkṣha*, Conches (either side)	*Śṛī-ārogyavihāre-bhikṣusaṁghasya* (Fig. 1 A5)	Oval	1.65″ x 1.3″
9	An indistinct symbol	*Swāmīnāga* (Fig. 1 B3)	Oval	7″ x 4″
10	Wheel (Top), Conches (Below) (either side)	*Śarma* (Fig. 1 A11)	Oval	0.55″ x 4″
11	An indistinct symbol	*Bhāgasi(ṁ)hasya* (Fig. 1 A4)	Oval	1.25″ x 0.9″
12	A spouted vessel with a lid (centre), a Conch (left), and a Snake (right)	*Tambolikarmsya* (Fig. 1 B10)	Oval	9″ x 7″
13	*Dharmacakra (*centre), Conch (either side)	*Aṁśumāna (*Probably) (Fig. 1 B12)	Circular	0.5″ x 0.45″
14	*Peacock*	Indistinct (Fig. 1 B1)	Oval	0.7″ x 0.5″
15	*Dharmacakra*	*Devam…* (Fig. 1 B14)	Oval	0.7
16	*Dharmacakra*	*Rāmaswāmī* (Fig. 1 C7)	Oval	1.05″ x 0.8″
17	*Nandī*	*Viṣṇunandī* (Fig. 1 A7)	Oval	0.9″ x 0.8″

18	*Nandī*	*Iśwarada(ā)sa* (Fig. 1 A10)	Oval	1' x 0.85″
19	Two impressions side by side (left smaller, right bigger) a. Smaller impression - *Nandī* (upper half) b. Larger impression - Three symbols (upper half)	 Indistinct letter in one line (lower half). Indistinct letter in two lines (lower half) (Fig. 1 A8)	 Oval Oval	 1' X 0.7″ 1.75" x 1.35″
20	*Dharmacakra* (centre), Two indistinct animals (either side)	*Sarvsya Sambhūti* (Fig. 1 A6)	Oval	1.1″ x .8″
21	*Dharmacakra*	*Disa.kari(ī)ndra* (Fig. 1 A2)	Oval	1.3″ x 1″
22	*Pādukā* or Human feet	*Ba.dhara*(?) (Fig. 1 B2)	Oval	0.65″ x 0.5″
23	*Dharmacakra* (centre), Deer (either side)	*Viśvāmitra* (Fig. 1 B13)	Oval	1.05″ x .7″
24	Altar (?)	*Tu…* (Fig. 1 C4)	Oval	1.4″ x .6″
25	*Śaṅkha* (?)	*Sidhathasa* (Fig. 1 B6)	Oval	0.5″ x 0.5″
26	*Dharmacakra* (centre), Two indistinct symbols (either side)	*(Nā)gadina* Indistinct (Fig. 1 B4)	Circular	0.7″ x 0.6″
27	*Dharmacakra*	*Dharma* (Fig. 1 C1)	Oval	1.3″ x 1.25″
28	*Nandī* in front of a tree	*Bhadrasena* (Fig. 1 A9)	Circular	1.05″ x 0.7″
29	Rays darting out on all sides	*Bhamasyandi…* (Fig. 1 C3)	Oval	1.2″ x 0.5″
30	*Dharmacakra*	*Su(sa)ttato*	Circular	1″

Courtesy: (1-5) ARASI 1912-13; (6-7) Kuraishi, 1931; (8-30) Altekar & Mishra, 1959.

List of inscribed potsherds of the Gupta period[95]

1. *[Ā]rogyavihāre* – 'In the Sanatorium-cum-monastery' (Fig. 2 B4)
2. *Dhruvanandīsya* (Grammatically correct – Dhruvanandīnaḥ) (Fig. 2 B5)
3. *[Dha]nvantareḥ* – 'of Dhanvantari' (Fig. 2 A2)
4. *[Śra]manyāḥ* (?) (Fig. 2 B1)
5. *Bhasarva* (Fig. 2 B2)
6. *Na…* (Fig. 2 A5)

7. *Nana*
8. *Jīvan*. Note – may be the name of an individual. (Fig. 2 A4)
9. *Budhadeva[ā]layāni [mittam]* – 'for the temple of the Buddha' (Fig. 2 B6)
10. *Damma*

Discussion and Conclusion

In literature, Pāṭaliputra is entitled as the 'permanent home of Saraswatī', and the Goddess was its protected deity. Chinese accounts inform that the walls and pillars of palaces were engraved with inscriptions; two among them, i.e., the *Jambūdwīpa* pillar and *Ni-li* pillar erected by Aśoka, were the most notable. Various archaeologists conducted many search operations to recover them, but all efforts were unsuccessful. Though many spots of the city were explored extensionally or accidentally in a hundred years of era (1892-1992) and produced enormous antiquities of various types of different periods, the treasury of inscribed objects remained minimal, and no major inscriptions have been found, so far.

In fact, except Kumrahār, no other site of the city was studied extensively, and places which produced antiquities were either excavated in minimal areas like one or two trenches or yielded antiquities accidentally during construction works in the city. Factors like dense population, undefined actual boundaries of the old city, waterlogging, underground water, monsoon, and landowners' objections are responsible factors that constantly generate obstacles in the way of the extensive archaeological works.

The inscribed objects recovered from the city are not highly informative; however, a few seals, sealings and inscribed potsherds are crucial for history writing. In fact, the nature of these objects, which consist of a few words, decreases their value from the historical perspective, especially when they bear individual names. Therefore, many inscribed antiquities found in this city remained uninformative. Nevertheless, much information of historical value might be extracted from some inscribed objects, like seals and sealings connected with

Buddhism, in order to establish that Pāṭaliputra, from its early phase to the decline, was an active harbour of the Buddhist Faith. On the other side, devices such as *Triśūla*, *Naṇdī* and *Swāstika*, *Saṇkha*, and Human feet may represent that the Brāhmaṇic cult equally flourished in this legendary city.

These inscribed objects collating with monumental vestiges and literature represent the continuation of monastic institutions in the city from the Mauryan period up to the Gupta period. *Dighavata Palama Saghasa* is perhaps one of the earliest seals which provide the name of a Buddhist monastery from the Mauryan period. The sealings, like *Śṛ-ārogyavihāre bhikṣusaṁghasya*, *Śṛ-suapī-bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya, Bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, and inscribed potsherds like *Ārogyavihāre*, *[Dha]nvantareḥ*, *[Śra]manyāḥ*, *Budhadeva[ā]layani [mittam]* attest that Kumrahār was a monastic area, where many monastic organisations were flourishing during the Gupta period. The sealing *Śṛ-ārogyavihāre bhikṣusaṁghasya* represents another aspect of the Buddhist monasteries that they served as hospitals and dispensaries; and by Faxian's travelogue, it can be concluded that their maintenance was under the control of Vaiśya communities or the wealthy business class of the city.

Seals found at Patna help to link the monastic development over the period. The sealing *Dīghvata Palam Saṁghasa* of the Mauryan period does not have any device, while monastic sealings of the Gupta period represent two different monasteries with different devices. Seals and sealings of the Gupta period at other sites like Kasiā (Kuśīnagar), Sārnāth, Kosāmbī, etc., showed monastic sealings with various devices. But the tradition of using separate symbols on seals and sealings was abandoned from the 5th-6th century C.E., and a law was introduced to use a uniform emblem for all monasteries. For this, the wheel-and-deer symbol representing the first sermon of the Buddha's preaching at the deer park was selected as the common emblem; afterwards, monastic seals from Kasiā, Sārnāth, Nālandā, and Antīcak of later periods were engraved with the same logo.

It is also noted that monastic communities of the Gupta period did not use the term *ārya* (reverend) in their seals, viz., *Śṛ-ārogyavihāre bhikṣusaṁghasya*, *Śṛ-suapī-bṛhad-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, *Śṛ-Mahāparinirvāṇa-vihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, *Śṛ-Dvītavanārāma-mahāvihāra-bhikṣu-saṁghsya*. But seals of the post-Guptan eras from Kasiā, Sārnāth, Nālandā, viz., *Śṛ-Mahāparinirvāṇa-vihāriy**ārya**-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, *Śṛ-Bandhan-Mahāvihārīy**ārya**-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, *Śṛmad-Īraṇḍa-mahāvihāriy**ārya**-bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, *Śṛ-Nālandā-Mahāvihārīy**ārya**- bhikṣu-saṁghasya*, etc. adopted term in their seals.

A series of ghāts (piers) of the Mauryan/post-Mauryan period, more than 700 feet long, have been found on the southern bank of the old bed of river Son, which once used to flow south of the city and served as a ditch to defend the city.[96] These piers made of baked bricks are found a few hundred metres north and northwest of this monastic settlement. It worked as a harbour for the monastic settlements to connect it with other territories via waterways. The length of ghāts, of which more than 700 feet were exposed, but neither of its ends was traced, suggests that this mega construction was not built merely for religious transportation but also served as the dockyard for loading and unloading goods for commercial purposes. The discovery of matrices, sealings, and inscribed potsherds certify that the site was active in trade and commerce. Sealing with the legend *Tambolikarmsya* represents a commercial guild. Sinha believes this old Son channel was the medium to bring gigantic Aśokan pillars for constructing eighty pillared halls.[97] All these discussions conclude that Kumrahār was one of the centres for the commercial activities of Pāṭaliputra.

It is worth-noting that Kumrahār and Bulandībāg are the only sites producing matrices, sealings, and inscribed pottery. Sites like Śāh Kamāl Road, Mahābīrghāt, Begum kī Hawelī and Gulzārbāg Government Press Playground yielded a lot of potsherds from all cultural strata but do not produce any inscribed objects. So, the absence of seals and potsherds indicates that these areas might be residential zones in all periods. However, this hypothesis is based on slender evidence, and further findings may reopen the discussion window.

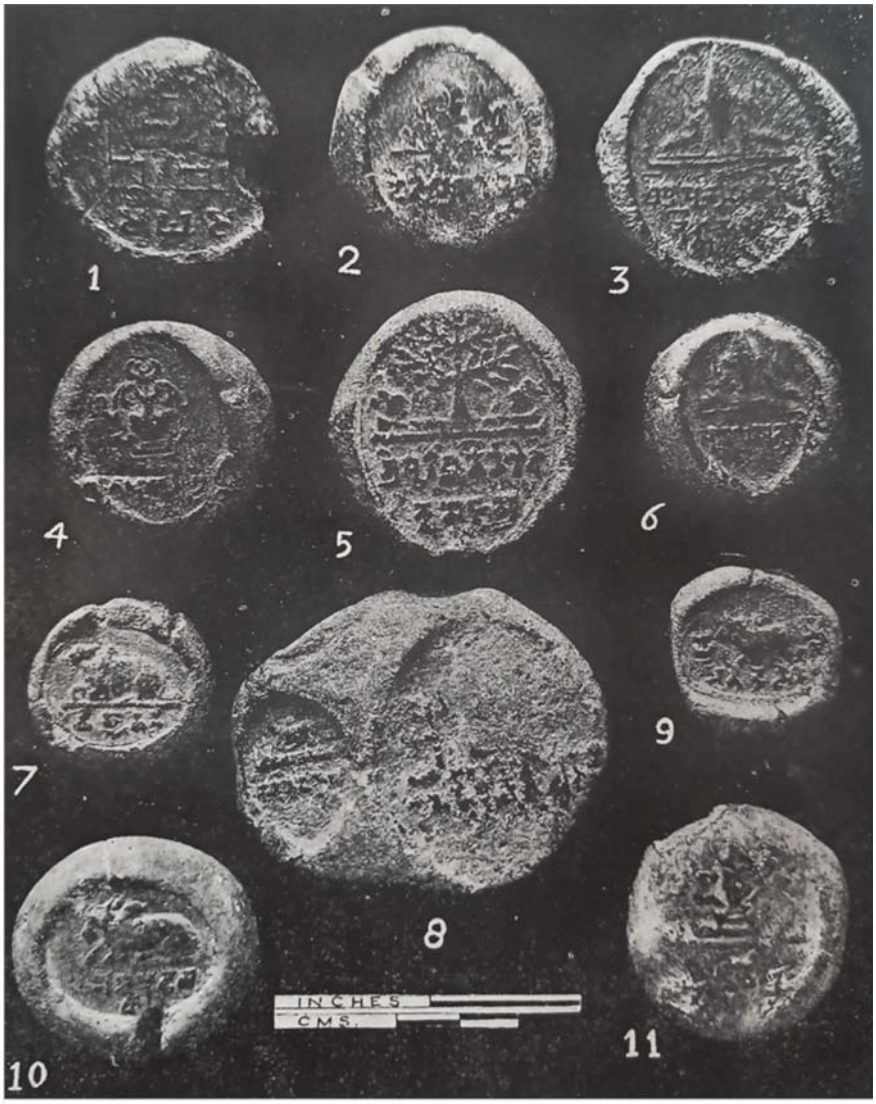
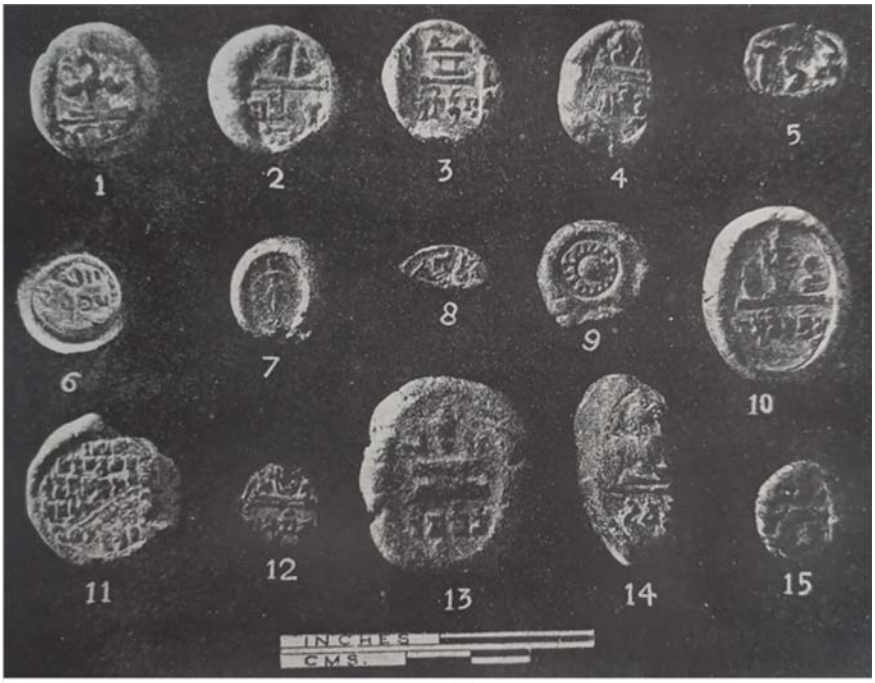
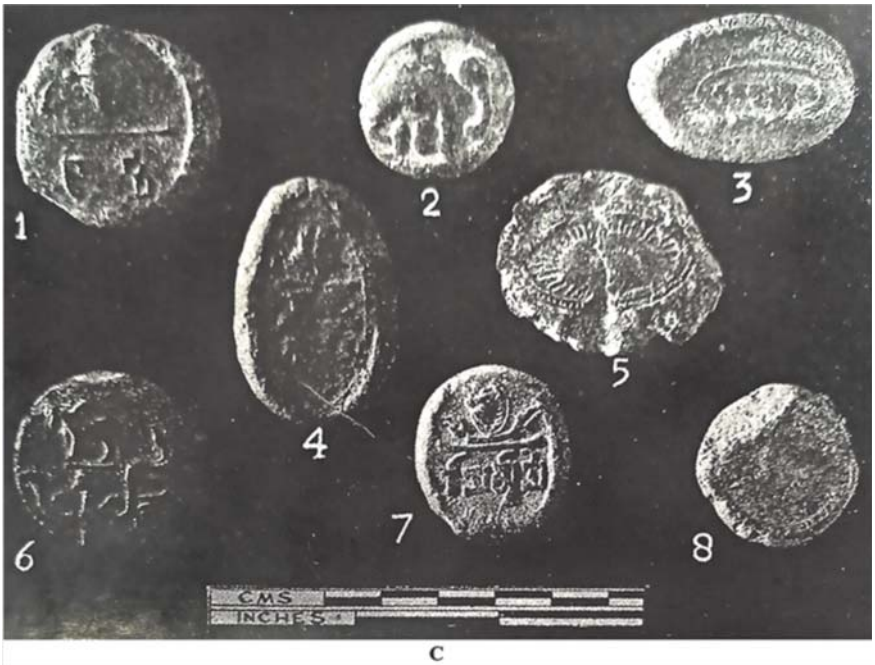


Fig. 1: Inscribed Terracotta Sealings, Kumrahār Excavations, 1951-55



B



C

Courtesy: Altekar & Mishra, 1959

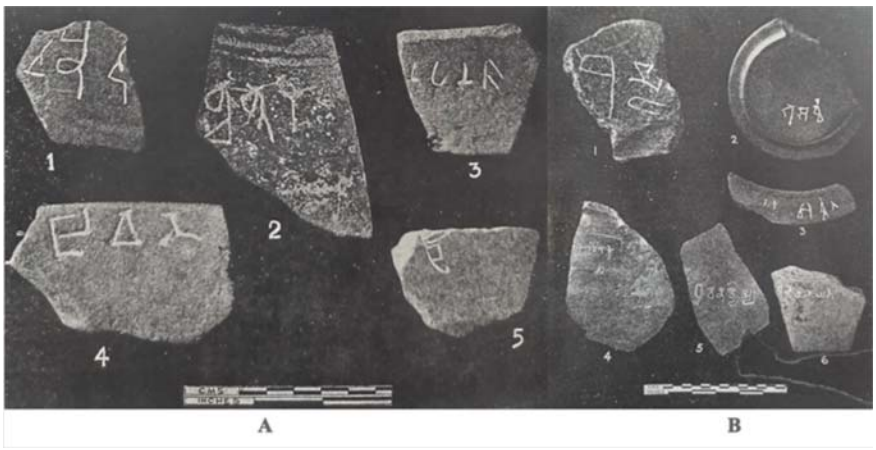


Fig. 2: Inscribed Potsherds, Kumrahār Excavations, 1951-55
Courtesy: Altekar & Mishra, 1959.

Fig. 3: Inscribed Terracotta Sealings, Pot, and Steatite Disc, before Kumrahār Excavations, 1951-55

(A) Inscribed Terracotta Sealings from Bulandībāg; (B, C, & D) from Kumrahār; (E) Inscribed Pot, Bulandībāg; (F) Inscribed Seals found on the Bed of Gaṅgā in front of Patna; (G) Inscribed Steatite Disc, Kadamkuān.

Courtesy: (A & E) Ghosh, 1926-27; (B, C & D) Spooner, 1912-13; Cunningham, 1882; Jayaswal, 1935.

Fig. 4: Inscribed Life-size Stone Images

Courtesy: A. Cunningham, 1882

Notes

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[2] H. Sastri, *Magadhan Literature*, (Lectures Delivered at Patna University in December 1920 and April 1921), Patna University, Patna, 1923, p. 23.

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[5] "Asti mahītalatilak Saraswatīkulagṛhaṁ Mahānagaram.
Nāmnām Pāṭaliputraṁ paribhūtapurandarasthānam." *Kuṭṭanī-mata*, 175; A. M. Shastri, op. cit., 1975, p. 172.

[6] Durgaprasad and A. P. Parab (eds.), *The Kathāsaritasāgara of Somadevabhatta*, 4th Edition, Nirnaya-Sagar Press, Bombay, 1930, p. 7; C. H. Tawney (trans.),

Kathasaritsagara, Vol. I, J. W. Thomas at Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1880., p. 11.

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[8] C. H. Tawney, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 116.

[9] Ibid., p. 618-19; C. H. Tawney, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 7-9, 56-57, 449; J. C. Jain, *Life in Ancient India as depicted in the Jaina Canons*, New Book Company, 1947, p. 174.

[10] "Śrūyate ca Pāṭaliputre śāstrakāraparīkṣā
Atropavarṣavarṣāviha Pāṇinipiṅgalāviha vyāḍiḥ
Vararucipataṅjali eha parīkṣitāḥ khyātimupjagmuḥ
Ithaṁ Sabhāpatibhūrtvā yaḥ kāvyāni parīkṣate
Yaśastasya jagadvyāpi sa sukhī tatra tatra ca.", *Kāvyamīmāṁśā*, I. 10; H. Sastri, op. cit., p. 24.

[11] C. H. Tawney, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 115.

[12] B. Nahata (trans.), *Vividha Tirtha Kapla of Jinprabha Suri,* First Edition, Sri Jain Swetambar Nakoda Parswanath Tirtha Mevanagar Rajasthan, Vardhman Mudranalaya, Varanasi, 1978, p. 156; R. C. C. Fynes, 'Pataliputra in a Medieval Guidebook', *South Asian Studies*, Vol. 15 (1), 1999, p. 51.

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[26] Ibid., p. 37.

[27] Ibid., p. 43.

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[29] P. C. Mukharji, op. cit., 1898, p. 13.

[30] *ARASI, 1912-13*, 79, 82-84.

[31] *ARASI, 1926-27*, 135-40.

[32] *ARASI, 1935-36*, 54-55.

[33] K. P. Jayaswal, 'Jaina Image of Maurya Period', *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Vol. XXIII*, Pt. 1, (130-33), 1937.

[34] A. S. Altekar and V. Mishra, *A Report on Kumrahar Excavations*, K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1959, pp. 103-06.

[35] B. P. Sinha and L. A. Narain, *Pataliputra Excavations (1955-56)*, The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Bihar, Patna, 1970, p. 9.

[36] *Indian Archaeology 1970-71– A Review*, p. 6.

[37] *Indian Archaeology 1991-92– A Review*, p. 6.

[38] *ASASI,1912-13*, 79, 82-84.

[39] A. S. Altekar and V., Mishra, op. cit., 1959, pp. 103-06.

[40] Ibid., pp. 52-53, 103.

[41] Kumrahār is thoroughly excavated and studied, which produced numerous antiquities, but very few pre-Mauryan and Mauryan antiquities found here.

[42] Excavation reports display the rich material prosperity, with many superstructures are overlapping each other viz., two trenches of Mahabirghat measuring 48' X 15' and 51' X 15' yielded at least 10 different stratigraphic periods of brick structures along with 15 ring wells. Antiquities of these sites also demonstrate the material affluence.

[43] K. P. Jayaswal, 'Terra-cottas Dug out at Patna', *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. III, No. 2, (125-26), December 1935, 125.

[44] A. Cunningham, *Report of a Tour in Bihar and Bengal in 1879-80 from Patna to Sunargaon*, Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. XV, Calcutta, 1882, Plate II.

[45] Measurement of seals found by Cunningham has not been noted by him. The measurements of seals are given by me based on the drawings of seals along with the scale provided by him.

[46] K. R.Chandra, *Prakrit-Hindi Koca*, 1987, p. 872.

[47] In Brahmi form, Spooner reads the first two letter as alphabetic and third as numeric.

[48] *ARASI*,1912-13, 78.

[49] Ibid., 82-83.

[50] *ARASI 1926-27,* 139.

[51] Ibid., 140.

[52] M. H.Kuraishi, *Lists of Ancient Monuments Protected under the Act VII of 1904 in the province of Bihar and Orissa*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, Vol. LI, Government of India, Calcutta, 1931, p. 109.

[53] Although the precise date is not mentioned by Spooner, it seems to belong to the Mauryan era. *ARASI*, 1912-13, pp. 82-83.

[54] A. C. Woolner, *Introduction to Prakrit*, The Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1917, p.181.

[55] K. P. Jayaswal, op. cit., 1935, 125.

[56] *ARASI, 1912-13*, p. 82.

[57] Altekar A. S. and V. Mishra, op. cit., p. 103.

[58] Ibid., pp. 38, 103.

[59] Buddhist sacred texts provide information that a monastery (*vihāra*) was constructed after consulting experienced or elder monks selected by the *Saṁgha*. Ibid., p. 103 (footnote 2); R. Sankrityayan (trans.), *Vinaya Pimaka*, 1935, pp. 11-12.

[60] Altekar A. S. and V. Mishra, op. cit., p. 103.

[61] Ibid., p. 107.

[62] M. H.Kuraishi, op. cit., p. 109.

[63] Ibid., p. 109. Writing '*la*' instead of '*ra*' was a common feature of Magadhan people in the Mauryan period, as it is commonly seen in Aśokan edicts. For example, a sealing bearing the same name with dialectic changes *Budhalakhitasa* is found at Vaiśāli of Maurya period. Another such example of dialectic change can be seen in a sealing from Bulandībāg with a legend *Devarakṣhitasya* engraved as *Devalakhitśa*. But, this specialty of Magadhan writing was changed during the post-Maurya period, so the seal belongs to the post-Mauryan period.

[64] A. Cunningham, op. cit., 1882, p. 3.

[65] K. P. Jayaswal, 'Statues of Two Śaiśunaka Emperors (483-409 B. C.)', *The Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. V, (88-106), Patna, 1919, 96-97.

[66] R. Chanda, 'Inscriptions on Two Patna Statues in the Indian Museum', *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XLVIII (25-28),1919, 25-26, 27.

[67] R. C. Majumdar, 'Alleged Úaisunâga Statues',*The Indian Antiquary*,Vol. XLVIII (29-36),1919, 29-34.

[68] D. C. Sircar (ed), *Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization Vol. I*, 1965, p. 94.

[69] M. H.Kuraishi, op. cit., p. 109.

[70] *ARASI, 1906-07*, 75; *ARASI, 1907-08*, 66.

[71] *ARASI, 1903-04*, 102.

[72] *ARASI, 1906-07*, 58-59.

[73] *ARASI, 1916-17*, 43; *ARASI, 1922-23*, 276-78; *ARASI, 1930-31*, *1931-32*, *1932-33*, *1933-34*, 277, 281.

[74] B. S. Verma, 'Antichak Excavations-2 (1971 – 1981)', *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 102*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 2011, 162-65.

[75] *ARASI, 1905-06*, pp. 83-84; *ARASI, 1906-07*, 62-63.

[76] *ARASI, 1906-07*, 58; *ARASI, 1909-10*, 71.

[77] *ARASI, 1905-06*, 83-84; *ARASI, 1906-07*, 62-63.
[78] *ARASI, 1906-07*, 58.
[79] *ARASI, 1906-07*, 59.
[80] A. S. Altekar and V. Mishra, op. cit., pp. 52-53, 103.
[81] Ibid., p. 107.
[82] Legge, J., op cit., p. 79.
[83] K. G. Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India: Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery*, Indian Medical Tradition, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991, p. 45.
[84] N. A.Jayawickarma, op. cit., pp. 46-47.
[85] A. S. Altekar, and V. Mishra, op. cit., p. 104.
[86] *ARASI*, 1912-13, 82-84.
[87] M. H. Kuraishi, op. cit., p. 109.
[88] *ARASI, 1903-04*, 104.
[89] B. P. Sinha and S. R. Roy, *Vaisali Excavations 1958-62*, Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Bihar, Patna, 1969, p. 126.
[90] *ARASI, 1903-04*, 104; Sinha & Roy, *Vaisali Excavations*, 1969, p. 113.
[91] *ARASI, 1903-04*, 101-22.
[92] Altekar, A. S. and V. Mishra, op. cit., p. 107.
[93] Altekar, A. S. and V. Mishra, op. cit., p. 107.
[94] K. Deva, and V. Mishra, *Vaisali Excavations: 1950*, Muzaffarpur, 1961, p. 57.
[95] A. S. Altekar and V. Mishra, op. cit., pp. 106-07.
[96] P. C.Mukharji, op. cit., 1898, p. 22; P. C.Mukharji, op. cit., 1903, pp. 77, 80.
[97] B. P. Sinha, *Directory of Bihar Archaeology*, Bihar Puravid Parishad, Patna, 2000, pp. 105.

Tribal Politics in Assam and the Deori Identity Formation

Lakhya Protim Nirmolia and Prafulla Nath

Abstract

The process of tribal awakening began in Assam between 1916 to 1933, upto the formation of the Tribal League. The legacy of the League was further carried out by various groups in the form of identity movements and other demands. The initial section of this paper historicises the tribal politics in Assam, the early political consciousness of the Bodos and Tribal League, bringing in the legacy of the Tribal League, and the second section discusses the Deori identity formation – formation of various organisations, preservation of culture, language as well as different demands of the Deori community.

Keywords: Tribal Awakening, Tribal League, Identity, Deori

Introduction

Identity politics has become an increasingly prominent feature of contemporary political discourse and practiced in many parts of the world. Identity politics generally refers to how individuals and groups define themselves based on shared attributes that become sources of solidarity and empowerment. It has emerged as a dominant force in the contemporary global world, shaping public opinion, policy and activism around issues of race, ethnicity, language, religion, sexuality and so forth. Thus, the issue of identity politics or the identity question has got considerable attention in academics as well as in popular perception.

Identity politics or the identity movement of various communities in Northeast India in general and Assam in particular has got considerable attention in the realm of popular media as well as in

academia. Assam is the home of numerous communities belonging to various racial and linguistic groups. Although many communities asserted their identity during colonial times, however, in post-colonial times this has become more forceful. This article explores the process of tribal identity formation in Assam from the colonial period in general and the identity formation of the Deori community in particular. Historicising the political consciousness of the Deoris, it looks at the formation of various organisations in the subsequent period that was instrumental in preserving and propagating the Deori culture and language as well as the very idea of Deori identity and demands associated with the movement.

Quest for Existence

Identity politics developed among the Plains Tribes of Assam during the colonial period. The Bodos of Assam during the colonial period initially started developing their literature, culture and language. At the same time, some educated Bodo leaders also asserted themselves politically, by demanding special measures from the colonial government for the Bodos.

In 1919, under the patronage and cooperation of Kalicharan Brahma[1], the Bodo Chatra Sanmilani[2] was founded in Dhubri. With the coming to the fore of educated people like Rupnath Brahma, Madaram Brahma etc. from among the Bodos, the community started raising its voice. The freedom movement played a role in the formation of various organisations such as the Guwahati Aadi Kaivarta Jati Hitkari Sabha (1914), Kaivarta Jati Hitkari Sabha (1921), Kachari Sanmilan (1921), Miri Sanmilan (1923 – 24), Assam Chutiya Sanmilan (1925) etc.[3]

The first organisation of the Bodos called *Habraghat Bodo Sanmilani* was formed in South Goalpara in 1912.[4] Under the auspices of the Sanmilani, Gangacharan Kachari and Narapati Chandra Kachari authored the first Bodo language book *Bodoni Phisa o Aayen*, published in 1915.[5] In 1918, the first Bodo literary organisation, the Dakshinkul Bodo Sahitya Sanmilan, was formed.[6] In 1919, the first Annual Conference of the Bodo Chatra Sanmilan was held at Kokrajhar where

Sobharam Brahmachaudhuri and Satishchandra Basumatary were elected as the President and Secretary respectively.[7] The Sanmilan campaigned for the spread of education among the Bodos as well as the safeguarding of trade and commerce. In 1924, *Bibar*, the first journal in the Bodo language, was published under the aegis of the Bodo students[8] from Cotton College. In addition to publishing independent writings by various authors on the Bodo language, literature and society, *Bibar* also played the role of a news magazine.

On January 4, 1929, the Bodo congregation of Goalpara District, the Bodo Yuvak Sanmilani, met the Simon Commission in Shillong and submitted a memorandum calling for the protection of the Bodo race, initiating the struggle for the reinforced Bodo self-identity.[9] The major demands mentioned in the memorandum were to give status to the Bodos based on the civilisation and heritage of Bodos and to record the Bodos as a distinct group in the Census, a separate electorate for the Bodos in the local and central council by arranging separate representatives for them, provision of separate seats for the Bodos in the Dhubri Local Board by arranging a separate electorate.

It also includes demands like providing compulsory pre-primary education for Bodos, provision of separate special scholarships for Bodo students in higher education and appointment of eligible Bodo people in higher-level government posts etc. It also asked to form a 'Bodo Regiment' for the Bodo people of Assam in the British-Indian army, stop the conspiracy regarding the transfer of Goalpara district over to Bengal and also demanded a sub-division either at Kokrajhar or at Haltugaon within the sub-division of Dhuburi.[10] The political consciousness among the Bodos can be gauged from this memorandum submitted to the Simon Commission. Moreover, Rupnath Brahma, the leader of the Bodos, won the assembly elections held in 1937 as per the Government of India Act 1935 as a candidate supported by the Tribal League.

The Bodo Sahitya Sabha (Bodo Literary Society) was formed in 1952 at the initiative of leaders of the Bodo community such as Madaram Brahma, Dwaren Brahma, Ishan Basumatary etc.[11] The Sabha

played an important role in the establishment of Bodo nationalism along with the development of the Bodo language. The All-Bodo Students Union (ABSU) was formed on the 15th of February 1967 with the vision of ensuring 'Justice, Dignity and Peace'.[12] The birth of the ABSU gave a whole new direction and much-needed strength to the Bodo movement.[13] During the initial years, the ABSU tried to safeguard and develop the socio-economy, education, culture, tradition, language and literature of the community[14] but the political aspiration of a separate homeland has been the principal objective of ABSU in the later period.[15] The students' body became the mouthpiece of the community and started representing the nationalist aspirations of the community.

The struggle for self-determination that erupted among the Bodos initially attracted the other tribes of the state such as the Karbi, the Dimasa, the Deori, Mising, Tiwa, Rabha, Hajong, etc. in the subsequent period. This paper discusses the process of identity formation, and mobilisation of the people of the Deori community by emphasising the tribal politics in Assam from the colonial period.

Tribal League

The Tribal League, which was established in 1933, was a common platform of the plains tribes of Assam. Since the formation of the Tribal League, the process of tribal awakening in Assam started. The numerically small, educated tribal elite attempted to define their tribal identity as a 'community of the Plains Tribes'.[16] Bhimbar Deori, a lawyer by profession along with some other educated tribal people like Rupnath Brahma, Yadav Chandra Khakhlari, Ravichandra Narzary, Dhirsingh Deori and Kark Chandra Doley were conscious about the rights, self-respect and self-determination of the tribal people and could realise that the conditions of the tribals would improve if everyone worked unitedly. As a result, a meeting was held on April 17, 1933, at Raha in Nagaon district that gave birth to a socio-political party called Assam Backward Plain Tribal League or Tribal League covering Bodo, Kachari, Deori, Rabha, Tiwa (Lalung), Mishing tribes of Assam.[17] The aim of the League was to fight against the social and

economic problems of the tribals. The two demands raised by the Tribal League in the first session[18] were — (1) in the proposed new system of governance, the backward castes of the plain areas of Assam should be treated as a common group rather than separately, and (2) seven seats should be reserved in the Legislative Assembly for the tribals. Due to the constant demand of the League, four out of the total 108 seats of the Assam Legislative Assembly were reserved for the plains tribals as per the Government of India Act enacted in 1935.[19]

The Tribal League clamoured for the preservation of the Line system[20], without which they felt that the entire tribal economy and culture would be jeopardised by the unrestrained influx of immigrants. From the first decade of the 20th century with the direct patronage of the colonial government, farmers from the Mymensingh, Rangpur and Sylhet districts of East Bengal were introduced to the agricultural lands of Assam. The local populations of Assam started losing land. Immigration and land aggression became major issues in Assam's politics[21] in the early 1920s. The Tribal League supported the Line System as a colonial intervention to safeguard tribal lands. But the system did not work in reality in the same manner as it existed on paper.[22] Taking advantage of the drawbacks of the Line System some local Marwari and even Assamese moneylenders financed the immigrants so that the latter could reclaim land, and expand the cultivation of jute, *ahu* rice, pulses and vegetables.[23] The Assamese opinion against the immigration issue was voiced through the Asamiya Samrakshini Sabha.[24] In December 1925, the Assam Association in a sitting at Nowgong urged the government to stop immigration.[25] The Assamese public demanded a rigid policy[26] to stop immigration from other provinces. Mahadev Sarmah, a member of the Legislative Council, raised a discussion on the issue of immigration in the Council on 23rd July 1927. Although the Council, by a majority vote, rejected the demand, the Government agreed to call an all-party conference to examine the issue.[27]

In September 1928, an all-party committee, with A. W. Botham as Chairman, conferred on the issue of migration. The committee

consisted of four British and five Indian members, including Saadulla and N. C. Bordoloi.[28] The committee recommended that the 'lines' should be reduced and the colonisation scheme should be developed as a way to prevent migration and protect the land of indigenous people. The main point of the colonisation scheme was not the division of boundaries between villages, but the fixation of land for migrants in terms of *mouza*.[29] Migrants were not permitted to buy or live on land outside the designated *mouza*.[30] The first colonisation scheme started in Nowgong in 1928, was successively followed by one each in the Barpeta and Mangaldai sub-divisions. Under all these schemes, a small family was to be given about 20 *bigha*s of land on payment of a premium. The areas allotted under the Nowgong scheme to 1,619 Muslim and 441 Hindu immigrant families amounted in all to 47,636 acres till March 1933.[31] During the six years preceding 1936, as many as 59 grazing, forest and village reserves had been thrown open in Nowgong under the colonisation scheme for settling immigrants. Out of the district's total occupied area of 5,41,160 acres – sown and followed – in 1936, 2,04,078 acres (37.7%) were under immigrant occupation, as against 62.3% still in the hands of indigenous people.[32] Many Muslim leaders were not satisfied with the Line System and colonisation policy of the government. They pressurised the government to give more land in Assam to migrants. On the other hand, Assamese leaders like Rohini Kumar Choudhary demanded a ban on migration and that migrants should be confined to specific terrains.[33] The necessity of the system as a protective measure was reiterated by Rabi Chandra Kachari in the following words, "There should be a Line system to protect the weak and backward people, without a Line of demarcation it is not possible to look into the interest of the poor people who require special protection".[34] Under pressure, the Government decided to constitute a committee and appointed F. W. Hockenhull, leader of the European party, to inquire into the working of the Line System.[35] The Hockenhull committee submitted a report in February 1938, which emphasised that the indigenous people alone would be unable, without the aid of immigrant settlers, to develop

the province's enormous wasteland resources within a reasonable period.[36] Of course, the committee in its unanimous report favoured the Line System and strong measures to protect tribal land.[37] The Bordoloi ministry, after much deliberation, agreed to evict all immigrant[38] squatters from areas declared 'protected tribal blocks' in the submontane region.[39] Following the report of the Line System committee, the Congress coalition government adopted a resolution on the subject, which was gazetted on 4th November 1939. Its main features were (a) denial of land settlement to anybody in the village and professional grazing reserves; (b) regulated settlement of landless people, including immigrants on available wastelands, subject to a holding of 30 *bigha*s per family; and (c) eviction of all immigrant squatters from areas declared 'protected tribal blocks', in the submontane region.[40] Before implementing the decision, the Bordoloi coalition ministry quit suddenly on 15th November 1939.[41] During the Saadullah ministry, the Muslim League again demanded the abolition of the Line System. But the Tribal League representatives in the Assembly strongly demanded more stringent legislation to stop land alienation and blocked efforts of the members of the Muslim League to abolish the Line System.[42]

In 1941, the Census began in Assam along with other parts of India. A bulletin of the League was taken out with the main objective of instructing the tribal people about enumerating themselves in the Census. According to the Tribal League, it does not matter what religion a tribal followed but the Census must identify him or her as 'tribal'. Assam had evoked widespread reactions over the League's stand on the Census. The caste Hindus feared that the Census based on sectarian communities would reduce the Hindu population and the Muslim League's conspiracy to merge Assam with Pakistan would be successful. Editorials in newspapers also addressed the same issues.[43] Despite the huge controversy and widespread propaganda of the caste Hindu-influenced newspapers, the leadership of the League enjoyed considerable success in the 1941 Census according to its position or policy.[44]

The Tribal League felt that since the colonial times and even till the end of the 19th century, the tribals of Assam have faced various problems and have remained backwards in social, political, economic and educational spheres. On the other hand, the high caste Hindus regarded the Bodos and other tribal communities of Assam as untouchables and lower castes of the society.[45] That is why, Bhimbar Deori, the tribal leader and minister, strongly demanded promoting and introducing education among the tribals. Bhimbar Deori said in the Legislative Assembly, "If the government is short of funds for the education of the tribals, then the money should be collected by taxing the tribals".[46] On December 25, 1941, in the uncertain political atmosphere of Assam, the Saadulah cabinet collapsed and Assam was under Governor's rule.[47] After the Governor's rule ended, Saadulah formed the Muslim League coalition ministry on August 25, 1942, with the help of non-Congress parties.[48] Though the Tribal League joined the Saadulah cabinet to get benefits for the backward communities they strongly criticised Saadulah's immigration policy which was termed a 'policy of invitation' to landless people from beyond the borders to stream into Assam.[49] When the British were planning to merge Assam with East Bengal, Bhimbar Deori vehemently protested.[50] The All-Assam Muttock League, another constituent of the Tribal League, also expressed their strong disapproval of the idea to place Assam within the 'grouping' which, they felt, would be highly detrimental to the culture, language and economic prospects.[51] The issue of 'grouping' and the demand for Pakistan created an irrepairable gulf between the Tribal League and the Saadullah Government.[52] The Tribal League decided that they would remain part of India rather than Pakistan. Every leader of the League supported Bhimbar Deori and he was unanimously elected leader to voice their decision before the Governor General.[53] Bhimber Deori also appealed to the members of the Tribal League to accept the joint electorate system where reservations for the tribals would be incorporated for the greater interest of Assam.[54] From this, it can be understood how the Tribal

League and Bhimbar Deori worked for the development and safeguarding of Assam including the tribal people.

Deori Identity Formation

The genesis of social consciousness among various tribal groups can be traced back to the colonial period. Bhimbar Deori is said to be the helmsman of the development and propagation of the Deori language, literature, and culture. After the colonial rule, many educated people from the Deori community like Dombrudhar Deori, Dhir Singh Deori, Abichandra Deori, Lilakanta Deori, Shadananda Deori, Padedhar Deori, Shashidhar Deori, Nripen Deori, Saurabh Kumar Deori, Lakshyapati Deori and many more were working for the development of their community.

During colonial rule, many British administrators, and ethnographers, studied the Deori language, their settlement, tradition, customs, and religion and wrote various books. W. B. Brown's *An Outline Grammar of the Deori Chutiya Language* was the first book on the Deori language published in 1895. In addition, based on Census notes, notes on the Deori language, and rhetorical form, the Deori language got a definite form at that time. Among them are the notes of the 1881 Census, a glimpse of the language of the Deoris mentioned on page 17 of the fourth chapter of the book in the *Caste and Tribe of Assam*. Moreover, G. A. Grierson in *Linguistic Survey of India*, mentions that Deoris were secluded people of the Lakhimpur and Sibsagar districts of upper Assam who preserved their language, religion and custom.[55]

However, many times (during colonial and post-colonial times) in the Census as well as in some other official documents, the Deori and the Chutiya communities were considered as a single community. The 1931 Census of India recognised the language of the Chutiyas spoken by the Deoris as the primary language of upper Assam. It says, "The Chutiya language is now spoken only by the Deori section of the Chutiyas most of whom are to be found in Lakhimpur. The Deoris are very independent people and are well able to stand up for themselves. Their language is probably the original language of Upper Assam".[56]

However, nowadays, the Deoris refuse to accept it. The disparity in the language spoken by the Deoris and the confusion related to the language of the Deoris with the Chutiyas can be found in the Census texts published in the pre-independence period. The Deoris say that the Deoris were priests and they lived independently. The Deoris did not give up their language and tradition even during the Ahom rule. On the contrary, defeated by the Ahoms, the Chutiyas forgot their language, customs and traditions, and merged with the other people of Assam. As a result, the Chutiyas were forced to identify themselves as Hindu Chutiya, Borahi Chutiya, Miri Chutiya, and Deori Chutiya. Scholars of the Deori language and literature of recent times say that the Deoris were never Chutiyas and Chutiyas also did not belong to the Deori tribe, because today the Chutiyas cannot speak the Deori language. Many claim that anthropologically, there were similarities between Deori and Chutiya, but linguistically there was no similarity between Deori and Chutiya communities.[57]

Under the patronage of Bhimbar Deori, All-Assam Deori Sanmilon, a social organisation, worked for the rescue and development of the Deori language and literature was established in 1936. After the death of Bhimbar, many educated people from the Deori community came out to protect their own culture, tradition, language, religion, etc. The book *Deori Sanskriti aru Samu Itihash* written by Sarat Chandra Deori Bharali and Baturam Deori Bharali, was the first book to be written in the Deori language in 1950.[58] It gives some insight into the mythological culture of the Deoris. As a result of the movement to write Deori history from 1941 to 1944, the book *Deori Sanskriti*, written by Dumbrudhar Deori, was published in 1964[59] where history, migration, folklore, customs, traditions, religion and language of the Deoris can also be found.

Formation of Nationalist Organisations

After independence, in order to protect the Deori culture, tradition, history, customs, and religion, the student community of the Deori tribe formed Muge Asom Deori Poriya Sesengsaa (All Assam Deori

Students Union – AADSU) in 1959.[60] The AADSU has been involved in the development of the Deori language and literature from its inception as well as in the struggle for the self-determination of the community. Subsequently, in 1982, the All-Assam Deori Students' Union announced a 12-point charter of demands for autonomy for Deoris, and recognition of the Deori language and adopted a phased schedule of the mass movement for the fulfilment of the demand.[61]

With the establishment of the Deori Sahitya Sabha on January 20, 1965, a new addition was made to the development of the Deori language and literature.[62] Since then, the Sabha has been instrumental in preserving and propagating the language, culture and heritage. The Sabha also played an important role to bring the scattered Deori population of Assam under a common platform through its conventions. Apart from the Deori Sahitya Sabha, other organisations like Deori Sanmilon and Deori Students Union could give status to the Deori language by publishing various literature. It is worth mentioning that the Deori language survives only among the *Dibongia Phoids*[63] at present. From its inception to 1982, the Deori Sahitya Sabha worked for the development of the Deori language and literature. Especially amidst a lack of funds, lack of proper teaching material, lack of an adequate number of teachers, and trainers, and a lack of systematic programmes, the Sabha made efforts to impart training in Deori language education as well as to publish a history of the Deori community. It has been maintaining contact with other literary organisations of the state such as Asom Sahitya Sabha, Bodo Sahitya Sabha, Rabha Sahitya Sabha, Karbi Sahitya Sabha, Mishing Sahitya Sabha etc. The Asom Sahitya Sabha, in collaboration with the Deori Sahitya Sabha or individuals, has published several books on the Deoris.[64]

The goal of stirring the life of Deoris was set in the joint meeting of the Deori Sahitya Sabha and Deori Students Union held at Sadiya in 1982. The two issues addressed in this meeting were the recognition of the Deori language and the demand for Deori autonomy in the house of the Government.[65] A strong movement was formed to give

constitutional status by recognising the Deori language. Deori Students' Union stood as the main driving force collaborated by Deori Sahitya Sabha and Deori Mahila Samiti. From 1982 to 2004, there was only a faint awakening among the Deori people. However, during this period i.e., 1982 to 2004 the Deori Sahitya Sabha could solve the script issue. Like the languages of other Tibetan groups, the Deoris do not have a script of their own. Earlier, Deori writers used the Assamese script, but from the 1980s of the last few centuries onwards, some Deori people started demanding Roman script[66] for writing the Deori language. On October 27, 1985, a meeting of Deori Sanmilon, Deori Sahitya Sabha and All Assam Deori Students' Union was held at Jorhat, where a script committee was formed. This was followed by a meeting of the Deori Script Committee on October 11, 1986, under the Chairmanship of Kishore Deori at Sivasagar, where it decided to adopt the Assamese script for the Deori language.[67]

The period from 2004 to 2005 was a period of intense struggle for Deori autonomy and language recognition. Organisations such as the All-Assam Deori Students' Union, All Assam Deori Sahitya Sabha and others had protested strongly against the government for formally recognising the language spoken by the Deoris as Deori-Chutiya language on 31st March 2001.[68] The subsequent Government also faced protests on the Deori-Chutiya language debate. Many people in the movement were forever turned around. Many people have been victims of government wrath and the movement took a violent turn. Some miscreants killed Lilakanta Deori, President of the Deori-Chutiya Sahitya Sabha, sensing the opportunity of the movement.[69] On March 19, 2004, a motorcycle rally was taken out from Sonitpur to Dhemaji and from Majuli to Sadiya under the leadership of the Deori Students Union. A 72-hour hunger strike for language recognition was observed on July 5 after a mass rally was held at Bihpuria on June 15, 2004, under the aegis of the Deori Students Union. The All-Assam Deori Students' Union and the All-India Deori Youth Students' Union then held a meeting at the Sivasagar and demanded that the Deori language be recognised at the earliest. In the context of various

debates, discussions and demands, the then Government recognised the language spoken by the Deoris in 2005 through a government notification.[70] It also directed to introduce Deori language as a subject language in educational institutions in Deori-dominated areas in class III and IV of primary level from the academic year 2005.

With the recognition of the Deori language, the long-standing demand of the Deoris got settled. However, the autonomy issue was still unresolved. So, the All-Assam Deori Students' Union, All-India Deori Youth Students' Union, All-Assam Deori Autonomous Demand Committee[71] etc. pressed the government to fulfil the demand for autonomy at the earliest. Meanwhile, the Deori-Chutiya pro-language organisations, the All-Deori Students' Union, Deori Autonomous Demand Committee, etc. also continued their agitation for autonomy. At the same time, the two other tribes of the state, the Sonowal Kachari and the Thengal Kachari, also rose to the agitation for autonomy. Considering all these aspects, the government finally signed an agreement on March 4, 2005, to grant autonomy to Deori, Sonowal Kachari and Thengal Kachari. The Deori Autonomous Council was formally recognised by the Governor of Assam through a Gazette notification.[72]

Deori and Chutiya or Deori-Chutiya : A Conundrum

The Deoris and Chutiyas are the two ancient tribes of Assam and both communities have their own identity and cultural heritage. During British rule, the Deoris and Chutiyas were brought together and identified as Deori-Chutiya.[73] But this action has not been accepted by the Deoris and they claim that they are a separate community of Assam. There is a discrepancy in the fact that Goddess *Tamreshwari* gave the title of Deori to a few Chutiyas of a pure and holy heart who still use the title 'Deori'. On the other hand, the Chutiyas still write the title 'Chutiya' or use it to write 'Borah', 'Saikia' etc. even today.[74] If the Deoris were 'Chutiyas', they too would have written the title, Chutiya. The culture, tradition, customs, dress, and food habits of the Deoris were completely separated from those of the Chutiyas. Today

Chutiya community people forgot their language[75], culture, customs, traditions, etc. whereas the Deoris are able to survive their language, culture, customs and traditions by staying in one place. This also proves that there is no relation between Deori and Chutiya. The colonial government recognised the Deori language as a distinct and original language of upper Assam and they have not become Hinduised like the Hindu-Chutiya and the Ahom-Chutiya.[76] From this, it can be inferred that the Deori language was not the language of the Chutiyas. The Government of India Act of 1935, enacted during the Rule of the British Government, abolished the title of Deori-Chutiya and recognised Deoris as a Scheduled Tribe by keeping only the title Deori. Presently Chutiya community of Assam has abandoned or forgotten their age-old tradition, and language, and assimilated with the Assamese culture. Only Deoris, specially *Dibongiya Khel* retained the Chutiya language. There are a lot of differences between Deori and Chutiya when it comes to dressing up. Every piece of cloth worn by Deori men and women has its name and characteristics. But the Chutiyas do not have any traditional attire of their own. Though the colonial government established a relationship between Deori and Chutiya and called them as Deori-Chutiya in different articles and the Census report but the Deori people do not accept it. Because the Chutiya community people do not know any single Chutiya word.

Conclusion

A conglomerate tribal politics in Assam continues, led by the Tribal League in the colonial period and later carried forward by the respective tribal group in the post-colonial period. However, with the formation of nationalist organisations among the tribal groups during the colonial period the identity question of the respective group was initiated. It was further accelerated in the post-colonial period with the formation of literary bodies and students unions of the respective groups. The literary bodies of the tribal groups developed their language, standardised it, published grammar and dictionary and resolved the script issue. On the other hand, the students' organisations

of different communities acted as a potent civil society organisation where along with raising the issues of the students' community it also fought against the hegemonic forces (state as well as other dominant communities) whenever the interest of the community was hurt or need arises to assert the rights of the community. Not only in the case of the Deoris and their political activism; but for each community of the state and their movements for autonomy, the respective student organisation has played a vital role. Similarly, the role of the literary bodies can also be seen as exemplary –from standardisation of language to literary production to cultural nationalism - the role of the bodies of the concerned community is significant.

Notes

[1] Kalicharan Brahma (1860-1938), was a 20th century social and religious reformer of the Bodos who established Brahmo religion among the Bodos around 1906. He prioritised uplifting the Bodos by eradicating liquor from the Bodo community, abolishing the dowry system, protesting the increase in taxes of zamindars, initiating cooperative movements, and promoting education among the Bodos, Munindra Das, *Bodoland Andolan: Patabhumi aru Gatidhara*, Guwahati: Asom Prakashan Parishad, 2012, pp. 2-7.

[2] Surasikha Pathak, Tribal Identity Politics in Colonial Assam: Plains Tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley, 1860-1947, unpublished PhD Thesis, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2004, p. 44; Bimal Kanti Basumatary, Status and Role of Bodo Women in Northern Part of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam (1919 – 2003), unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of History, University of North Bengal, 2013, p. 39.

[3] Monoj Kumar Nath, *Asomar Janajati Rajneeti*, Guwahati: Alibaat Prakashan, 2013, p. 50.

[4] Dinanath Basumatary, *Bodo Jatir Itihash, Bhasa-Sanskriti aru Christian Missonary*, Bongaigaon: Nandita Basumatary, 2011, p. 16.

[5] Jadav Pegu, *Reclaiming Identity: A Discourse on Bodo History*, Kokrajhar: Jwngsar Narzary, 2004, p. 84.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Sibanath Barman, *Asamar Janajati Samashya: Aitihasik Utsa Sandhan*, Guwahati: Banalata, 2013, p. 91.

[8] Munindra Das, *Bodoland Andolan: Patabhumi aru Gatidhara*, Guwahati: Asom Prakashan Parishad, 2012, p. 90.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Surasikha Pathak, Tribal Identity Politics in Colonial Assam: Plains Tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley, 1860 – 1947, unpublished PhD Thesis, Center for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2004, p. 157.

[11] Sibanath Barman, *Asomar Janajati Samashya: Aitihasik Utsa Sandhan*, Guwahati: Banalata, 2013, p. 60.

[12] Pratibha Brahma (Ed.), *History in Glimpse: All Bodo Students Union (1967 – 2017): A Journey of Struggle*, Kokrajhar: ABSU, 2017, pp. 7-8.

[13] Berlao K. Karjie, 'The Bodo Movement: Past and Present', *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research* (JETIR), June 2019, Vol. 6, Issue. 6, p. 92.

[14] Brahma, op. cit., p. 8.

[15] Karjie, op. cit., p. 93.

[16] Suryasikha Pathak, 'Tribal Politics in the Assam: 1933-1947', *Economic & Political Weekly,* March 6, 2010, Vol. XLV No. 10, 62.

[17] Indibor Deori, *Janagosthiya Samashya: Atit, Bartaman aru Bhabishyat*, Guwahati: Bandhab, 2015, p. 38.

[18] Ibid., p. 5.

[19] Tunujyoti Gogoi, *1826: Yandaboo Sandhir Pora 'CAA' Birodhi Andolanaloi*, Guwahati: J.S. Publications, 2021, p. 109.

[20] The Line system envisaged the drawing of an imaginary line demarcating two distinct areas, and no land occupation by the immigrants was allowed beyond this 'line'. It was introduced in Nowgong and by 1930 it was operating in most districts of upper Assam, S. Pathak: 'Tribal Politics in the Assam: 1933-1947', *Economic & Political Weekly*, March 6, 2010, Vol. XLV No. 10, p. 62.

[21] Pulin Kalita, *Asamiyar Sanbidhanik Rakkhakabas (Line Prathar para Asam Chuktir 6 No. Dafa Samitiloi Esha Bachariya [1920 – 2020] Parikrama*, Guwahati: Jagaron Sahitya Prakashan, 2020, pp. 12-13.

[22] S. Pathak: 'Tribal Politics in the Assam: 1933 – 1947', *Economic & Political Weekly*, March 6, 2010, Vol. XLV No. 10, p. 62.

[23] Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2012, p. 167.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., p. 168.

[27] Arun Ch. Bhuyan, Sibopada De, *Political History of Assam*, Vol. II, 1920 – 1939, Guwahati: Publication Board Assam, 2008, p. 311.

[28] Rhode's speech, 16 March, ALCP (1931), Vol. 11, p. 307. *Report of the Line System Committee* (Shillong, 1938), Vol. 1, p. 4.

[28] In Bangladesh and Eastern India, a *mouza* or *mauza* is a type of administrative district, corresponding to a specific land area within which there may be one or more settlements. Before the 20th century, the term referred to a revenue collection unit in a pargana or revenue district. As populations increased and villages became more common and developed, the concept of the *mouza* declined in importance. Today it has become mostly synonymous with the *gram* or village. Most censuses and voter lists, for example, now use the

names of villages rather than *mouza*s. The term has a similar meaning in the Assam region of India, where a mouza is a locality in a district or within a large Assamese city. This term should not be confused with the term *Gaon* (meaning village in Assamese, Hindi and Urdu). In Assam, several villages typically form a single *mouza*. The head of the *mouza* is known as a *Mouzadar* or *Mazumdar*, https://www.definitions.net/definition/Mouza

[29] Pulin Kalita, *Asamiyar Sanbidhanik Rakkhakabas (Line Prathar para Asam Chuktir 6 No. Dafa Samitiloi Esha Bachariya [1920 – 2020] Parikrama*, Guwahati: Jagaron Sahitya Prakashan, 2020, p. 63.

[30] Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2012, p. 169.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Pulin Kalita, *Asamiyar Sanbidhanik Rakkhakabas Line Prathar para Asam Chuktir 6 No. Dafa Samitiloi Esha Bachariya [1920-2020] Parikrama*, Guwahati: Jagaron Sahitya Prakashan, 2020, p. 64.

[33] Surasikha Pathak, Tribal Identity Politics in Colonial Assam: Plains Tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley, 1860-1947, unpublished PhD Thesis, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2004, p. 181; Speech by Rabi Chandra Kachari, ALAP, 5th August 1937.

[34] Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2012, p. 212.

[35] Ibid.

[36] S. Pathak: 'Tribal Politics in the Assam: 1933-1947' *Economic & Political Weekly*, March 6, 2010, Vol. XLV No. 10, 64.

[37] The term 'immigrant' as anyone coming to the Brahmaputra Valley from outside the province (including Sylhet and Cachar) for the purpose of taking up land for cultivation, Nirode K. Barooah, *Gopinath Bordoloi, The Assam Problem and Nehru's Centre*, Guwahati: Bhabani Print & Publications, 2010, p. 55.

[38] Pathak, op. cit., 2010, p. 64.

[39] Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2012, p. 212.

[40] Nirode K. Barooah, *Gopinath Bordoloi, The Assam Problem and Nehru's Centre*, Guwahati: Bhabani Print & Publications, 2010, p. 54.

[41] Surasikha Pathak, 'Tribal Identity Politics in Colonial Assam: Plains Tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley, 1860-1947', unpublished PhD Thesis, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 188, 191.

[42] Ibid., 2010, p. 65.

[43] Tunujyoti Gogoi, *1826: Yandaboo Sandhir Pora 'CAA' Birodhi Andolanaloi*, Guwahati: J.S. Publications, 2021, p. 110.

[44] Nandini Sarma, Tribal Movements in Assam with Special Reference to Bhimbar Deori, unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Gauhati University, 2016, p. 18.

[45] Devabrata Sharma, *Asomia Jatigathan Prakriya aru Jatiya Janagosthigata Anusthan Samuh*, Jorhat: Ekalavya Prakashan, 2013, p. 400.

[46] Tunujyoti Gogoi, *1826: Yandaboo Sandhir Pora 'CAA' Birodhi Andolanaloi*, Guwahati: J.S. Publications, 2021, p. 112.

[47] Ranjit Sabhapandit, *Saiyad Saddullar Pora Gopinath Bordoloi Loi*, Guwahati: Asom Publishing Company, 2014, p. 78.
[48] Arun Ch. Bhuyan, Sibopada De, *Political History of Assam*, Vol. III, 1940 – 1947, Guwahati: Publication Board Assam, 2008, p. 313.
[49] Nandini Sarma, Tribal Movements in Assam with Special Reference to Bhimbar Deori, unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Gauhati University, 2016, p. 115.
[50] Bhuyan, De, op. cit. 317, Vol. III, 2008.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Nandini Sarma, op. cit., p. 315.
[53] Tunujyoti Gogoi, op. cit., p. 114, Lalit Chandra Deori (ed.) *Sanhatir Buniyad Jananayak Bhimbar Deori*, Vol. I, Guwahati, 1994., p. 56.
[54] G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. III, *Tibeto-Burman Family*, Part – II, *Specimens of the Bodo, Naga and Kachin Groups*, Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, India, 1903, p. 118.
[55] C. S. Mullan, *Census of India, 1931*, Vol. III Assam Part I. – Report, Calcutta: The Government of India, Central Publication Branch, 1932, p. 172.
[56] Padedhar Deori, *Deori Sanskritir Itihash*, Dhemaji: Kiran Prakashan, 2011, p. 169.
[57] Saranan Deori, op. cit., 2007, p. 67.
[58] Munindra Das, *Axamar Nrigosthiya Uttaranar Itihash: Samashya-Sangram-Prapti*, Guwahati: Banalata, 2020, p. 386.
[59] Saurabh Kumar Deori, *Malapachi*, Editorial, 20th Bi-Annual Conference, 27th and 28th February, Dibrugarh, Assam, 1999, p. 3.
[60] Munindra Das, *Axamar Nrigosthiya Uttaranar Itihash: Samashya-Sangram-Prapti*, Guwahati: Banalata, 2020, p. 383.
[61] Saranan Deori, op. cit., 2007, p. 51.
[62] The Deori-Chutiyas are divided into four *khel*s – Bargania, Patargania, Tengapania and Dibongia – which derive their names from the place where they originally settled. The only distinction between them is that each *khel* has its own *deosal*, or temple, where they worship the same deity under different names, that of Borgonia being *Kesayikhati*; of the Patorgonia, *Tameswari Mair*; of the Tengapani, *Bolia Hemota*; and of the Dibongia, *Buraburi*, E. A. Gait, *Report of the Census of Assam 1891*, Vol. I, Part II, Chap. X, Shillong: Assam Secretariate Printing Office, 1892.
[63] Saranan Deori, *Deori Bhasa Sahitya Samaj*, Guwahati: Bina Library, 2007, p. 52.
[64] Lakhyapati Deori, *Deori Janagosthi: Austitva aru Sankat*, Narayanpur: Deori Autonomy Council, 2019, p. 36.
[65] Saranan Deori, op. cit., 2007, p. 52.
[66] Saranan Deori, *Chigasi: The Mouthpiece of Deori Sahitya Sabha*, 5th Issue, 2005, p. 98.
[67] Munindra Das, *Axamar Nrigosthiya Uttaranar Itihash: Samashya-Sangram-Prapti*, Guwahati: Banalata, 2020, p. 387; Padedhar Deori, *Deori Sanskritir Itihash*, Dhemaji: Kiran Prakashan, 2011, p. 174.
[68] Padedhar Deori, *Deori Sanskritir Itihash*, Dhemaji: Kiran Prakashan, 2011, p. 175.

[69] Saranan Deori, *Deori Bhasa Sahitya Samaj*, Guwahati: Bina Library, 2007, p. 54.

[70] The All-Assam Deori Autonomous Demand Committee, a political organization, was formed in 1994 under the Presidentship of Betharam Deori at Kaluluwa Deori Gaon in the district of Dibrugarh for the fulfilment of their long-standing political aspiration. See Deori, Lalit, *Deori Sayataya Hakhit Parishadar Atit, Bartarman Aru Bhabishayat* in *Malapachi*, a mouthpiece of AADSU, Aril, 2007, p. 15; Lucky Chetia, 'Politics of Identity Assertion of the Plains Tribes in Assam: A Case Study of the Deoris', an unpublished PhD thesis, Department of Political Science, Dibrugarh University, 2018, p. 136.

[71] *The Assam Gazette,* Extraordinary, published by Authority, No. 194, Dispur, Tuesday 17th May 2005, 27th Vaisakha, 1927 S.E.

[72] *The Report on the Census of Assam for 1881,* Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government, 1882, p. 76.

[73] Padedhar Deori, *Deori Sanskritir Itihash,* Dhemaji: Kiran Prakashan, 2011, p. 168.

[74] Dr. Ajit Kumar Borah, *The Chutiyas*, Guwahati: Purbayan Prakashan, 2020, p. 156.

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Purulia Chhau : An Enigma of Masks and Costumes

Sharmila Chandra

Abstract

Chhau is an indigenous dance of the Bengal Region. *Purulia Chhau* is particularly attractive for its colourful masks and costumes. The costumes of *Purulia Chhau* are essentially in accordance with the masks. Conventionally, all the characters in *Purulia Chhau* wear masks. Each character in this performing art is identified by his or her mask and costume. However, over time, innovations have come about in the themes and performing techniques of *Purulia Chhau*. With these innovations, the masks and costumes of *Purulia Chhau* have undergone transformations that are perhaps interfering with the preservation of the traditional *Chhau* culture.

Keywords: Purulia *Chhau*, masks, costumes, innovations, transformations

Introduction

Chhau incorporates all the attributes of a 'tribal war dance' (Chatterji, 2009) and entails the practice of martial arts and combative training. Studies have revealed that *Chhau*, particularly *Purulia Chhau*, belongs essentially to the *tandava*[1] style of dance and therefore, involves a good deal of vigorous movements. Therefore, until recently, it was restricted to the menfolk of the rural society. Women were deliberately kept away from this performing art. Neither were they allowed to come in contact with the masks nor were they permitted to enter the *Chhau* arena.[2]

A major attraction for *Purulia Chhau* is generated by the unique masks and costumes worn by the dancers. Masks form the pivotal part of *Purulia Chhau*. It is mandatory that every character performing

the dance drama wears a mask. The masks are always character appropriate. Again, in case of *Purulia Chhau,* it is noticed that the masks and the costumes complement each-other. *Purulia Chhau mask*s have been adorned with the GIA tag in 2018. Therefore, the concept and evolution of masks and costumes here definitely deserves to be investigated into and to be discussed in detail.

The evolution of masks and costumes in *Purulia Chhau*

Scholars have often expressed the opinion that at the time of its inception, *Purulia Chhau* was performed without any kind of mask. The dancers painted their faces in black so that their original identity was completely hidden from the audience. Perhaps this act mystified the dance all the more and brought in an aura of supernaturality into the performance. The dancers also painted their faces and bodies in order to distinguish themselves from the audience (Chandra, 2022). Some scholars have said that the dancers covered their faces with huge *sal* leaves or *palash* leaves with motifs of demons painted on them in colours. The leaves played the role of masks, but these used to get destroyed in the course of the dance. At that time, the dances had not seen any kind of evolution and *Purulia Chhau* was essentially a tribal dance, in its rudimentary stage, which was held locally, in the villages. The performers used lamp black, brick dust and coloured clay to paint their bodies and attached branches and twigs as dress materials (Singh, 2021). Gradually, *Chhau* came to be patronised by the *Raja*s of Baghmundi. The first feudal chief to introduce the dance in the area was Raja Hridaynath Singh Deo. Scholars like Shibshankar Singh are of the opinion that it was Hridaynath Singh Deo who introduced the mask to *Purulia Chhau*. (Singh, 2021). On the other hand, Dr. Ashutosh Bhattacharya has expressed the idea that masks were first introduced into *Purulia Chhau* at the time of King Madan Mohan Singh Deo (Bhattacharya, 1972). Whatever be the fact, it is clear that the addition of the mask or *muhora,* as it is called locally, to *Purulia Chhau* was an act of the royal family of Baghmundi. Prof. Ashutosh Bhattacharya has stressed that since *Purulia Chhau* was

performed by the dark skinned and horrendous looking aboriginals of the Chotanagpur Plateau, they had to put on masks for playing the roles of Aryan gods and goddesses. Prof. Bhattacharya, thus, refers to the mask as a 'disguise' that the dancer used to hide his own dark visage so that he would not appear incongruous when trying to represent the gods. (Chatterji, 2009). According to him, this was the main purpose of the masks in the initial stage. It is said that originally, these dance masks were crafted out of wood and were exceedingly heavy. As *Chhau* involves a high degree of acrobatics, therefore, for a long period, the dancers found it difficult to dance with these masks on their faces. Later on, in order to reduce the weight of the masks and also to bring down the cost, these masks, locally called *muhora*s came to be made of clay and papier mache. Again, some scholars have expressed the opinion that in the initial stage, gourd shells were dried in the sun and the eyes, ears and other features of the mask were drawn on these gourd shells to create masks that were light in weight. However, this attempt on the part of the mask makers was not very successful as the gourd dried up quickly and this practice was soon abandoned by them (Singh, 2021). The *Chhau mask*s of Purulia were handcrafted by the *Sutradhara* community of Bardhaman who settled in the village of Charida in the Baghmundi Block of Purulia. The story goes that the *Sutradhara* families of Bardhaman were invited by the feudal chiefs of Baghmundi to stay in Charida and engage in clay modelling. Later on, they specialised in handcrafting *Chhau mask*s. Perhaps that is why the facial masks of *Purulia Chhau* represent faces of clay idols. Thus, Charida came to be well known as *'Mukhosh Gram'* or the village of mask makers in Purulia.

It is said that the tradition of mask making in Charida was popularised by Buddeshwar, the first artisan to handcraft *Purulia Chhau mask*s. It was Buddheswar who first made the male and female masks of *Kirat-Kiratini* representing forms of *Shiva* and *Parvati,* two iconic figures from Hindu mythology. Till today, the small mask of the character, *Kiratini,* representing the benevolent *Goddess Parvati,* is one of Purulia's favourite characters. In the beginning, only people

belonging to the lower castes from the marginalised communities engaged in mask making. Later on, the caste divisions faded away.

Tsubaki and Richmond (Richmond et al., 1990) had observed a striking resemblance between the *Purulia Chhau mask*s and the idols of Krishnanagar.[3] Therefore, it is not improbable that the mask makers of Purulia were originally *mritsilpis*[4] (clay modellers) belonging to the Krishnanagar School.

Fig. 1. *Chhau* masks of *Lord Shiva* in the past and the present.

Source : Indian Museum, Kolkata and Primary Survey, Purulia.

Unlike the *Saraikela Chhau mask*s, which are sophisticated in form and content, the *Purulia Chhau mask*s appeared rustic from the very beginning. This is perhaps because *Saraikela Chhau* was throughout patronised by the royal family,[5] whereas *Purulia Chhau* received royal patronage for a limited period, rather it was left to the tribals to continue the tradition of mask dancing. Hence, while the *Saraikela Chhau mask*s are smaller and lighter, the *Purulia Chhau masks* are heavy (about 3 kg to 4 kg in weight) and are of huge size. It is only recently that they are being tailor-made to suit the size of the dancer's face.[6] As Anusua Mukherjee says, today, the masks are made "according to his or her facial measurements by their trusted craftsmen, who work in close collaboration with the troupes." (Mukherjee, 2021). Therefore, the *Chhau mask*s of Purulia are not at all oversized.

From the Indian Museum Collection it can be seen that the *Chhau mask*s of Purulia were, at one time, quite simple. Later on, they came to be adorned with huge, ornate headgears and elaborate decorations (Fig. 1). The colour of the *muhora* is in accordance with the character of the deity. The masks representing the gods and goddesses are painted in pastel shades and show expressions that are serene or benign. Pastel green is used for the *muhora* of *Rama* and *Arjuna* whereas pastel blue is applied to *Krishna*'s mask. A mask for the half-man, half-lion deity–*Narasimha,* usually has a mane and large, wide eyes. The *muhora* of *Lord Shiva* is usually coloured white or light pink and has matted hair. This *muhora* is special as it features serpents. *Ganesha*'s mask is pink with the trunk of an elephant, turned upwards, depicting *raudra rasa.* The demon masks are painted in darker shades than those representing the gods. They are usually coloured red or green. They are given a realistic look with dishevelled hair, fangs of teeth jutting out from their large, open mouths, hairs all over the face, thick eyebrows and bulging, rounded eyes.

*Purulia Chhau mask*s have been classified into various types – *babu mukhosh* – masks of *Shiva, Kartik, Ganesha, Narayana, Krishna, Lakshmana, Arjuna,* etc, *veermukhosh,* e.g. masks of demons such as *Ravana, Tarakasura, Chikurasura* and *Mahishasura* as well as masks of *Parashuram* and *Kirat, narimukhosh,* e.g. those of *Saraswati, Parvati, Lakshmi, Goddess Durga, Goddess Kali* and so on, *bhutamukhosh* such as those of *Nandi* and *Bhringi, pashumukhosh* or animal masks including masks of the tiger, lion, deer, etc. as well as masks of *Bali, Sugrib* and *Hanuman* taken from the *Ramayana* and *pakhimukhosh* or bird masks, e.g. those of *Jatayu,* the peacock, swan, etc.

However, Mahato has expressed the opinion that since *Purulia Chhau* comprises three main gaits – *Deb Chal* (the gait of the gods), *Asura Chal* (heroic gait) and *Pashu Chal* (animal gait), the masks should be classified accordingly into masks of gods and goddesses, demon masks and animal masks (Mahato, 2021).

As *Purulia Chhau* is typically a tribal dance and has received very little patronisation by the feudal lords, the masks still carry a rustic

and unsophisticated look unlike the Saraikela masks, as mentioned previously. In earlier days, the *Chhau mask*s of Purulia were made of wood and painted clay. This went on for about seventy years, after which the artisans started adding beads, laces and wooden trinkets to the masks. Till recently, the decorative materials used for the masks were mostly made of glass beads and *zari*. Tinsel paper was also used for the crown of the head-dress so that as the dancer moved, the head-dress shimmered, displaying a dazzle of reflected light (Richmond et al., 1990). Beads and trimmings for masks and costumes were sourced from Kolkata. Colourful feathers were attached to the mask, thus intensifying the tribal effect. Paper, glass beads, clay and feathers made the masks fragile so that they were easily destroyed after four or five programmes. So innovations were sought by the mask makers and the *Chhau mask*s of Purulia saw an evolution. Instead of glass beads, paper and feathers used earlier, the artisans are now using plastic flowers and leaves and sometimes straw to decorate their masks.[7] This lowers the cost of production and reduces the price of the masks so that they become affordable for the dance troupes. Again, with the use of plastic flowers and leaves, the masks have become more durable and can now withstand vigorous dancing. Thus, this was a step forward in the art of mask making in Charida.

Mask making in Charida is more or less a long process. The materials used are clay, cloth, water, coal ash, paper, adhesives, colour, diluted glue, varnish and so on. Clay models are involved in the making of *Chhau mask*s in Purulia. The clay model is made by the mask maker himself and is dried under direct sunlight. Then a number of layers of soft paper are pasted on the model one after another with diluted glue. Powdered ashes of burnt coal are sprinkled on the model after this. This ash is covered up by a thin layer of flour which is pasted on the model. Then the entire model is again coated with clay and dried. After that, a piece of cloth dipped in clay and water is put on the model. The final touches are given by the artist with his fingers and a thin piece of wood. The mould is polished and again sun-dried. Then the clay layer as well as the layers of cloth and paper

are scraped off from the dried mask. Initially, the mask is coated with white colour. Then other colours are put on the mask as required. Wool, jute strips, bamboo strips, foil, plastic flowers and beads are added to the mask to complete it. Usually, the task of decoration is allotted to the women of the household and is supervised by the mask maker himself.

With innovation in the themes of *Purulia Chhau,* the masks and costumes of *Purulia Chhau* have also undergone improvisation. A new development seen in Charida is the creation of clay masks of the *Kathakali* type. As is known by all, the *kathakali* mask is not at all indigenous to this region, but belongs to the South Indian state of Kerala. These were innovated in Charida by the artisan, Jayanta Sutradhar.[8] As was known from primary survey, the *Kathakali* mask was introduced into the market of *Chhau mask*s as an item of home décor. Later on, this mask became so popular among the tourists that it is now produced on a massive scale and displayed on the walls of the shops lined along the streets of Charida Village.[9] However, it must be noted that these *Kathakali*-style masks formed an essential part of the *non-Chhau* costume items used in *Dakini Mangal*. *Dakini Mangal* was an experimental production based on Shakespeare's drama, Macbeth, and staged by the troupe of Ustad Jagannath Choudhury of Maldi Village, Balarampur in 2009 at the initiative of the social organisation – 'banglanatak dot com'. For the drama, *Lakshmaner Shaktishel,* written by Sukumar Ray, the mask of *Ravana* was designed in an unconventional and innovative manner. It is said that the *Chhau* dance of Purulia belongs to the category of 'poor theatre' as the materials used to embellish the masks and costumes are of cheap quality (Trivedi, 2021). It is to be noted here that elaborate and expensive costumes were designed for Tagore's *Chitrangada,* staged in December, 2007 by Binadhar Kumar at the initiative of 'banglanatak dot com'. However, this performance could not become popular as it lacked the appeal of authenticity and was too experimental.

Today, the mask makers of Charida have formed a collective called *Chhau Mukhosh Shilpi Sangha.* Also, a Rural Craft Hub has been set

up in Charida by the state Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to promote mask making. The *Chhau mask* of Purulia received the GI tag in 2018.

It is difficult to trace the evolution of the costumes of *Purulia Chhau* since the costumes used at the time of the inception of the dance have never been documented. The general opinion is that *Purulia Chhau* did not use any regular costumes during its pre-mask period. Rather, the dance was performed with a bare body that was painted all over with brick-dust. Branches of trees, twigs, leaves and local flowers were attached to the hands and legs of the dancers. This means that *Purulia Chhau*, in its initial stage, typically represented a primitive, tribal culture. In the next stage, some unstitched cloths like *saree border*s were used sporadically to cover parts of the body. From the records of Bibhutibhusan Mukhopadhyay, it is known that the integral parts of the costume in the early days were *dhoti* and *gamcha* (Mukherjee, 2001). At this stage, in the process of patronisation, the costumes were mostly supplied to the dancers by the royal family of Baghmundi. The addition of feathers of peacock and other birds to the mask and costume of *Purulia Chhau* is thought to have been influenced by the *Santhal*s living in this area. Feathers were particularly used for the masks of *Kirat-Kiratini* and *Kartik*. Much later, the use of masks necessitated a regular set of costumes. The performance of *Purulia Chhau* is primarily based on Hindu mythology. It must be stressed that Hindu mythological stories abound in narrations of war between two opposing forces - *Rama* against *Ravana, Abhimanyu* against *Duryodhana, Dushashana, Drona* and others, *Kartikeya* against *Tarakasura* and so on. Therefore, the central theme of *Purulia Chhau* is a battle. Accordingly, the elaborate masks and costumes worn by the dancers convey the message of aggression and battle. The two, main emotions expressed in *Purulia Chhau* are *veer rasa* and *raudra rasa*. A very conspicuous part of the costume is the elaborately decorated *'buk'* or armour in the front part. Some scholars such as Goswami have expressed the opinion that the *'buk'* was meant for only a few characters such as *Kartik, Ganesha* and the main dancers

(Goswami, 2022). Bright colours are used to evoke joy during festive periods. Since the jewellery and costumes adorned by the performers of *Purulia Chhau* are very heavy, and each mask weighs about 3 kg to 4 kg, (sometimes the weight of the masks go up to 7 kg.), the dancers have to carry an extra 10 kg. to 15 kg. weight on their body.[10] Traditionally the costume of the male characters performing *Purulia Chhau* comprised a loose-fitting shirt and a *dhoti,* locally called *ghutna.* The *ghutna* was later replaced by a trouser-like *pyjama.* In the 1970s, Dr. Ashutosh Bhattacharya had written that conventionally a demon would wear jet black trousers with red stripes on it. On the other hand, a divine character would put on similar trousers in bright colours such as red or green to distinguish himself from the demon characters (Bhattacharya, 1972). Usually, the *pyjama*s of the demons were loose fitting. Goswami has expressed the opinion that these *pyjama*s suited the demon characters, but were unsuitable and too casual for the gods (Goswami, 2022).

It has been observed that the dancers cover the upper parts of their bodies with more attractive and dazzling costumes. The designs have no religious or sectarian motifs. Usually, loose fitting shirts or *kurta*s are worn by the dancers. Today, in many areas, the full-sleeved *kurta*s have been replaced by a sleeveless garment and colourful ribbons are tied on the wrist. A jacket is fitted over the *kurta* for the hunters and soldiers. These elaborately embroidered jackets with tinsel and imitation pearls attached to them are considered to be a direct influence of the *Bengali Jatra.* The *Jatra*s, in turn, imitated the dresses worn in the theatres of Kolkata at that time. Here it may be mentioned that it is most probable that *Chhau* originated in Bengal, where the *Jatra* was a popular form of entertainment at that time and therefore, it is quite natural that the aesthetics of the *Bengali Jatra* would have a huge effect on the aesthetics of this performing art. Perhaps it is logical to assume that it was at this time that urban elements entered the world of *Purulia Chhau.*

The costumes of *Purulia Chhau* vary according to the character represented by the dancers and are customised accordingly. For

instance, the most conspicuous part of the costume of *Lord Shiva* is a tiger skin loin cloth, the hair is matted. On the other hand, *Ganesha* wears a white *dhoti* typical of the clay idol worshipped in Bengal during *Durga Puja.* The mask of *Ravana* has ten heads in accordance with the description in the *Ramayana.* To perform the roles of birds and animals, the dancers wear bird masks and animal masks of different types. *Mahishasura* is represented with a demon mask and a green dress. On the other hand, the costume of *Goddess Durga* is enriched with a magnificent ornamental diadem on a deep red-coloured *saree.* The typical colour for the costume of *Kartik* is white, although sometimes green is used nowadays. *Kali* has a special dress appropriate to her character, with jet black and tightly fitted trousers, matching her body colour. *Goddess Kali* is the only female character wearing a male's dress. Female demons wear long skirts called *choli.* Characters such as the *Pandava*s[11] or forest dwellers like *Rama* use a single piece of cloth from one side of the shoulder to the waist. Simple and saintly characters do not decorate their bodies with ostentatious jewellery. They use cotton cloth to cover their bodies. On the other hand, bright, satin garments are used for divine characters to add glamour. The accessories and jewellery of *Purulia Chhau* include kneecap, a set of necklaces of various lengths, coloured ribbons from the wrist till the elbow, anklet, *komorbandh* (belt), *taga* and so on. Some characters also wield accessories such as swords, shields, bow, arrow, *trishul,* flute, etc.

While in earlier days, velvet was used for making *Chhau costume*s which were decorated with *salma, chumki* and various other materials, nowadays rolex is generally used and the costumes are embellished with imitation beads and *zari.* At one time, there were costume designers in Purulia who created the appropriate costumes for the dancers. Among them were Haripada Das, Karali Charan Nag and some others. Later on, their descendants continued this business and established dress-houses such as New Purulia Dress House, New Ganga Dress House, Nag Dress House, New Kolkata Dress House and so on. Today, many *Chhau* troupes have recruited particular

costume designers of their own for their productions. Among these costume designers, Basanta Mahato has earned a repute for himself. In the 1960s, a well known mask maker and make-up artist of Purulia was Prahlad Kumar of Ketika. He used to create exclusive headgears for the *Chhau dancer*s. Another well-established make-up artist is Bhojohari Mahato of Baligara (Choudhury, 2015).

Figure 2 : The typical costume of *Mahishasura.*
Source : Sanjoy Mahato, 2022.

As Goswami has pointed out, at one time, the *ghangra* formed an important part of the costume (Goswami, 2022). This *ghangra* was somewhat like a petticoat, but it had conspicuous pleats in the front. It was tied to the waist by a belt or *komorbandh.* The *ghutna* was worn inside the *ghangra.* A pair of *ghungroo*s (strings of small bells made of brass) was tied to the ankle. Tying these around the feet added a new level of grace and rhythm. However, this was a later development. Originally, small shells of snails collected from the village ponds and

marshy lands were used in place of the *ghungroo* as they made a tinkling sound in the course of the dance. It has been observed that due to lack of skill, the dancers gave up tying the *ghungroo,* but it must be mentioned here that this goes against the maintenance of age-old customs. The practice of dancing barefooted was given up at a later stage and at present, the *Chhau dancer*s wear coloured socks to cover their feet.

For gods and goddesses who require more than two hands, such as *Durga*, *Kali* and *Ganesha*, artificial limbs are often used. These are usually made of wood and are attached to the dancer's backside. The researcher has witnessed the making of these artificial limbs at the *Chhau* Department of Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia. In general, the artificial wooden limbs of *Durga, Ganesha* and *Kali* are made by the mask makers as they belong to the *Sutradhara* group and excel in carpentry.

Apart from the gods and goddesses representing mythological characters, animals and birds also have artificial features attached to their bodies. Thus, *Bali* and *Sugrib* are represented with tails. *Jatayu* not only wears a bird mask but has feathers of birds all over its body.

Figure 3 : Artificial limbs of *Ganesha.*

Source : Department of Chhau, Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia.

Figure 4 : Artificial limbs of *Goddess Durga* and a variety of *Chhau mask*s made at the Department of Chhau, Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia.

Source : Department of Chhau, Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia.

Conclusion

As an effect of modernisation and globalisation, the costumes of *Purulia Chhau* have undergone drastic changes from the 1990s. The *Jhalda gharana* was the first to see this kind of transformation. While the *Baghmundi gharana* of *Chhau* has remained conservative to this day, innovations were attempted early in case of the *Jhalda gharana.* To popularise *Chhau dance,* more and more props are now being used. The dance today shows a huge amount of deviation from the original and authentic *Purulia Chhau,* particularly with reference to the costumes and props. In place of the mythological episodes, new *pala*s based on social issues, contemporary events and mainstream literary works such as Shakespeare's Macbeth and Tagore's *Chitrangada* are being performed. These necessitate appropriate costumes and masks that are non-*Chhau* in appearance. For instance, for the *pala, Saontal Bidroha,* which highlighted the rebellion of the *Santal*s against the British Raj, the producers had to innovate a colour and costume detail that distinguished the empowered and often lighter skinned British officials from the native tribals. Again, for *Rakte Ranga Kargil,* the mask-makers and dancers highlighted the difference between the Pakistani warriors in black and those from the Indian side in brighter

colours.[12] Moreover, specialised training has been given to the mask-makers and tailors to produce masks and costumes at lower cost under the Art for Livelihood (AL) Project.[13] Designers worked with mask-makers to make masks with gypsum bandage and locally available embellishments. Skill development workshops were held by experts from the Indian Institute of Craft Design, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan and Government Art College, Kolkata with the mask-makers of Purulia. As a consequence, while keeping core traditions intact with respect to *Chhau* mask making, certain changes have come about in the style of the masks and costumes of *Purulia Chhau*. The researcher feels that new themes and their presentations with too much innovations in masks and costumes are often interfering with the preservation of authenticity with respect to the traditional *Chhau* culture of Purulia. Moreover, from primary survey by the researcher in Charida, it has been observed that over the years, commodification has come about in *Chhau* mask making primarily due to the spurt in tourism, so that a trend is seen to customise the *Chhau mask*s according to the demands of the tourists.

Notes

[1] The *tandava* style of dance is strongly associated with the dance of *Lord Shiva* immediately after the death of His consort, *Sati*. It is said that *Lord Shiva* performed this dance in a fit of rage and caused havoc destruction of everything on earth.

[2] Interview with Professor Mahua Mukherjee, 2022. Prof. Mahua Mukherjee was a pupil of the renowned *Chhau dancer,* Late Gambhir Singh Mura of Charida Village. She used to learn *Chhau* at the Royal Chhau Academy, Balarampur. She performed the *Chhau dance* of Purulia with her troupe in Charida in 1994. At present, she is a specialist in *Gaudiya Nritya*.

[3] Krishnanagar is a small town in the Nadia district of West Bengal. The place is well-known for the production of handmade clay dolls. The particular area in Krishnanagar where clay modelling takes place is called Ghurni. The clay dolls of Krishnanagar are famous all over the world.

[4] The *mritsilpi*s of Krishnanagar belong to the *Kumbhakar* (potter) caste.

[5] It is said that the feudal chief of Saraikela, King Aditya Pratap Deo visited Ajanta and was very much impressed by the Ajanta Paintings. Subsequently, he made the *Saraikela chhau mask*s made in the Ajanta style of painting. These masks therefore, have a strong aesthetic appeal. They are characterised

by dreamy eyes and elongated eyebrows painted with long strokes of the brush. Hence, they look much more sophisticated than the *Chhau mask*s of Purulia.

[6] Interview with Ustad Jagannath Choudhury, the veteran *Chhau dancer* of Maldi Village, Balarampur, January 2023.

[7] Primary survey in Charida Village, 2022.

[8] Interview with Jayanta Sutradhar, 2022.

[9] Primary survey.

[10] Interview with Ustad Jagannath Choudhury, January 2023.

[11] The *Pandava*s form the main characters of the *Mahabharata.* They were five brothers – *Yudhishthir, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakul* and *Sahadev*. All the five brothers were married to *Draupadi.*

[12] The researcher is of opinion that perhaps this was done to highlight the Pakistani warriors as villains.

[13] Art for Livelihood was a project taken up for five years from 2004 to 2009 by an NGO called Contact Base. This project assisted 3200 artists in six threatened art forms in the six most economically deprived districts of West Bengal. The aim of the project was to improve the livelihood of traditional rural artist communities. Among the communities benefitted by this project mention may be made of the *Chhau dancer*s of Purulia, the *patua*s of East and West Medinipur and the *Baul-Fakiri singer*s of Nadia. The project was financed by the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre (EZCC) with support of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India and the European Union. The project intended to create direct marketing opportunities for the rural artists, so that they could achieve better living standards and overall development in the long run.

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Environmental Refugees: A New Identity Emerged and Relocated in the Indian Sundarbans (1964-2011)

Arabindu Sardar

Abstract

There are many fundamental differences between these two terms 'refugees' and 'environmental refugees'. In a broader sense, environmental refugees are those people who have been displaced as a result of natural disaster and/or environmental changes. Natural disaster refers to two types of natural calamities, which are responsible for forced migration of a large number of people of the Sundarbans. The number of displaced people in the Sundarbans is increasing day by day for various reasons. Sudden on-set events are floods, cyclones, and land erosion and slow on-set events are coastal erosion, sea-level rise, salt water intrusion, rising temperature, changing rainfall patterns and drought. In 1964, the first group of environmental refugees in the Sundarbans migrated from Lohachara and Bedford islands to different colonies of Sagar Island.

The concept of 'ecological refugees' was first introduced by Lester Brown in 1970s but UNEP researcher Essam-El-Hinnawi (1985)[1] first coined and defined the term 'environmental refugees' and Norman Myers (1993) propeled environmental refugees mainstream.[2] Another debate I am discussing here is about the two research groups of environmental refugees (Astri Suhrke, 1994).[3] One section is Alarmist or Maximalist, and another section is Skeptic or Minimalist. Many theories are in work both in national and international levels of migration. In my present work, I explain and analyse the flow of theories of migration, where kin and friendship networks as important variables in migration. Here, I discuss about the legal status, protection and guidelines of the UNHCR and International Human Rights

Council towards environmental refugees. I also discuss here National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, National Human Rights Commission's recommendations and relief and rehabilitation of the displaced persons.

Keywords: Refugee, Environment, Migration, Displaced, Sundarbans

There are many fundamental differences between these two terms 'refugees' and 'environmental refugees'. The traditional concept of 'refugee' or *Udbastu* refers to a person who has been forced to leave their homeland or settlements due to war, persecution, ethno-cleansing, community riots or natural disasters. India has a long experience and tradition of providing protection and rehabilitation to the refugees. In a broader sense, environmental refugees are those people who have been displaced as a result of natural disasters due to environmental changes. A natural disaster refers to two types of natural calamities, which are responsible for forced migration of large number of people of the Sundarbans. The first type of natural hazards are called sudden events that destroy everything in a short time, like floods, cyclones, and land erosion. Another type of natural calamity is known as slow on-set events, such as coastal erosion, sea-level rise, salt water intrusion, rising temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns and drought. The natural calamities are gradually destroying the land and homestead of the Sundarban region into rivers and seas. These two types of natural calamities have made life miserable for the people of the Sundarban coastal islands. The number of such displaced people in the Sundarbans is increasing day by day for various reasons. In 1964, the first group of environmental refugees in the Sundarbans migrated from Lohachara and Bedford islands to different colonies of the Sagar Island.

The Sundarbans, world's largest active delta, are unique in its nature. Its own estuarine system, intricate coastlines, clusters of smaller deltas, innumerable islands, criss-crossed by numerous distributaries, provides great diversity to the ecosystem. William Wilson Hunter portrayed the Sundarbans as an area 'a sort of drowned land, covered

with jungle, smitten by malaria, and infested by wild beasts; broken up by swamps, intersected by a thousand river channels and maritime backwaters but gradually dotted, as the traveler recedes from the seaboard, with the clearing and patches of rice land.'[4] The area, as he observed, has a vast alluvial plain, where the process of land formation is still ongoing.

The history of reclaiming of the Sundarban forests started after East India Company's rise to power. The forests extended to the contiguity of Calcutta. Early attempts at reclamation in the eighteenth century were unsuccessful. But in later times, the landlords from Kolkata and its adjoining areas gradually took out a lease on the land of Sundarbans from the Company at a low cost. Subsequently, they engaged the indigenous people of the neighbouring states and districts to clean the forests. This eventually established growing settlements in the Sundarbans.

Considering the ecological and human factors the evolution and growth of settlements in the Sundarbans witnessed many ups and downs and a critical turnover. Initially most of the region was under virgin forests but today the numerous and unplanned settlements in the region are vastly different from the earlier ecological set-up and of tropical deltaic coastal environ. People are settled here but natural disasters and series of calamities have turned them into environmental and climatic refugees.

The terrain of Sundarbans presently consists of fifteen police stations distributed in the two districts of West Bengal viz. South and North 24 Parganas. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes dominate the population in this area. The settlement history of the Sundarbans is evolutionary in character and indigenous people of different origins came to settle in the region through the ages. Basically, four types and phases of migrating people are generally found in the region in different times and later on they intermingle to form a mixed, yet rich cultural heritage. The first and original settled population of the Sundarbans is known as 'pond' or *pundakshatriya*. During the colonial rule, Tilman Henkle implemented the 'Sundarban

Plan' (4th April, 1784)[5] which necessitated the tribal community of Bihar, Chotanagpur Malbhumi, Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Dhanbad, Manbhum and Singhbhum. The Orang, Bhumij, Koodmi, Badia, Kol etc. were settled in the Sundarbans. They were also known as 'Boona' or 'Buna' in the Sundarbans. The human stream which had a sudden influx into the Sundarbans is called the 'second generation migrants'.

Flood-ravaged displaced poor people have settled in different islands of the western Sundarbans from the Midnapur district of Bengal. According to Sir William Wilson Hunter, "A number of people emigrated to the 24 parganas from Hijili and other places in the Midnapur district, after the cyclones of 1824 and 1834, and settled permanently in the Sundarbans and adjoining places. They are hence called *bhasa,* i.e., 'came floating'. These people still receive fresh accessions from the same District, and the new-comers go by the same name."[6] Those ethnic groups subsequently brought their relatives to the Islands, introducing them to the immense natural resources of these regions. Along with them another kind of people, anti-social in character, took shelters in the deep forests, they were robbers, pirates, murderers and smugglers. These people gradually became powerful maintained linkage with the state power and political elites.

These three streams of people in the Sundarbans, in later years have unified into one collective body of identity until independence, although, there were ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences among the original inhabitants of the Sundarbans. Another type of community that the Sundarbans had offered shelter was the refugees of the partitioned India. After the partition of India in 1947, millions of people from the East Pakistan were forced to leave their ancestral households, lands and professions and sailed for an uncertain future. The Government, both central and state, failed to deliver timely justice to the displaced people; so they moved toward forcibly entering and taking shelter in different islands of Sundarbans on their own which was marked by immeasurable odds.

These newly-migrated and settled people were dependent directly on forest and forest-based natural resources. Agriculture was not productive enough due to the salinity of the water. Besides being an economic resource, the forest, fishery, rivers and the sea (Bay of Bengal) provided natural protection to the lives and livelihood properties of the coastal population in the cyclone-prone archipelago of West Bengal.

Sundarbans is perhaps the only place on the earth that is threatened at once by cyclones, tidal waves, due to earthen rivers and continuous erosion of sea embankments, followed by saline water intrusion in the paddy fields. This invites crisis of drinking and fresh water. As global warming continues to increase the level of the sea, so some of the islands of the Sundarbans, to name a few — New Moor, Lohachara, Suparibhanga have already disappeared into the womb of the Bay of Bengal and some sea-facing islands are steadily sinking (Sagardwip, Ghoramara, Mousuni, Namkhana, G-Plot etc.).

Upen Naiya, a resident of Ghoramara Island, lamented that the river eats land to survive. He passed the comment because his houses and cultivated land had already been submerged by the river *Muriganga*.[7] Not only his houses and lands but also one-third of this island has disappeared into the river. Bedford and Lohachara islands have already submerged; residents of those two islands have internally migrated to or shifted in various places of the Sagar Island in the Sundarbans. Some of the displaced inhabitants of the Ghoramara Island have compelled to shift in various places of Kakdwip and Diamond Harbour sub-division.[8]

The embankment can only prevent the displaced and relocated inhabitants of the islanders of Sundarbans. Human settlement, migrated people lived here from different districts, protected resources to live, and livelihood in the Sundarbans has been possible only because of the embankments. Embankment may be considered as the 'lifeline' of the islanders of the Sundarbans. In short, embankments act as the safeguard of life, property and livelihood of the rural villagers, farmers from the ingression of salt water. These earthen embankments are also used as road for travel and transport for the villagers. Besides,

embankments protect the unique estuarine mangrove ecosystem enriched with diverse flora and fauna.

Since 1970s, the weather and climate of the entire world have been changing rapidly. This has a profound impact on biodiversity and ecosystems. Sea-level is rising due to global warming. The island's inhabitants, who live along the seashore, are gradually being forced to move out of their homes and forced to resettle to another territorial location, now popularly called as 'environmental refugees'. The concept of 'ecological refugee' was first introduced by Lester Brown in 1970s.[9]

Struggle for Emplacement

If we analyse the settlement history of the islands like Sagardwip, Ghoramara, Lohachara, Suparibhanga and Bedford, we realize the progress of the settlement, as recorded by Frederick Eden Pargiter and F. D. Ascoli in their texts. According to them "In the year 1863 and 1904, Sagar island has been trace up six revenue-free grants, which is particularly or wholly cleared, reclaimed and cultivation process had been started. The six revenue-free grants are — Mud Point, Tower Land, Bamankhali, Ferintosh and Shikarpur."[10] However, the work of land restoration was in full swing.

These estates were granted free of land revenue for some conditions. One of the most important conditions is "A place of refuge consisting of a tank and an embankment terraced inside surrounding it was to be constructed on a specified spot, shown on a plan attached to the deed."[11] These are indications of a very advanced thinking, but we have not adhered to them in our need.

The Ghoramara Island was formerly known as 'Mudpoint', which is gradually separated from Sagar Island around 1904-1905.[12] Bedford, Suparibhanga and Lohachara were three separate islets. All these were surrounded by rivers and dense forests.

Two broad patterns through which the jungle-based land was transformed into habitable places are the following: cleaning and toiling to transform the landscape into habitable and the continuous unfolding

of relations and indeed of persons through accumulation of land. The jungle land had been distributed among the people of the islets of Ghoramara, Lohachara and Suparibhanga. These swampy 'wastelands' had been cleared and prepared to make it suitable for agricultural work. Here, the labourious task of forest reclamation had been done by the very poor people, who usually belonged to the Adivasi community and other lower stratas of the society.

Thus, the conflation of particular labour regimes (i.e. forest clearance) by ethnic people (i.e. Adivasis) and sequential ordering of tasks (i.e. first clearance by Adivasis and subsequently farming by peasants had proven to be crucial for large parts of the Sundarbans had been bypassed here.[13] Listening to contemporary residents, a past of difficult years and existential frictions with the adversities of untamed nature emerges. Decisive for the settlers' transformation of swamps into fertile fields was hard labour and providing of time. Labour to detract the landscape from the water; and time to let the saltiness wither as far as possible. Gopal Karok and Asish Jana, two of my interlocutors, insisted that their fathers and grandfathers had taken the land by themselves, and had transformed it through their labour and individual struggle.[14]

Two types of impediments for struggle of emplacement in those sea-facing tiny islets were: Tigers and other wild animals consistently formed the threats aptly reflected into narrated pasts. After the story of the dead horse (Ghoramara), tigers were remembered as a frequent threat and of their silent presence inside the jungles. The trends were gradually disappearing with the spread of settlements. Second one was the deficient supply of fresh water and outbreaks of unknown fevers in the salty zones (*nona-jayga*) mostly in the first two years of the reclaiming land. The health sufferings were also outputs of abject poverty, malnutrition and toiling. Both widespread sickness and thirst for sweet water became, hence, somewhat of better past against which the ensuing comfort and ease could be measured. Those who endured so many obstacles have survived and eventually prospered.

Across the islands and islets, the narrations of transformation have resembled each other closely. After dislocation from larger Sagardwip, between Ghoramara and Lohachara the only difference lay, perhaps, is in the emergence of differentiation of settlement structures and development, but never allude to significant social or cultural differences among these tiny islets because most of the people settled for living on these islands came from Midnapur district.

Ghoramara islet includes villages like Bagpara, Raypara, Hatkhola, Mandirtala, and Chunpuri. Villages like Khasimara, Khasimara Char, Lakshmi Narayanpur, Baishnabpara, etc. had already been sunk. Lohachara islet is small in size small as there are no other discernable villages on this islet. The third islet Suparibhanga did not feature grown village structure altogether. The existence of the settlement structures on this island had some contradictory assertions. Official documents reveal that the islet has its ephemeral existence. This island is mostly comparable to the Jambudwip. At a particular time of the year, workers and businessmen from different regions used to come here for maintaining livelihood and subsequently built transient settlements to earn a living by using natural resources.[15] Several respondents remembered only their seasonal presence on this land. In this regard, Arne Harms wrote "the name of the islet, which is to be translated as 'Broken Supari' (*supari bhanga*), was commonly thought to derive from broken Supari-palms under which cow shepherds used to take rest."[16] Consequentially, the cows and their herders were acknowledged as the sole users of the island. Others, however, sternly emphasized permanent settlement structures on this islet. A few of the Colony's residents actually took refuge on the islet during the drawn-out decades between having become landless islanders and the eventual resettlements.[17]

With all their deprivation and hazards, those early years became synonymous with the continuous accumulation of land. In other words, in that period of initial emplacement as islander's hazards, labour and success had been tightly interwoven. The emplacement of 'original islanders' followed three phases: translocation from original home, years of toiling and suffering, and lastly, onset of prosperity. Where

there were jungles in the beginning, the ideal homestead (*bhite*) gradually developed. An ideal homestead includes a house (*ghar*), agriculture field *(jami-jayga*), a garden (*bagan*) and pond (*pukur*) gradually transforms the distinctions among the phases.

The vastness of lost lands, indeed of the estate, was emerged not only as a consequence of entrepreneurial spirit of families or their founding figures, but also as a consequence of easy availability of land. Herein lies one of the fundamental differences to the mainland, or more precisely to the remembered past spatially tied to those areas. While the mainland has been fundamentally marked by population pressure, the deltaic islands were remembered as vast emptiness. This imagery, of course, resonates well with many other 'settler societies' across the world. It is particularly striking owing to the strong hierarchical relations and the feudal character of settlements in these tracts as reflected or turned in available literature.

In the context of the Indian Sundarbans, three major types of displacement and internal migration occurred. First is conflict-induced displacement (Marichjhanpi incident 1978-79), second is development-induced displacement (Fishermen's eviction from Jambudwip 2002-03) and third is disaster-induced displacement (Ghoramara, Bedford, Lohachara, Mousuni islands, G-plot etc.). Third type of migrants, due to natural disasters, are called Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) or internal refugees. The persons under this category are rapidly increasing day by day, who are now popularly called 'environmental refugees'. The concept of 'environmental refugees' was first coined by Lester Brown in the 1970s and Essam-El-Hinnawi (1985) first time came to define 'environmental refugee' as "... those people who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption (natural and/or triggered by people) that jeopardized their existence and/or seriously affect the quality of their life. 'Environmental disruption' in this definition means any physical, chemical and /or biological changes in the ecosystem (or the resource base) that render it temporarily or permanently, unsuitable to support human life."[18]

Essam-El-Hinnawi recognized three sub-categories of environmental refugees: 1. Those who temporarily have to leave their traditional habitats due to natural disaster or anthropogenic causes. 2. Those who have been permanently displaced and re-settled in a new area due to drastic environmental change, and 3. Those who have migrated based on the gradual deterioration of environmental conditions. But Hinnawi's explanation about disruption is not fully true.[19] Diane C. Bates adds that the migration streams resulting from these disruptions can be distinguished by three categories of disruptions: disasters, expropriations, and deteriorations. First, disaster refugees originate in critical events that are not designed to produce migration. Second, expropriation refugees result out of acute anthropogenic disruptions in the environment that intentionally dislocates the target populations. Third, deterioration refugees migrate as a result of gradual, anthropogenic changes in their environments that are not intended to produce migrants. Deterioration refugees come from particular areas, where ecological patterns have gradually degraded to a point where people cannot survive on the local resources. This type of refugee may be analytically classified into sub-groups on the basis of sources of degradation in terms of pollution and depletion.[20]

In this region, disaster-induced displacements are of three types: temporary, permanent and internally-migrated displacements. Temporary displacement in various islands of the Sundarbans is a regular occurrence because of sea-level rise and land erosion which are the results of multi-various causes combined in one 'global warming'. Temporary displacement suggests a displacement in which, people seek shelter and stay for a few days/months during sudden natural disasters. For this reason, the Government constructs the storm refugee centres (recently termed as flood centre). The first storm centre was built up at Kachuberia of the Sagar Island during 1922-23. The Sagar Island has eleven such earthen storm refugee centres and Ghoramara has one, locally known as *gherpukur* (embanked pond). There are now seventeen flood centres.[21] Sunando Bandyopadhyay, observes: "Following the extremely destructive cyclonic storm of 1864, the State government made it mandatory in 1871 for the landlords of

the island (called 'grantees') to construct storm refugees centres for the settling peasants according to certain pre-laid specifications."[22] Recently earthen storm centres are converted to concrete flood centres, the government is funding for such centres to be built on every island.

Permanent displacement means one's house already sunk into the river or into the Bay of Bengal and the concerned inhabitants eventually compelled to build another house either on embankment or on his own survived lands. The third category of disaster-induced people is Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This type of refugees from different islets in the Indian Sundarban Delta has been relocated and re-established in various parts of the neighbouring Sagardwip Island and consequently five 'colonies' were created through several phases.

Resettlement Process

The Ghoramara Island is yet to be restored from the damage caused by earlier cyclones like Aila (2009), Bulbul (2019), Amphan (2020) in the past, but the tidal wave caused by cyclone Yaas (2021) submerged the entire island. The *tank pukur par* and the flood centre only stood up, where the environmental refugees took shelter. The size of the island was thirty-three thousand *bigha*s long back, now it has been reduced to about five thousand *bigha*s.[23] Ghoramara island that had a population of over five thousand as per 2011 Census of India, now approximately has just 1125 families living in the island.[24] Most of them have fled over the years to different places of Kakdwip, Diamond Harbour, because of rapid land erosion and rising water level. The island is sinking every day. The effect is such that there is apparently a possibility that the island will be wiped off the map very soon. A tragic journey for resettlement process has been started from Ghoramara and Lohachara Island to Refugees' colonies since 1964.

Phase-1

History of the internal migration due to climatic change from the Ghoramara Island to Sagardwip Island is one of the most tragic episodes in recent times. It is the story of the uprooting of a poor population

deeply attached to their beautiful island. After every disaster, slowly but steadily the area of land is under subsidence due to landslides.

Refugee's camps and *Tank Pukur Par*

Refugee's camp is a temporary settlement built to receive displaced inhabitants after or immediately before sudden disaster. These shelters are usually set up in an impromptu fashion and designed to meet basic human needs for only a short time. These camps are built because of natural calamities, so some shelters are dirty and unhealthy. School classrooms, various government buildings and flood centres are used as refugee's camp for environmental refugees. *Tank pukur par*[25] also built for this purpose. These camps are temporary facilities for displaced people.

Phase-2

People may stay in these camps, receiving emergency food and medical aid, until it is safe to return to their homes. In some cases, often after one or two months, they return to their homes, after making home liveable. Those whose houses and lands have been washed away by the natural calamities are waiting in refugee camp for government help for their basic needs. Some of them benefited from government assistance and with help relocated to different colonies in various parts of the Sagar Development Block as environmental refugees on government *khas* land. Afterwards, environmental refugees take shelter in 'transit camps' before being fully settled in pre-determined relocated areas. One such transit camp still exists in Rudranagar Gram Panchayet at Sagardwip Island known as 'Komalpur Refugee House'. It still carries memories of its past.

The remaining poor residents, with the help of local political leaders, settled permanently on the embankment and *tank pukur par* of Ghoramara Island, which we still see in Ghoramara, Mousuni and Sagardwip Island. The helpless people standing on the bank are in despair as the day melts into dust with great anxiety; they wait for a new day to struggle for their existence. Rabiul Mondal, a migrated labour and one of my interlocutors, at Ghoramara Island told me that 'Those who have money can cross the sea. Those who dont, wait like

us to get drowned. Even if we get to the mainland, we remain refugees with no homes, no identity and no community. We are simply losing the battle.[26]

Phase-3 (Final Stage)

There are no provisions for rehabilitation and relocation policy of climate refugees in India as well as in West Bengal. People who leave their homes for environmental reasons cannot apply for asylum. The resettlement of environmental refugees is due to massive erosion and wiping out of several islets and villages of the Ghoramara and Bedford islands. The process of resettlement was chalked out and disposal was organized by the Government of West Bengal through the local administrative bodies like Panchayet and Block Development Office. The resettlement in these colonies at Sagar Island started in 1964. Different uninhabited places in the Sagardwip Island mainly relocated by people from the islets of Lohachara, Suparibhanga and Bedford islands along with villages of Khasimara, Khasimara Char, Lakshmi Narayanpur, Bagpara, Baishnabpara of the Ghoramara Island. The following table (No-1) clearly indicates the trends of disposal of displaced environmental refugees from different islets at Sagardwip.[14]

Sl. No.	Name of Colony	Year of establish-ment	Came from	Number of households and size	Total popula-tion	Govt. aid given
01	Phuldubi	1964	Khasimara	11(5)	55	Land: 0.533(ha)
02	South Hara-dhanpur	1964	Khasimara Char	14(5)	70	Land: 0.533(ha)
03	Bankimnagar	1972	Lohachara	151(7)	1057	Land: 0.833(ha)
04	Gangasagar	1981	Ghoramara	150(7)	1050	Land: 0.267(ha) and one mud house
05	Jibantala-Kamalpur	1983	Ghoramara	136(6)	816	Land: 0.2(ha) and one brick-built house

Relocation of colonies has been initiated for the first time in Sagar Island's uninhabited wastelands at Phuldubi in 1964. Environmental refugees from Khasimara village of the Ghoramara island were settled here with the help of local administrative body and political leaders. Every household got government benefits with house and land. The rehabilitation packages offered includes houses (temporary or *pucca*) and agricultural land, which is mostly wasteland and moorland. Initially, environmental refugees enjoyed government benefits, but later those benefits diminished and are no longer provided. Environmental refugees have been moving to other places for accommodation and alternative livelihoods as per their convenience and ability.

The environmental refugees who came in early have received a lot of government support and land. Eventually as time has passed, the amount of government assistances and the volume of land has gradually decreased. The resettlement in these colonies started around the year 1964 till 2006. Government settlement records of upto 1995 shows a total of 327 families being displaced, from which 192 families were rehabilitated. But there are new colonies which are sprouting up and some of the colonies have also been planned to take in people from the neighbouring block of Kakdwip.[28]

The Sundarbans, mainly the sea-facing islets, are also volatile due to the effect of erosion and deposition process for its active deltaic design. Erosion and deposition are the continuous processes in this area that affected the island. As a result, people of the submerged islets have been safely brought out and relocated in uninhabited and unhealthy places to live.

Kin and friendship networks work as an important variable in migration. The interpersonal ties connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destinations that encourage circular migration and reduce migration risk. While analyzing the social class character of the people in these colonies, it is seen that relatives and friends have played an important role in making them live together. The majority of the people living in Gangasagar colony are Hindus of upper castes. Scheduled Caste communities dominate the colonies of Phuldubi, Bankimnagar and South Haradhanpur. The Muslim

community predominates in the Kamalpur and Jibantala colonies.

Kinship dominates the colonies. People have developed social bonds within themselves and are cooperative in nature due to their common traumatic past and new aspirations in the new land. Most of the people are settled here with their close relatives. The threat is evident from the latest Geographic Information Systems (GIS) report which showed that in the past 70 years, 220 sq km of forest land had been submerged. The 'Cost of Climate Inaction: Displacement and Distress Migration' report estimated that by 2050 over 4.5 crore Indians will be forced to migrate from their homes due to climate disasters.[29] Apart from sea-level rise, more immediate threat to human lives and livelihood can come from an increased frequency of cyclones and even super-cyclones. The area is cyclone-prone and historically these natural calamities came with devastating consequences for the islanders. With global warming and climate change, the frequency of such calamities is estimated to increase.

Notes

[1] Essam El-Hinnawi, *Environmental Refugees*, United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya, 1985, p. 4.

[2] Norman Meyer, 'Environmental Refugees: An Emergent Security Issue', 13th Economic Forum, Prague, 23-27 May, 2005, Lecture in Session-III, p. 1.

[3] Astri Suhrke, 'Pressure Points: Environmental Degradation, Migration and Conflict,' Project Paper in Peace and Conflict Studies Program, University of Toronto and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts, June 1991, p. 4.

[4] William Wilson Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol. – 1, Pt. – I, *Statistical Account of The District of 24-Parganas*, Trubner and Co., London, 1876, reprint by Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1998, Preface, p. xxix.

[5] William Wilson Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol. – 1, Part – II, *Statistical Account of The Sundarbans*, Trubner and Co., London, 1876, reprint by Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1998, p. 47.

[6] William Wilson Hunter, Vol. – 1, Pt. – I, op.cit., p. 39. and L.S.S.O' Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers: 24 Parganas,* The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1914, reprint by Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1998, p. 109.

[7] My interview with Upen Naiya, resident, Ghoramara Island, dated 30.06.2021.

[8] My interview with Sanjib Sagar, Pradhan, Ghoramara Gram Panchayat, dated 30.06.2021.

[9] Lester Russel Brown is an American environmental analyst, founder of the World Watch Institution.

[10] Frederick Eden Pargiter, *A Revenue History of the Sundarbans from 1765 to 1870,* Vol.-1, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, 1934, reprint by Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 2002, p. 340. And Frank David Ascoli, *The Revenue History of the Sundarbans,* Vol.-II, West Bengal Districts Gazetteers, Government of West Bengal, Higher Education Department, Kolkata, 2002, p. 170.

[11] Frederick Eden Pargiter, op. cit., p. 343.

[12] Sunando Bandyopadhyay, 'Natural Environmental Hazards and their Management: A Case Study of Sagar Island, India,' *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography,* Department of Geography, University of Singapore, 18 (1), 1997, 24. And Kalyan Rudra, *Atlas of Changing River Courses in West Bengal (1767-2010),* Sea Explorer's Institute, Kolkata, March, 2012.

[13] Arne Harms, *Dwelling in Loss-Environment, Displacement and Memory in the Indian Ganges Delta,* Berlin, December, 2013, p. 189.

[14] My interview with Gopal Karok and Asish Jana, Ghoramara Islands, 30.05.2019.

[15] Bikash Roy Chowdhuri, *The Moon and the Net: Study of the Transient Community of Fishermen at Jambudwip*, Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata, 1980, Reprinted 2003, p. 3.

[16] Arne Harms, op. cit., p. 190.

[17] Ibid., p. 190.

[18] Essam El-Hinnawi, op. cit., p. 4.

[19] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[20] Diane C. Bates, 'Environmental Refugees? Classifying Human Migrations Caused by Environmental Change', *Population and Environment,* Springer Science and Business Media B.V., Netherlands, Vol. 23, No-5, May-2002, 469.

[21] My interview with Swapan Kumar Pradhan, Chairperson, Sagar Panchayat Samiti, Rudranagar, Sagar Island, dated 03.11.2022.

[22] Sunando Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., 34.

[23] My interview with Arun Das, Revenue Officer, Block Land & Land Reforms Office, Rudranagar, Sagar Island, dated 07.08.2024.

[24] https://www.census2011.co.in/data/subdistrict/2438-sagar-south-twenty-four-parganas-west-bengal.html, date of accession 25.09.2024.

[25] The *tank pukur* currently exists in the Mandirtala village of Ghoramara Island (Mud point). It was built by Raja Peary Mohan Mukherjee, the *zamindar* of Mudpoint, Ferintosh, Towerland and Shikarpur. This *tank pukur par* or embanked pond is the highest point on the Ghoramara Island.

[26] My interview with Rabiul Islam, resident, Ghoramara Island, dated 18.01.2019.

[27] Field Survey and Interview with Local Panchayat officer, Sagar Islands, 2018 onwards & Namita Chakma, 'Inter Island Relocation due to Natural Hazards and Socio-Economic Challenges: A Case Study on Hugli Estuary Island,' *Golden Research Thoughts*, Vol. 4, Issue-5, Nov-2014, 3 and Semonti Das, 'Paribeshgata Karane Sundarbaner Ghoramara Dwipe Aj Jnara Udbastu: Ekti Samiksha', *Samakaler Jiyonkathi,* 2019, p. 321.

[28] Clare Lizamit Samling, Asish K. Ghosh & Sugata Hazra, 'Resettlement and Rehabilitation: Indian Scenario', Working Paper, DECCMA Project, 2015, p. 16.

[29] https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/publications/ActionAid%20CANSA%20-%20South%20Asia%20Climate%20Migration%20-%20Dec%202020%20-Final.pdf, date of accession 11.03.2022, p. 4.

On the Radical and Participial tenses of the modern Indo-Aryan Languages. —*By* G. A. GRIERSON, PH.D., C.I.E.

[Read January, 1896.]

In a paper which I had the honour of reading before the Society at the last meeting, I discussed the question of Pronominal suffixes, and their use in the conjugation of verbs in the Kāçmīrī Language. I also compared Kāçmīrī, in this respect, with the two other languages of the Indian North-Western family, *viz.*, Sindhī and Western Pañjābī and with the Maithilī dialect of Bihārī, and with Assamese,—languages belonging to the Eastern family.

In the present paper, I propose to carry this enquiry a step further, and to ascertain how far the use of pronominal suffixes has obtained in the case of verbs of other Indo-Aryan Vernaculars.

In my former paper, I showed that these languages should be classed in three families,—a North-Western, a Central and an Eastern, the last including, as a sub-division, the Southern Marāṭhī with its Kōnkanī dialect. I also explained the difference between an analytic, an agglutinative, and a synthetic language, and I believe that the result of this paper (amongst other things) will be to show, that it may be taken as a broad rule, that while the Central Vernaculars prefer an Analytic, the North-Western, Eastern and Southern prefer an Agglutinative, or (its further developed form) a Synthetic system of conjugation.

In all these languages, the tenses of the verb may be divided into three groups, *viz.*, (1) the Radical tenses, (2) the Participial, and (3) the Periphrastic. The last, as not being necessary for our immediate purpose, may be dismissed without further notice, beyond explaining that they are compound tenses formed by adding auxiliary verbs to participles or to other tenses, as in the Hindī *gayā hai*, 'he has gone,' formed by adding the auxiliary verb *hai*, 'is' to the past participle *gayā*, 'gone.' So also the Sindhī *haliō āhē* (*haliō*, 'gone,' + *āhē*, 'is,') and the Bengali *giyāchē* (*giyā*, 'gone,' + *āchē*, 'is'). Again, the Hindī future is a periphrastic tense; thus *jāũgā*, 'I will go,' lit., 'I am gone' (*gā*, auxiliary verb) 'that I may go' (*jāũ*, radical tense); and the Western-Pañjābī present *jān'dā*,

'I am going,' compounded of the Participle *jān'dā*, 'going,' plus the auxiliary verb *hã̄*, 'I am.'

Radical tenses are those which are derived throughout from a corresponding Sanskrit-Prakrit tense. That is to say, which are actual survivals of the old Sanskrit conjugation. The only Sanskrit-Prakrit tenses which have survived are the Present (including the Imperative), and the Future.

The following are the Sanskrit-Prakrit forms of the Present tense, the verb taken as an example being the √ *cal*, 'go.'

		Sanskrit.	Prakrit.	Apabhraṁça. (Optional.)
Singular	1	*calāmi*	*calāmi* (*calami*)	*calaũ.*
,,	2	*calasi*	*calasi*	*calahi*, *calai.*
,,	3	*calati*	*calai*	*calahi*, *calai.*
Plural	1	*calāmas*	*calamō* (*calimō*)	*calahũ* (**calihũ.*)
,,	2	*calatha*	*calaha*	*calahu.*
,,	3	*calanti*	*calanti*	*calahĩ* (**calaĩ.*)

We shall now compare the existing form of the corresponding tenses in all the Indo-Aryan Vernaculars.

CENTRAL FAMILY.

		Eastern Pañjābī.	Gujarātī.	Rajputānī.	Hindī (Braj.)	Central Pahārī.	Naipālī.
Sing.	1	*calã̄*	*cālũ*	*calaũ*	*calaũ*	*calũ*	*calũ.*
,,	2	*calẽ*	*cālē*	*calai*	*calai*	*calī*	*calē.*
,,	3	*calē*	*cālē*	*calai*	*calai*	*cal*	*calē.*
Plur.	1	*caliē*	*cālīe*	*calã̄*	*calaĩ*	*calaũ*	*calē.*
,,	2	*calō*	*cālō*	*calō*	*calau*	*calā*	*calau.*
,,	3	*calan*	*cālē*	*calai*	*calaĩ*	*calan*	*calun.*

In all the above, the tense has in modern times gained a conditional power, and is more commonly used as a Present Subjunctive.

NORTH-WESTERN FAMILY.

		Sindhī.	Western Pañjābī.	Kāçmīrī.
Sing.	1	*calã̃*	*calã̃*	*tsalạ*
,,	2	*calẽ*	*calẽ*	(*tsala-k*)[1]
,,	3	*calē*	*calē*	*tsali*
Plur.	1	*calũ̃*	*calũ̃*	*tsalau*
,,	2	*calō*	*calō*	*tsaliu*
,,	3	*calane*	*calin*	*tsalan*

In this, the Kāçmīrī form has gained the force of a Future. The other languages give it a Subjunctive force.

EASTERN FAMILY.

Eastern Group.

		Baiswārī.	Bihārī (Maithilī).	Assamese.	Bengali.	Oṛiyā.
Sing.	1	*calaũ̃*	*calũ*	*calõ*	——	*cali*
,,	2	*calai*	not used	*cala*	*calis*	*calu*
,,	3	*calai*	*calai*	*calē*	*calē* (*calu-k*)[2]	*calai*
Plur.	1	*calaĩ*	*calī*	singular form used.	*cali*	*calũ*
,,	2	*calahu*	*calâh*[3]	*calā*	*cala*	*cala*
,,	3	*calaĩ*	*calath*[i]	singular form used.	*calen*	*calanti*

[1] A late agglutinative form.

[2] A form with the pronominal suffix *k*, only used in the imperative.

[3] *â* pronounced something like the *a* in ' ball.'

SOUTHERN GROUP.

		MARĀṬHĪ.	KŌNKANĪ.
Sing.	1	*cālẽ*	*cālun*
,,	2	*cālēs*	*cāl'çī*
,,	3	*cālē*	*cālat*
Plur.	1	*cālũ*	*cālũ*
,,	2	*cālã*	*cāl'çat*
,,	3	*cālat*	*cāltit*

In Marāṭhī, this tense has acquired the force of a Habitual Past, 'I used to go.' In Kōnkanī it is a Contingent Future, 'I may perhaps go.'

It is thus manifest that in every modern Indo-Aryan language there is a tense derived direct from the Sanskrit-Prakrit present. Sometimes Singular forms are used for Plural, and *vice versa*. The terminations are corruptions of the original Sanskrit-Prakrit terminations, and (with the exception of one or two sporadic forms) nothing has been added to these terminations in the way of pronominal suffixes. It is a genuine synthetic tense by origin.

We now come to the **Future.** The Sanskrit-Prakrit terminations are as follows:—

		SANSKRIT.	PRAKRIT.	APABHRAṀÇA. (Optional.)
Singular	1	*calişyāmi*	*calissāmi* or *calihimi*	*calissaũ* or *calihiũ*
,,	2	*calişyasi*	*calissasi* or *calihisi*	*calissahi*, *calissai* or *calihihi*, *calihii*
,,	3	*calişyati*	*calissai* or *calihii*	*calissahi*, *calissai* or *calihihi*, *calihii*.
Plural	1	*calişyāmas*	*calissāmō* or *calihimō*	*calissahũ* or *calihihũ*, (* *calihiũ*).
,,	2	*calişyatha*	*calissaha* or *calihiha*	*calissahu* or *calihihu*, (* *calihiu*).
,	3	*calişyanti*	*calissanti* or *calihinti*	*calissahĩ* (* *calissaĩ*) or *calihihĩ* (* *calihiĩ*.)

This future has not survived, as a Radical tense in all Indo-Aryan Vernaculars, as will be seen from the following:—

CENTRAL FAMILY.

	Eastern Pañjābī.	Gujarātī.	Rājputānī (Optional.)	Hindī (Braj.) (Optional.)	Central Pahārī.	Naipālī.
Sing. 1	wanting.	*cālīç*	*calahũ*	*calihaũ*	wanting.	wanting.
„ 2		*cālīçē*	*calahī*	*calihai*		
„ 3		*cālīçē*	*calahī*	*calihai*		
Plur. 1		*cālīçũ*	*calahã*	*calihaĩ*		
„ 2		*cālīçō*	*calahō*	*calihau*		
„ 3		*cal'çē*	*calahī*	*calihaĩ*		

In Rājputānī and Hindī, the future can also be made periphrastically, *e.g.*, H. *calaũ-gau*, 'I shall go,' *lit.*, 'I am gone that I may go.' In Eastern Panjābī, Central Pahārī, and Naipālī, a Periphrastic Future is the only one used.

NORTH-WESTERN FAMILY.

	Sindhī.	Western Pañjābī.	Kāçmīrī.
Sing. 1	wanting.	*cal'sā*	wanting.
„ 2		*cal'sẽ*	
„ 3		*cal'sĩ*	
Plur. 1		*cal'sũ*	
„ 2		*cal'sō*	
„ 3		*cal'sin*	

In Sindhī, a Periphrastic Future is used. In Kāçmīrī, the old Present is used as a Future.

EASTERN FAMILY.

Eastern Group.

		Baiswārī (Optional).	Bihārī (Maithilī).	Assamese.	Bengali.	Oṛiyā.
Sing.	1	*calihaũ*	wanting.	wanting.	wanting.	wanting.
„	2	*calihahi*				
„	3	*calihahi*				
Plur.	1	*calihahĩ*				
„	2	*calihahu*				
„	3	*calihahĩ*				

In Baiswārī (the old language of Tul'sī Dās is taken as the type) a periphrastic form is also used. In the other languages, the Future is a Participial Tense.

Southern Group.

Both Marāṭhī and Kōnkanī have a Periphrastic Future, and no remains of the old Sanskrit-Prakrit tense appear.

With regard to the Sanskrit-Prakrit Future, therefore, the remarks apply which we have made regarding the Present, but in a modified form. The tense has survived only in Gujarātī, Rājputānī, Hindī, Western Pañjābī, and Baiswārī. In these languages it is a Radical Tense. In Eastern Pañjābī, Central Pahārī, Naipālī, Sindhī, and Marāṭhī (with its Kōnkanī dialect), the Future is a Periphrastic tense, and need not concern us further. Kāçmīrī has the Future as a Radical Tense, but has borrowed the old Sanskrit Present for the purpose. In the true Eastern languages, Bihārī, Assamese, Bengali and Oṛiyā, the Future is a Participial tense, and will require subsequent further examination.

Except the Imperative, which closely resembles the Old Present, and need not be specially considered, there are no other Radical tenses in the modern Indo-Aryan Vernaculars.

We now come to the **Participial Tenses.** A modern Indo-Aryan participial tense is not directly derived from any tense in Sanskrit or Prakrit. It is simply a modern participle to which the function of a

tense is given. Pronominal suffixes may or may not be added to it. Thus, to take the root *cal*, to go. In Hindī (Braj) its Past Participle is *calyau*, 'gone,' and to this is given the function of a past tense, and it is also used to mean 'I,' 'thou,' or 'he went,' without the addition of any suffix to show what person is referred to. On the other hand, in Kāçmīrī, the Past Participle is *tsol*^{u}, 'gone,' and when the function of a past tense is given to it, pronominal suffixes in the nominative case are added to it, to indicate the person who is gone; thus, *tsolu-s*, 'I went,' lit. 'gone-I,' *tsolu-k*, 'thou wentest,' lit. 'gone-thou.' If the subject of the verb is feminine or plural, or both, then the participle, being an adjective, is altered to agree with the subject. Thus, the plural masculine of the Hindī *calyau*, is *calē*, and *calē* is used as a participial tense, to mean 'we,' 'you,' or 'they went' (masculine). So the masculine plural of the Kāçmīrī *tsol*^{u} is *tsal*^{i}, and when the participle is used as a participial tense, with the subject in the masculine plural, this form is used, as in *tsal*^{i}*-vạ*, 'you went,' in which *vạ* is the pronominal suffix of the second person plural in the nominative case.

It has hitherto been assumed that these terminations, added by some languages, and which I call pronominal suffixes, are merely the old Sanskrit-Prakrit terminations of the old Present, borrowed for the purpose (possibly under the influence of false analogy), and tacked on to these modern participles. *Primâ facie*, the addition of an old Prakrit termination to a modern form—so that the two form one synthetic word—is not probable. In the second place, it will be seen that they are not the same as the terminations of the old Sanskrit-Prakrit present. Thirdly, we have the evidence of some languages that these terminations are (at least in them) agglutinative pronominal suffixes, which may be added or not as fancy seizes the speaker. For these reasons I believe that I can show that all these terminations of participial tenses are pure pronominal suffixes added to participles, and are not the terminations of the Old Present borrowed for the occasion.

The Participles used in the formation of Participial tenses, are the Past, the Present, and the Future. We shall take them in order. Only Masculine forms, as a rule, will be given.

The following are examples of Tenses based on the **Past Participle.** They are all simple past tenses, and mean 'I,' 'thou,' 'he,' &c., 'went.'

CENTRAL FAMILY.

	Eastern Pañjābī.	Gujarātī.	Rājputānī.	Hindī (Braj.)	Central Pahārī.	Naipālī.
Past Participle.	*caliā*	*cālyō*	*calyō*	*calyāu*	*calē*	*calyō*
Singular 1	*caliā*	*cālyō*	*calyō*	*calyau*	*calē*	*caly-ẽ*
„ 2						*cali-ės*
„ 3						*calyō*
Plural 1	*calē*	*cālyā*	*calyā*	*calyē*	*calā*	*caly-aũ*
„ 2						*caly-au*
„ 3						*calyē*

Except Naipālī, all the above take feminine forms, to agree with a feminine subject.

NORTH-WESTERN FAMILY.

	Sindhī.	Western Pañjābī.	Kāçmīrī.
Past Participle.	Sg. *caliō*, fem. *calī*	*caliā*	Sg. *tsol^{u}*, fem. *tsaḷ^{i}*
Sing. 1	*caliu-se* fem. *calia-se*	*calia-s* or *calia-m*	*tsolu-s*, fem. *tsali-s*
„ 2	*cali-ẽ*	*cali-ā*	*tsolu-k*; fem. *tsali-k*
„ 3	*caliō* fem. *calī*	*caliā*	*tsol^{u}*, fem. *tsaḷ^{i}*
Plur. 1	*caliā-sī̃* fem. *caliũ-sī̃*	*caliō-se*	*tsaḷ^{i}*, fem. *tsali*
„ 2	*calia-u* fem. *caliũ*	*caliō-hē*	*tsaḷ^{i}-vạ*, fem. *tsali-vạ*
„ 3	*caliā* fem. *caliũ*	*calē*	*tsaḷ^{i}*, fem. *tsali*

In Western Pañjābī, there is no change for gender.

EASTERN FAMILY.

Eastern Group.

	Baiswārī.	Bihārī. (Maithilī.)	Assamese.	Bengali.	Oṛiyā.
Past Participle.	*caleu*, fem. *caliu*.	*calal*, fem. *calal*^{i}.	* *calil*.	* *calila*.	* *calilā*.
Singular 1	*cale-ũ* fem. *cali-ũ*	*calal-ahũ*	*calil-õ*	*calin-u*	*calil-i*
„ 2	*cale-u*, fem. *cali-u*	*calal-ẽ*	*calil-i*	*calil-i*	*calil-u*
„ 3	*caleu*, fem. *caliu*	*calal*, fem. *calal*^{i}	*calil* or *calil-ē*	*calila* or *calil-ek*	*calilā*
Plural 1	*cale-nhi*, fem. *calĩ*	*calal-ī*	singular used	*calila-am* (*-ām*)	*calil-ũ*
„ 2	*cale-hu*, fem. *cali-hu*	*calal-âh*	*calil-ā*	*calil-ā or -ē*	*calil-a*
„ 3	*cale-nhi*, fem. *calĩ*	*calal-ăh*, fem. *calal-īh*	singular used	*calil-en*	*calil-ē*

Except Baiswārī and Bihārī, as shown above, none of these change for gender.

Southern Group.

	Marāṭhī.	Kōnkanī.
Past Participle	*cal'lā*, fem. *cal'lī*, neut. *cal'lẽ*	*cal'lō*, fem. *cal'lī*, neut. *cal'lẽ*
Singular 1	*cal'lā-ũ* (*õ*), fem. *cal'l-ẽ*, neut. *cal'l-ẽ*	*cal'l-õ* *cal'l-ĩ* *cal'l-ẽ*
„ 2	*cal'lā-s*, fem. *cal'lī-s*, neut. *cal'lẽ-s*	*cal'lō-i* *cal'l-ī* *cal'l-eĩ*
„ 3	*cal'lā*, fem. *cal'lī*, neut. *cal'lẽ*	*cal'lō* *cal'li* *cal'lẽ*

		Marāṭhī.	Kōnkanī.
Plural	1	masc. fem. neut. *cal'l-õ*	*cal'lē-aũ*
,,	2	masc. fem. neut. *cal'l-ã̃*	*cal'lē-āt*
,,	3	*cal'l-ē*, fem. *cal'lyā*, neut. *cal'lyĩ̃*	*cal'lē*, fem. *cal'leo*, neut. *cal'lĩ̃*

Most of the above are examples of the simplest kind of Past tense, that of a neuter verb, in which the only factor affecting the form of the verb is the subject, with which the verb must agree in number and person, and sometimes in gender. In fact the *form* of this tense is exactly paralleled by Sanskrit and Prākrit. The Marāṭhī *tō cal'lā*, is exactly paralleled by the Sanskrit *sa calitaḥ*, Prākrit *sō caliō*. This idiom, in which the subject of the sentence is also the subject of the verb, and agrees with the latter in number, person (and gender), is called the *Kartari prayōga*, or Active construction.

When, however, the verb is transitive, the Past Participle is a passive one, and we have a different set of phænomena. Take the transitive root *mār*, 'kill.' In Sanskrit, the Past Participle is *mārita*, and *sa māritaḥ* does not mean 'he killed,' as *sa calitaḥ* means 'he went,' but means 'he was killed.' If we wish to use this Past Participle in an active sense, for 'he killed,' we must say '*tēna maritaḥ*' 'by him killed,' and for 'he killed a man,' we must say 'a man (was) killed by him,' in which the object of the sentence becomes the subject of the verb, and the subject of the sentence becomes the agent, in the instrumental case, after the verb. We have the same in the Indo-Aryan Vernaculars. In Hindī *wah māryau* does not mean 'he killed,' but 'he was killed.' For 'he killed,' we must say *vā nē māryau*, 'by him killed.' So also 'he killed a man' is *vā nē manuṣ māryau*, 'by him a man was killed.' So *vā nē strī mārī*, [1] is 'he killed a woman,' 'by him a woman was killed,' in which the verb agrees in gender, number and person with the object, not with the subject of the sentence. As the Past Participle is used passively, this is called *Karmaṇi prayōga*, or Passive construction.

There is, however, another way of dealing with a Past Participle passive the impersonal method, familiar to those who remember the 'actum est de Balbo,' of our school-boy days. Here the participle is

[1] It is not suggested that these examples are idiomatic Hindī.

put in the neuter gender, and the object of the verb is put in the dative (a kind of dativus commodi). Thus for 'he killed the man,' we may say 'by him, with reference to the man (dative), it was killed' (neuter singular),[1] *vā nē manuṣ kaũ māryau;* or for 'he killed the woman,' *vā nē strī kaũ māryau* 'by him, with reference to the woman, it was killed' (or 'the act of killing was done).' This is called the *Bhāvē prayōga*, or Impersonal construction. All these *prayōgas* are met with in the conjugation of the Past tenses of the Indo-Aryan Vernaculars, and hence, although it is a twice-told tale, it has to be again explained, for the sake of what follows. I now proceed to give examples of the Past tense of transitive verbs.

CENTRAL FAMILY.

For Eastern Pañjābī, Gujarātī, Hindī and Central Pahārī, the Past Participle of transitive verbs is used, either in the *Karmaṇi* (passive) or in the *Bhāvē* (impersonal) construction. The forms of the Past Participle are those given for the neuter verb. The following is an example taken from Hindī, which language possesses no neuter gender.

(*a*) *Karmaṇī prayōga*,—*vā nē strī mārī*, 'he killed a woman,' literally, 'by him (*vā nē*) a woman (*strī*) was killed (*mārī*, fem. of *māryau*, to agree with the feminine noun *strī*),' *ab illo mulier interfecta.*

(*b*) *Bhāvē prayōga*,—*vā nē strī kaũ māryau*, 'he killed the woman,' literally 'by him (*vā nē*), with reference to the woman (*strī kaũ*), it was killed (*māryau*, used impersonally, in the masculine, as Hindī possesses no neuter).' In unidiomatic Latin this might be represented by *ab illo de muliere interfectum*, for *ab illo mulier interfecta.*

In Naipālī, only the *Bhāvē prayōga* occurs. The verb does not change for gender. The terminations are the same as in the neuter verb. An example is *hãmiharu lē kēṭi lāi mãryaũ*, 'we killed the girl.' Here *mãryaũ* is a compound of *māryō*, the past participle, 'killed,' and *ũ*, the instrumental pronominal suffix of the first person plural, which we also find in Sindhī. *Mãryaũ* means 'killed (*mãryō*)-by-me (*ũ*),' and the whole phrase is literally 'by (*lē*) us (*hãmiharu*) with-regard-to (*lāi*) the girl (*kēṭi*) it-was-killed-by-us (*māryaũ*),' the instrumental pronoun being repeated in the suffix, just as I have in a former essay shown to be the case in Kāçmīrī.

NORTH-WESTERN FAMILY.

Here we at once see a marked difference between transitive and intransitive verbs; owing to the change of suffixes. In intransitive verbs,

[1] In Vernaculars which have no neuter, the masculine singular is of course used.

the subject of the sentence is in the nominative case owing to the *Kartari prayōga*, and the suffixes are hence also those of the nominative case. On the other hand, in the case of transitive verbs, either the *Karmaṇi* or the *Bhāvē prayōga* is adopted, and the subject of the sentence is necessarily in the instrumental. Hence the suffixes are also those of the instrumental case.

		Sindhī.	Western Pañjābī.	Kāçmīrī.
Past Participle.		*Māriō.*	*Māriā, or *Māriō.*	*Mōr^{u}* (Sg. Masc.)
Singular	1	*māriō*, or *mariu-me*	*māriu-m*	*mōr^{u}* or *moru-m*
,,	2	*māriō* or *māryu-e*	*mār-ēi*	*mōru-t*
,,	3	*māriō* or *māriã̃-ĩ̃*	*māriu-s*	*moi^{u}* or *mōru-n*
Plural	1	*māriō* or *māriō-sũ̃*	*māriō-sē*	*mōr^{u}*
,,	2	*māriō* or *māry-va*	*māriō-hē*	*mōr^{u} -ṿa*
,,	3	*māriō* or *māriã̃-ũ̃*	*māriõ̃-hẽ̃*	*mōr^{u}* or *mōru-k*

In Western Pañjābī, according to Mr. Bomford's Grammar, the forms of the verb are not changed according to the object of the sentence. The *Bhāvē prayōga* is, therefore, the only one in use in that language. In Sindhī and Kaçmīrī, both the *Karmaṇi* and *Bhāvē prayōga* are used. In the first case, the Past Participle must, of course, agree with the object of the sentence. Thus, Kāçmīrī, *mōr^{u}* or *mōru-m* 'I struck him,' but *mör^{i}* or *möri-m*, 'I killed them.' So in Sindhī.

EASTERN FAMILY.

Eastern Group.

In this group, the Past Participle does not change for gender. In these languages, too, the formal distinction between the nominative and instrumental cases has disappeared, though the sense that the past tense of a transitive verb is really passive still remains. The old Prakrit termination of the instrumental case of the subject has been worn away, leaving that case in the same form as the nominative. In the

older forms of the language, *e.g.* in old Baiswārī (1630 A.D.), the termination *hi* of the instrumental still existed and was used, but, now-a-days, to take Bengali as an example, the *hi* has disappeared, and the instrumental has been merged in the nominative. Thus for 'he killed the woman,' a Bengali says *tini strī-kē mārilen*, which means apparently 'he' (instead of 'by him') 'with-regard-to-the-woman it-was-killed-by-him (*māril-en*),' but *tini* is really an instrumental of which the case termination *hi* has been worn away, leaving the instrumental the same in form as the nominative. In old Baiswārī, the instrumental of this pronoun is *tinahi*. In the Eastern languages even in the case of intransitive verbs, the *Bhāvē prayōga* is used. In Sanskrit for 'he went,' we may say either *sa calitaḥ* (*Kartari*) or *tēna calitaṁ*, 'it was gone by him' (*Bhāvē prayōga*). So, in Bengali, *calilen* means 'it was gone (*calil*) by-him (*en*).' That the suffixes are in the Eastern Group really instrumental (*Karmaṇi* or *Bhāvē*), and not nominative (*Kartari prayōga*), is proved—

(1) By the analogy of other languages.

(2) By the fact that the Past Participle is both by origin and meaning a passive.

(3) By the fact that in Bihārī there are remains of the distinction between nominative and instrumental suffixes still surviving, the former being used only with neuter verbs (*Kartari prayōga*), and the latter only with transitive verbs (*Karmaṇi* or *Bhāvē prayōga*).

(4) By the fact that the Perfect tense in Bihārī is clearly in the *Bhāvē prayōga*. It is formed by adding the third person singular of the Present tense of the Verb Substantive, to the Past tense. When a Bihārī wishes to say 'I killed,' he says *măral-ahũ*. That this means 'killed-by-me,' and not literally 'I killed,' is proved by the fact that when he wishes to say 'I have killed,' he does not say *măral-ahũ chī*, 'I killed am,' but *măral-ahũ achⁱ*, 'I killed is,' or literally 'killed-by-me is.' So for 'you have killed,' he says *măral-âh achⁱ*, 'killed-by-you is,' not *măral-âh châh*. It is much as if we were to say in Bengālī for 'I have killed,' *māril-ām āchē*, which form, however, is not employed, a different idiom being used. In the Bihārī Perfect, this *Bhāvē prayōga* is used by Intransitive as well as Transitive verbs. We say *calal-ahũ achⁱ*, 'gone-by-me it is,' *mayā gatam asti*, just as we say *măral-ahũ achⁱ*, equivalent to the Sanskrit *mayā māritam asti*. But

in the case of Intransitive verbs we can also use the Past Participle with the Verb Substantive in the *Kartari prayōga*. Instead of *calal-ahũ achi*, we can say *calal chī*, 'gone I am,' *calitō 'smi*, while on the other hand we cannot use such a form in the case of Transitive verbs. We cannot say, for the Perfect active '*māral chī*, which would mean, 'killed I am,' 'I am killed,' not 'I have killed.' Bihārī, however attempts to use the *Kartari prayōga* in the case of Transitive verbs, and does so by a curious periphrasis. Instead of saying *mărala-ahũ achi*, 'beaten-by-me is,' we can also optionally say 'by-means-of-(so and so)-being-beaten I am,' *măralẽ chhī*. Here the Past Participle Passive is put in the Instrumental case, as if we were to say in Sanskrit, *ahaṁ Dēva-dattēna māritēna asmi*, 'I, by means of the beaten Dēva-datta, am.' It is true that before all these verbs the subject-pronoun appears to be in the Nominative case, but, as already explained that is because no true Instrumental form of any Pronoun has survived in Maithili, or, indeed, in any Eastern Indian Language. Instead of saying '*mayā māritam asti*,' all the languages of the Eastern Family *apparently* say *ahaṁ māritam asti*, a purely nonsensical phrase, merely because the special form for *mayā* has disappeared altogether, and the word for *ahaṁ* is used instead of it.

An interesting light on this loss of the sense of the original passive meaning of the past tense is shown by the Gujarātī corruption of the *Bhāvē prayōga*. In that construction, the passive participle being used impersonally, should be in the neuter. In Gujarātī, however, this is forgotten, and the passive participle agrees in number and person with the object of the sentence, which is, according to custom, in the dative case. Thus *tēṇē rāṇī nē mārī*, is in the *Bhāvē prayōga*, and means 'he killed the queen.' It should be properly *tēṇē rāṇī nē māryũ*, 'by him (*tēṇē*) with-reference-to-the-queen (*rānī nē*) it-was-killed (*māryũ*),' but *māryũ* (neuter) is changed to the feminine *mārī*, to agree with *rāṇī*, as if it were in the *Karmaṇi prayōga*, which it is not.

With the exception of Bihārī, none of the Eastern languages make any distinction between the conjugation of the past tense of intransitive and transitive verbs. I hence, here, content myself, with giving only the Bihārī conjugation of both forms.

BIHĀRĪ (MAITHILĪ).

		INTRANSITIVE.	TRANSITIVE.
Past Participle.		*Calal.*	*Māral.*
Singular	1	*calal-ahũ*	*māral-ahũ.*
,,	2	*calal-ẽ*	*māral-ẽ.*
,,	3	*calal*, fem. *calal*^{i}	*māral-ak.*
Plural	1	*calal-î*	*māral-ī* (or *māral*).
,,	2	*calal-âh*	*māral-âh.*
,,	3	*calal-ăh*, fem. *calal-īh*	*māral-anh*^{i}.

The origin of the above terminations has been discussed in my previous essay on Kāçmīrī Pronominal Suffixes and will be referred to again. Suffice it to point out here that the intransitive forms of the third persons singular and plural are adjectival participles used in the *Kartari prayōga*, while the terminations of the other persons of the intransitive verb and of all the persons of the transitive verb are instrumental ones used in the *Bhāvē prayōga*.

There is one very interesting form in Bengali, the optional form of the third person singular in *ēk*, to which I wish to draw attention. It also occurs in the Bengali future (*maribē* or *marib-ēk*) third person singular, which is, as I shall shortly show, also formed from a Passive participle, and is built upon the principle of the *Bhāvē prayōga*, but does not occur in the Past Conditional, which being formed from the Active Present Participle, is built upon the basis of the *Kartari prayōga*. It is now-a-days considered vulgar, but it is a genuine termination all the same. It is the pronominal suffix *k*, of the third person, which we have already met in Kāçmīrī and Maithilī.[1] Thus *calila* means 'he went,' but *māril-ēk* means 'killed (*maril*),' 'by him (*ēk*).' We cannot say *mārit-ēk*, because that would mean 'killing-by-him,' which would be nonsense for the purpose of the idea to be conveyed. It may be added, that the third person singular of the Bengali Imperative also ends in *k*. Thus, *māru-k*, 'let him kill.'

[1] See *ante* pp. 346 and 350.

SOUTHERN GROUP.

Marāṭhī and Kōnkanī, in the case of Transitive Verbs, use either the *Karmaṇi* or *Bhāvē prayōga*, and do not add pronominal suffixes. Hence the Past Participles are merely used in a Passive sense, agreeing in gender and number (when in the *Karmaṇi prayōga*) with the object of the sentence, as already explained. Further examples are therefore unnecessary.

The following are examples of tenses based on the **Present Participle**. This participle is an Active one, and hence the *Kartarī prayōga* is used throughout.

CENTRAL FAMILY.

	Eastern Pañjābī.	Gujārātī.	Rājputānī.	Hindī (Braj).	Central Pahārī.	Naipālī.
Present Participle.	*cal'dā*	*cāl'tō*	*cal'tō*	*cal'tu*	*cal'dō*	*cal'da*
Singular 1	*cal'dā*	*cāl'tō*	*cal'tō*	*cal'tu*	*cal'dō*	Not used.
„ 2						
„ 3	...					
Plural 1	*cal'dē'*	*cāl'tā*	*cal'tā*	*cal'tu*	*cal'dā*	
„ 2						
„ 3						

In Gujārātī this tense is a Habitual Past. Its weak form *calat* is the Past Conditional. In Eastern Pañjābī, Rājputānī, Hindī and Central Pahārī it usually has a conditional sense. Naipālī uses a periphrastic form.

NORTH-WESTERN FAMILY.

		Sindhī.	Western Pañjābī.	Kāçmīrī.
Present Participle.		*calandō*	*calandā*	
Singular	1	*calandu-se*[1]	(Optional).	Not used.
,,	2	*caland-ẽ*	*calandā*	
,,	3	*calandō*		
Plural	1	*calandā-sẽ*		
,,	2	*calandā-u*	*calandē*	
,,	3	*calandā*		

In Sindhī, the tense has the power of a Future. In Western Pañjābī, the form (which is borrowed from the neighbouring Rājputānī) is optional. A periphrastic form is more usual. The meaning is that of a Past Conditional.

EASTERN FAMILY.

Eastern Group.

		Baiswārī (Rāmāyan).	Bihārī (Maithilī).	Assamese.	Bengali.	Oṛiyā.
Present Participle.		*calat*	*calait*		**calita*	*calantō*
Singular	1	*calate-ũ*[2]	*calit-ahũ* (or *calait-ahũ* and so throughout)	A periphrastic form is employed.	....	*calant-i*.
,,	2	no example	*calit-ẽ*		*calit-is*	*calant-u*
,,	3	no example	*calait*		*calit-a*	*calant-ā*
Plural	1	no example	*calat-i*		*calita-am* (*-ām*)	*calant-u*
,,	2	*calate-hu*	*calit-âh*	Not used.	*calit-ā* or *-ē*	*calant-a*
,,	3	no example	*calit-anhi*		*calite-n*	*calant-ē*

[1] Fem., *calandia-se*, &c.

[2] Fem. *calati-ũ*.

In Baiswārī, Bihārī and Bengali, this is a Past Conditional. In Oṛiyā, it is, usually, a Habitual Past.

SOUTHERN GROUP.

	MARĀṬHĪ.	KŌNKANĪ.
Present Participle.	*cālat, cāl'tā* * *cāl'tō*	*cāl-tā* *cāl-tō*
Singular 1	*cāl't-ō̃* [1]	*cāl't-ã* *cāl't-ō̃* [2 3]
„ 2	*cāl'tō-s* *cāl'ta-s* [2]	*cāl't-ai* *cal'tō-i* [2]
„ 3	*cāl'tō* *cāl'tā* [2]	*cal'tā* *cal'tō* [2]
Plural 1	*cāl't-ō̃*	*cal't-aũ* *cal'tē-aũ* [2]
„ 2	*cāl't-ã̄*	*cal't-āt* *cal'tē-āt* [2]
„ 3	*cāl't-āt* *cāl't-ē* [2]	*cal't-āt* *cal'tē* [2]

We now come to tenses formed from the **Future Participle**. This is derived from the Sanskrit Participle in *tavya*, which is a Passive, not an Active Participle. *Calitavya* means 'to be gone,' and, as a participle, can only be used impersonally (*Bhāvē prayōga*) in the neuter, *calitavyaṁ*, 'it is to be gone,' 'one must go,' *eundum est*. *Māritavyaḥ*, means 'he is to be killed.' We should hence expect to find that the passive construction is followed, and this, it will be seen, is the case.

Participial tenses from the Future Participle have survived only in Marāṭhī, Gujarātī, and the Eastern Group. In the first two, the

[1] Fem. *cal't-ē̃*; Neut. *cal't-ē̃*, and so throughout.

[2] This tense is used in both as a Present Indicative, and as a Past Conditional. When two forms are given for the same person, the first is the Present and the second the Past.

[3] Fem. *cal't-ī̃*, Neut., *cal't-ē̃*, and so throughout.

tense is used as a Present Conjunctive, and, in the last, as a Simple Future. The forms are as follows :—

CENTRAL FAMILY.

Gujarātī.

In this language, the Future Participle is used alone without suffixes.

In the case of intransitive verbs, it is used passively and impersonally, in the neuter gender, for all persons (*Bhāvē prayōga*) ; e. g., *tēṇē cāl'vũ*, 'he must go,' lit. 'by him (*tēṇē*) it is to be gone (*cāl'vũ*),' Sanskrit *tēna calitavyaṁ*.

In the case of transitive verbs, it is used passively, in the *Karmaṇi prayōga*, e. g., *tēṇē dikri mār'vī*, 'he may' or 'should kill the girl,' literally 'by him (*tēṇē*) the girl (*dikrī*) is-to-be-killed (*mār'vī*, fem. to agree with *dikrī*).'

EASTERN FAMILY.

Southern Group.

Marāṭhī.

In the case of intransitive verbs, the *Bhāvē prayōga* is followed, as in Gujarātī, e. g., *tyā̃ nẽ cālāvẽ*, 'he must go,' lit. 'by him (*tyā nẽ*) it-is-to-be-gone (*cālāvẽ*).' A tendency exists, however, to forget the passive force of this participle, and thus we sometimes find the *Kartari prayōga* adopted, the participle agreeing in gender and number with the subject, e. g., *tō cālāvā* (masc.), *tī cālāvī* (fem.), *tẽ cālāvẽ* (neut.), 'he, she,' or 'it, may go.' Moreover, in this case, the second person singular takes the suffix *s*, and the second person plural, the suffix *t*.

In transitive verbs either the *Karmaṇi* or the *Bhāvē prayōga* is used, and never the *Kartari*. Thus, '*tyā̃ nẽ mārāvī*,' 'he may kill her,' lit. 'she-may-be killed (*mārāvī*, fem.) by him (*tyā̃ nẽ*)'. This is the *Karmaṇi prayōga*. The *Bhāvē prayōga* is *tyā̃ nẽ mārāvẽ*, 'he may kill' lit., 'it-is-to-be-killed (neut.) by him.' No suffixes are used.

Eastern Group.

In this group of languages the Future is conjugated like other participial tenses. As in the case of the Past tense, both in transitive and in intransitive verbs, the *Bhāvē prayōga* is alone employed, though we are not, in this case, able to bring in Bihārī to our assistance in proving it, for in that language the tense is defective. The terminations are nearly the same as those of the Past tense. In the Old Baiswārī of the Rāmāyan, the *Bhāvē prayōga* is very clearly used, the simple form of the Future Participle masculine (*i.e.*, neuter)

being employed for all persons. This clearly shows how the modern terminations are all late pronominal suffixes tacked on to a neuter Future Participle passive used impersonally. Thus the Bengālī *māribē*, 'he will kill' is to be analysed into the neuter Passive Participle *mārib*, 'it-is-to-be-killed,' and *ē* 'by him.'

So also, in the Bengali second person singular, the tense which is formed from the active Present Participle,—the Past Conditional,—takes the termination *is*, e. g., *māritis* (*Kartari prayōga*), but the tenses formed from passive participles take the termination *i*, e. g., *mārili*, *māribi* (*Bhāvē prayōga*). It hence follows that *is* is a direct pronominal suffix of the nominative, and *i* an oblique pronominal suffix of the instrumental. Similarly, in Oṛiyā the termination of the first person plural is twofold. The direct form is *u* and the oblique form is *ũ*. These oblique terminations are also used in the *Bhāvē prayōga* with the past tenses of neuter verbs, but they are never used with tenses formed from the active Present Participle, which unlike the Past Participle (which is impersonally passive in the case of intransitive verbs, and personally passive in the case of transitive verbs) is never used in a passive construction.

	Old Baiswārī (*Bhāvē prayōga*).	Bihārī (Maithilī.	Assamese.	Bengali.	Oṛiyā.
Future Participle.	*mārab.*	*mārab.*	*māriba.*	**mārib*	*māriba.*
Singular 1	*mārāb*	*mārab-ahũ*	Plural form used.	*mārib-a* (pron. *māribō*)	*mārib-i*
„ 2	*mārab*	*mārab-ẽ*	*mārib-i*	*mārib-i*	*mārib-u*
„ 3	*mārab*	not used.	*mārib-a*	*mārib-ē* or *mārib-ēk*	*mārib-a*
Plural 1	*mārab*	*mārab*, (other dialects *mārab-ī*)	*mārim*	Singular form used.	*mārib-ũ*
„ 2	*mārab*	*mārab-áh*	*mārib-a*	*mārib-ā* or *-ē*	*mārib-a*
„ 3	*mārab*	not used.	Singular form used	*mārib-en*	*mārib-ē*

In Bihārī, the third person is founded on another base, derived from the Present Participle used in the *Kartari prayōga.*

It has been necessary to give all this detail, to show that the terminations of the Participial Tenses have nothing in common with those of the Radical Tenses. To make this quite clear, I now group together the terminations, Radical and Participial, of the four typical languages, Hindī, Kāçmīrī, Bengali and Marāṭhī.

HINDĪ.

	Singular.			Plural.		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Radical Termns.	*aũ*	*ai*	*ai*	*aĩ*	*au*	*aĩ*
Participial Termns	—	—	—	—	—	—

KĀÇMĪRĪ.

		Singular.			Plural.		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
Radical Termns.		*ạ*	wanting (Sindhī *ẽ*)	*i*	*au*	*iu*	*an*
Participial Termns.	Kartari	*s*	*k*	—	— (Sindhī *sĩ*)	*vạ*	—
	Karmaṇi	*m*	*t*	— (or *n*)	— (Sindhī *sũ*)	*vạ*	— (or *k*)

BENGALI.

	Singular.			Plural.		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Radical Termns.	wanting	*is*	*ē*	*i*	*a*	*en*
Participial Termns.	*u* (fut. *a*) *is* (Dir.) *i* (Obl.)—(fut. *ē*)			*ām*	*ā* or *ē*	*en*

MARĀṬHĪ.

		Singular.			Plural.		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
Radical Termns.		*ẽ*	*ēs*	*ē*	*ũ*	*ã*	*at*
Participial Termns.	Kartari	*õ*	*s*	—	*ã*	*ã*	—
	Karmaṇi	—	—	—	—	—	—

A glance at the above will show the difference between the terminations of the Radical and the terminations of the Participial tenses, and the extreme improbability of their having a common origin.

We can now construct the following Table of pronominal suffixes in the Indo-Aryan Vernaculars.

	Kāçmīrī.	Western Pañjābī.	Sindhī.	Naipālī.	O. Baiswārī	Bihārī (Maithilī).	Assamese.	Bengalī.	Oṛiyā.	Marāṭhī.
1st Person										
Sing. Dir.	*m, s*	*m, s*	*me, se*	*ẽ*	nasal	*ahũ*	*õ*	*u, a*	*i*	*ũ*
Sing. Obl.	*m*	*m*	*me*							
Plur. Dir.	—	*sẽ*	*sĩ, sũ*	*aũ*	*nhi*	*ĩ*	wanting	*am*	*u*	*ũ*
Plur. Obl.	—		*ũ, sũ*			— or *ī*			*ũ*	—
2nd Person										
Sing. Dir.	*h (k)*	*vẽ, õ*	*ẽ, e*	*is*	—	*ẽ*	*ī*	*is*	*u*	*s*
Sing. Obl.	*t* (dat. *y*)	*ẽi* (dat. *ī*)	(*ẽi*), *e*					*i*		—, *s*
Plur. Dir.	*va*	*vẽ*	*u, va*	*au*	*hu*	*âh*	*ã*	*ã, ẽ*	*a*	*ẽ*
Plur. Obl.		*vẽ, õ*	*va*							—, *t*
3rd Person										
Sing. Dir.	*n*	*s*	—	—	—	—	*ẽ, a*	—	—	—
Sing. Obl.	*n* (dat. *s*)		*se* (instr. *ĩ*)	—	—	*ak*		*ẽ, ẽk*		
Plur. Dir.	*h (k)*	—	—	—	*nhi*	(*ãh*), *anhi*	wanting	*en*	*ẽ* (?)	—
Plur. Obl.		*~hẽ, ni*	*ne* (instr. *ũ*)	—		*anhi*				

The origin of most of these forms has been discussed when dealing with Kāçmīrī suffixes in my former article [1]. I have there more especially given my views as to the derivation of the suffixes used in the North-Western languages, and in Bihārī. Most of the remaining suffixes can be explained by a reference to those remarks. Taking them, person by person, we find the following results :—

First Person. The termination *ahũ* (Bihārī), *aũ* (Baiswārī), nasal (Baiswārī), *õ* (Assamese), *u* and its weakened form *a* (pronounced *ō* in Bengālī), *u* and *ũ* (Oṛiyā and Marāṭhī), can all be explained by the derivation given for the Sindhī *ũ*, the Ap. Prakrit Genitive Plural *amhahã* ; or perhaps direct forms, such as the Oṛiyā *u*, may come from

[1] Ante, pp. 345 and ff.

the Ap. Pr. Nom. Sing. *haũ*, 'I'. The terminations *ẽ* (Naipālī), *ī* (Bihārī) are naturally referred to the Prakrit form *amhē* (both Nominative and Genitive Plural, H. C., iii, 106, 114, iv, 376), through **mhē*, **hẽ*. It will be observed that in Maithilī *ī* is both a direct and an oblique form: but that, as an oblique form, it can be dropped, leaving the verb in the *Bhāvē prayōga*. In Kaçmīrī, the suffix of the first person plural is also dropped. The Bengali *am*, is, of course, the same as the Kaçmīrī *m*, and is properly an oblique form.

Second Person. The termination *s* (Naipālī, Bengali and Marāṭhī) presents some difficulty. It may possibly be the Sanskrit-Prakrit termination *si* of the second person, which has survived in the Radical tenses of Bengālī and Marāṭhī, but not in Naipālī, used by false analogy. This explanation, besides being, at best, a *pis aller*, scarcely applies to Naipālī. I prefer, therefore, to consider it as a termination borrowed either from the first or from the third person. In Bihārī nearly every form of the first person, can also be used for the second person, so that there is no inherent impossibility of the *s* suffix of the first person being used for the second. Or we may refer to the well known honorific use of the third person instead of the second. The termination *ẽ* (Bihārī), *i* (Assamese, Bengali), *ē* (Bengali), are originally oblique forms, the same as the Kāçmīrī *y*, the Western Pañjābī *ēī*, and the Sindhī *ē*. It will be noted that the *s* suffixes of the first person are direct forms, and this distinction is borne out by Bengali, which has *is* for its direct, and *i* for its oblique suffixes of the second person singular. The terminations *hu*, *âh* (for *ahu*), *au*, *ā*, and *ã̄*, must be referred to the suffix *h*, *hē*, which we have met in Kāçmīrī and Western Pañjābī. Their origin is one of the many forms of the Prakrit pronoun of the second person, of which *uyhē* (H. C. iii, 91), is the most probable. The Marāṭhī *t* we have already met in Kāçmīrī. The oblique singular is used instead of the oblique plural. It cannot be connected with the Sanskrit-Prakrit *tha* (dual *thas*), which would become not *t*, but *h* or *hu*. Possibly, however, the *direct* Marāṭhī forms are borrowed by false analogy from the Radical Tenses.

Third Person. The terminations *nhi*, *anh*^{i}, and *en*, have been already explained in my former paper.[1] They are derived from the Prakrit *ṇēhĩ*. So also, as there explained, *âh*, as shown by its feminine form *îh*, is most probably not a pronominal suffix at all, but merely an old plural termination of the Present or Past Participle, to which it is added. The termination *ē*, or *a*, and also the termination *ēk*, is a weakened form of *ai*, as previously explained. With regard to the *k* in *ēk*, see *Ante*, pp. 350, 366. The North-Western forms have already been fully discussed.[2]

[1] Ante, p. 347. [2] p. 347.

P. S., On p. 356, I have omitted to draw attention to the fact that, in Kāçmīrī, the old Present being used as a Future Indicative, the old *h*-Future has not been abandoned, but reappears as a Past Subjunctive, '(If) I went.' Its forms are as follows :—

Sing.	1	*tsalaha*
,,	2	*tsalaha-k*
,,	3	*tsalihē*
Plur.	1	*tsalahau*
,,	2	*tsalahiu*
,,	3	*tsalahan*

George Abraham Grierson: On a Comparative Study of Tenses in the Modern Indo-Aryan Languages — Contributing towards Language Displacement and Contact

Shyam Sundar Bhattacharya

The comparative study of the New Indo-Aryan languages spoken in northern, north-western, eastern and central parts of India was evident from the second half of the nineteenth century. These were attested in the works of Beams (1872-79), Hoernle (1880), Bhandarkar (1887) and others. Such historical grammatical works became the foundation of Konow and Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* which commenced from 1896. Grierson's (1895a.: 352-375) enquiry of the verb conjugational pattern in respect to pronominal suffixes of the Indo-Aryan languages, was a comparative study which explored the extent of retention of old Indo-Aryan (Sanskrit) forms inherited through Middle Indo-Aryan (Prakrit) to New (modern) Indo-Aryan languages. Such an enquiry very naturally became part of Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* in the following years.

As we know the scholars of the Indo-Aryan languages are not very familiar with the pronominal suffixes in the verbal conjugation, the scholars of the Dravidian languages are also not equally familiar. On the other, it is very common that in the Persian language, and two other Indo-Persian languages, viz., Pashtu and Balochi use these pronominal suffixes. Moreover, according to Grierson (1895b.: 336), "…the only language which uses them freely is Saontali." Similarly, it is the Sanskrit language we find that it had enclitic pronouns (Grierson 1895b.: 337).

George Abraham Grierson (1895a.: 352-375) while examining the verb conjugational pattern of the modern Indo-Aryan group of languages, classified these languages into different groups depending upon the locations where each speech variety was spoken. These were North-Western group which included Sindhi, Western Punjabi, and Kashmiri; Central group which included Eastern Punjabi, Gujarati, Rajputani, Hindi (Braj.), Central Pahari and Naipali (or Nepali); Eastern group included Baiswari, Bihari (Maithili), Assamese, Bengali and Oriya; Southern group included Marathi and Konkani.

Having presented the Sanskrit, Pali and Apabhramsa forms of first, second and third persons of the Sanskrit-Prakrit verb root √cal 'go' as a point of departure, Grierson (1895 a.) examined the conjugational paradigm of the Radical verb (which refers to the unchanging root part of a verb form) of different Indo-Aryan languages of all the four groups. Grierson observed the gaining of conditional power of the present tenses which were generally used as Present Subjunctive in all the languages of the Central group and in the languages like Sindhi and western Punjabi of the North-western group, whereas, a force of future was evident in the conjugational forms of Kashmiri of the same family. But in the languages of Southern group like Marathi, a sense of habitual Past was evident, whereas, the sense of contingent future was attested in Konkani. Therefore, Marathi and Konkani were found to retain the original Sanskrit-Prakrit endings with some deviations, but no additional suffixes were found, which was viewed as genuinely Synthetic (Synthetic tenses are verb forms where tense and other grammatical information like person and number are expressed by a single inflected word) by origin (Grierson 1895a.: 355). In case of Periphrastic forms (auxiliary verb + main verb) of Future tense, no remains of Sanskrit-Prakrit were evident in these languages. But the forms were found to be retained mainly in the languages of the Central group, viz., Gujarati, Rajputani, Hindi (Braj.), western Punjabi; and Baiswari of the Eastern group (Grierson 1895a.:357).

However, the comparative analysis revealed significant differences in the verbal endings amongst these modern Indo-Aryan languages, which Grierson (1895a.:373) maintained:

> A glance at the above will show the difference between the terminations of the Radical and the terminations of the Participial tenses, and the extreme improbability of their having a common origin.

To understand the differences of the verbal paradigm in the context of syntactic structures of these Indo-Aryan languages, and the reasons operative behind such structural differences, we need to delve into the following major contributions of Grierson which commenced in 1896 (*Linguistic Survey of India*). The above observation brings into light the linguistic differences of the Outer and Inner sub-branches of the New Indo-Aryan languages – the concept of migration of the Indo-Aryan speaking group of people in successive waves, the concept of their displacement resulting into 'languages in contact' with the earlier/ existing settlers of the land and getting their language influenced by each other in the socio-political setting. Prior to Grierson, Hoernle (1880) propounded the theory of the advent of Aryan migration or invasion in two groups at different points of time. He opined "Perhaps this may be taken to point to the fact that two great immigrations of people of the Aryan stock into India took place at different periods, both speaking essentially the same language, though in two different varieties" (Hoernle 1880: XXXII). He also maintained that in spite of the linguistic differences they are basically the same language:

> …of which the Sanskrit variety, being its literary or high form, preserves on the whole the oldest phase. Thus one of the most striking points of identity is the ancient Skr. present tense active, which is preserved to the present day in all Gḍ languages of North-India alike. (Hoernle 1880: XXXII-XXXIII).

In the later years, we find Grierson (1927:116) was doubtful about the time of arrivals of each of the Aryan group of people and proposed that such a migration might be a continual process over a considerable

period of time. He also looked into Hoernle's wedge theory where he stated that instead of the second group of Aryans entering through Punjab acted like a wedge, displacing the first group of migrants and forcing them to move outwards to the peripheral regions into three directions — east, south and back to further west, it might also be possible that the second group of Aryan migrants entered into the land, faced opposition from their predecessors and went further down the Indus Valley and later to further south and east. Grierson (1927:116) stated:

> If the wedge theory is correct, it would be the Central People, and if it is not, it would be the Outer People who would be the latest arrivals. The political state of affairs is borne out by Indian tradition.

The Outer sub-branch included the languages of North-western group (Lahnda or western Punjabi and Sindhi), the Southern group (Marathi) and the Eastern group (Oriya, Bihari, Bengali, Assamese). The Mediate sub-branch included the mediate group (Eastern Hindi). The Inner sub-branch included Central group (western Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bhili, Khandesi and Rajasthani). There is one Pahari group also which included Eastern Pahari or Nepali, Central Pahari, Western Pahari and some unspecified languages as well (Grierson 1927: 120).

The languages depending upon their geographical locations inevitably came in contact with the other languages of the existing inhabitants of the land and underwent conflict resulting into assimilation of their culture and languages. Instances can be cited in this regard. The languages of the Outer sub-branch especially those of the Eastern group like Oriya, Bihari, Bengali came in contact with the Munda group of languages (belonging to the Austro-asiatic language family) whose influence was quite strong in the eastern part of the Gangetic plain. These Munda languages had a strong impact on these eastern Indo-Aryan languages which Grierson (1927:132) observed:

> Here the conjugation of the verb is much complicated by changes depending on the number and person of the object. The word, for instance, 'beating' is represented by one form in 'I am beating you',

> and by another in 'I am beating him'. These changes are Aryan in origin, and have parallels in the languages of north-western India, but the system is that of the Munda verb.

Furthermore, Grierson cited examples of the influence of the Tibeto-Burman languages on Indo-Aryan languages in respect to impersonal constructions, which is not attested in classical Sanskrit. In this context it is pertinent to quote Grierson's (1927:132) example:

> In Assamese, Tibeto-Burman influence has also been at work to prevent the use of the Dravidian pronunciation of cerebral letters. In the same language, the employment of pronominal suffixes with certain nouns, though undoubtedly of Aryan origin, is probably due to Tibeto-Burman influence. Their use with nouns has been dropped in the neighbouring Aryan languages, but the example of Tibeto-Burman forms of speech (which use prefixes, not suffixes, with the same class of nouns) accounts for their survival in Assamese.

Thus the comparative studies of the linguistic structures of the Indo-Aryan languages at different levels, both from the points of view of synchrony and diachrony, fed in postulating language sub-families, the theory of Aryan migration, the displacement and spread of groups of populace resulting into contact, influencing and influenced by other languages of different language families, which consequentially led to the changes or deviations in the original morpho-phonological and morpho-syntactic structures of different languages, differently. However, in spite of such structural changes due to languages in contact, the remnants survive as a witness of belonging to the original language from where the varieties shifted and metamorphosed, thus contributing to the development of the concept of linguistic genealogy by the linguists / language scientists in the later years.

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Abid Hasan Safrani : Netaji's Comrade-in-Arms, compiled by Ismat Mehdi and Shehbaz Safrani, foreword by Sugata Bose, Orient BlackSwan, Hyderabad, 2023, xxv + Acknowledgements + 148, ISBN 978-93-5442-605-6, Price Rs. 895.00.

The book under review is about such a person who made immense contribution during freedom struggle as a patriot and served India as a diplomat during post-independent era; in whose experiences we find the Gandhian political and socio-economic movement; and the armed struggle for Indian independence led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. This unsung national hero Zain-ul-Abdin Hasan, known as Abid Hasan Safrani (1911-1984) added the suffix 'Safrani', using the word Saffron, a colour that is associated with sacrifice in the Indian subcontinent.

Ishmat Mehdi and Shehbaz Safrani, the niece and nephew of Abid Hasan have compiled this book using unpublished private notes, papers and diary of Abid Hasan, which are in custody of Ismat Mehdi. Apart from anecdotal memories of Hasan described by his family members and others, the book provides descriptions of Netaji's life and activities through the eyes of his close aide, which is not commonly found, speeches of both Netaji and Hasan and also reproduction of a portion from Hasan's work *The Men from Imphal* actually published by the Netaji Research Bureau in 1971.

Born in Hyderabad, Hasan was brought up in a family, the members of which were involved in nationalist movement. His mother Fakhrul Hajia Begum, universally known as 'Ammajan' was instrumental in setting the foreign cloth ablaze, in her home 'Abid Manzil' in 1925 and took part in many All India Women's Conferences. Sarojini Chattopadhyay (later, Naidu), being the next-door neighbour, became close friend of Fakhrul Hajia. Abid's elder brother Badrul Hasan was appointed by Gandhi as the editor of weekly *Young India*. Abid, along with his brother Jafar joined Gadhiji's Ashram. The brothers wore khadi and courted arrest in response to Gandhi's call for non-cooperation and Satyagraha. Hasan went to Germany to study engineering in 1935, where he met Bose and offered his service. For

this, he left his studies when only one semester was left to finish his course. A team started the Azad Hind Radio on short wave. When Bose shared his idea about organising an army, it was on Hasan's suggestion that Bose agreed that some of the students would be in the army; rather than dealing only with political and diplomatic preparations.

It was for organising armed struggle from Japan for India's freedom that Netaji's journey from Germany to Japan in a submarine was recommended. Netaji chose Abid Hasan as his companion in the submarine. The book gives rare insights into the activities of Netaji and Hasan during the journey of about three months. Bose asked Hasan to take out his typewriter and get down to work. The script for the second part of *The Indian Struggle* was finally prepared. Hasan had to type 3-4 hours a day, as Netaji was drafting memoranda on various subjects. Hasan was also asked to play the role of Tojo (the then Prime Minister of Japan) and ask Bose difficult questions. While staying in Japan Netaji entrusted Hasan with 'dangerous mission' of carrying message to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, appealing him to come to a sort of understanding with Japan. The mission however was failure as Chiang Kai-shek refused the proposal.

Netaji's taking over of the leadership of INA, increasing the total strength from about one thousand two hundred to over fifty thousand, formation of the provisional government of Azad Hind, INA's fierce fight in Manipur against the British Indian Army, descriptions of Abid Hasan's experiences of fighting as the Second-in-Command of the Gandhi Regiment during the battle for Imphal, have been described on the basis of Hasan's own experiences. Hasan's unpublished notes gives description of Netaji's activities and journey from Bangkok to Saigon on 17th August, 1945 and also his journey to Tokyo later on.

It was when the British government abandoned INA trials and released all prisoners that Abid Hasan returned to his home from the prison in Singapore. After independence, Hasan joined the foreign services under the Government of India. His patriotism, courage and

knowledge of multiple foreign languages helped him to be selected for the job. He was posted in various diplomatic positions in Egypt, China, Switzerland, Iraq, Syria, Senegal and Denmark. Competence and integrity of Hasan had been testified by the Reports he had sent to the government of India regarding political and related developments in the concerned country he had been serving. The Indian government was not taken by surprise when the Baghdad coup took place, as Abid Hasan the Charge d'Affaires kept Delhi informed constantly. Safrani retired from service in 1969 and returned to Hyderabad. He settled on a farm but at the same time provided support to the weavers who were renowned for their hand-woven and hand-dyed textiles.

Abid Hasan Safrani's belief that every religion in the final analysis is a moral code and that with the passage of time rituals and dogmas dominate the better concept of pure religion, is evident from the speech he delivered as Consul General of India, Damascus, at the University of Damascus in December, 1960. He also believed that in India there has been continuous fight against the corruption of religion. He had deep reverence for Indian culture, ancient tradition and scriptures. Abid Hasan coined the term 'Jai Hind' and also made contributions to derive Hindustani version of 'Jana Gana Mana' i.e. 'Shubh Sukh Chain' that was adopted as *Qaumi Geet* of the Indian National Army.

The Foreword of the book under the title *A Quiet Revolutionary* by Sugata Bose providing deep insight into Abid Hasan's ideologies and contributions and also referring to more sources of information, no doubt would help the researchers interested to know more about Abid Hasan. Preface, written by Sumanta Banerjee, tells about the objectives and endeavour behind the publication of the book, with the assertion that India's freedom struggle was a truly secular and democratic movement. The book is featured with twenty eight chapters including an Epilogue and twenty five photographs.

The compilation of the private documents of Abid Hasan Safrani, not only attempts to fulfil the gap in the history of India's freedom

struggle, at the same time focuses on Safrani's integrity as an Indian diplomat in post-independent era. This is a welcome addition not only to the existing literature on the history of freedom movement but also history of India's foreign relations after independence.

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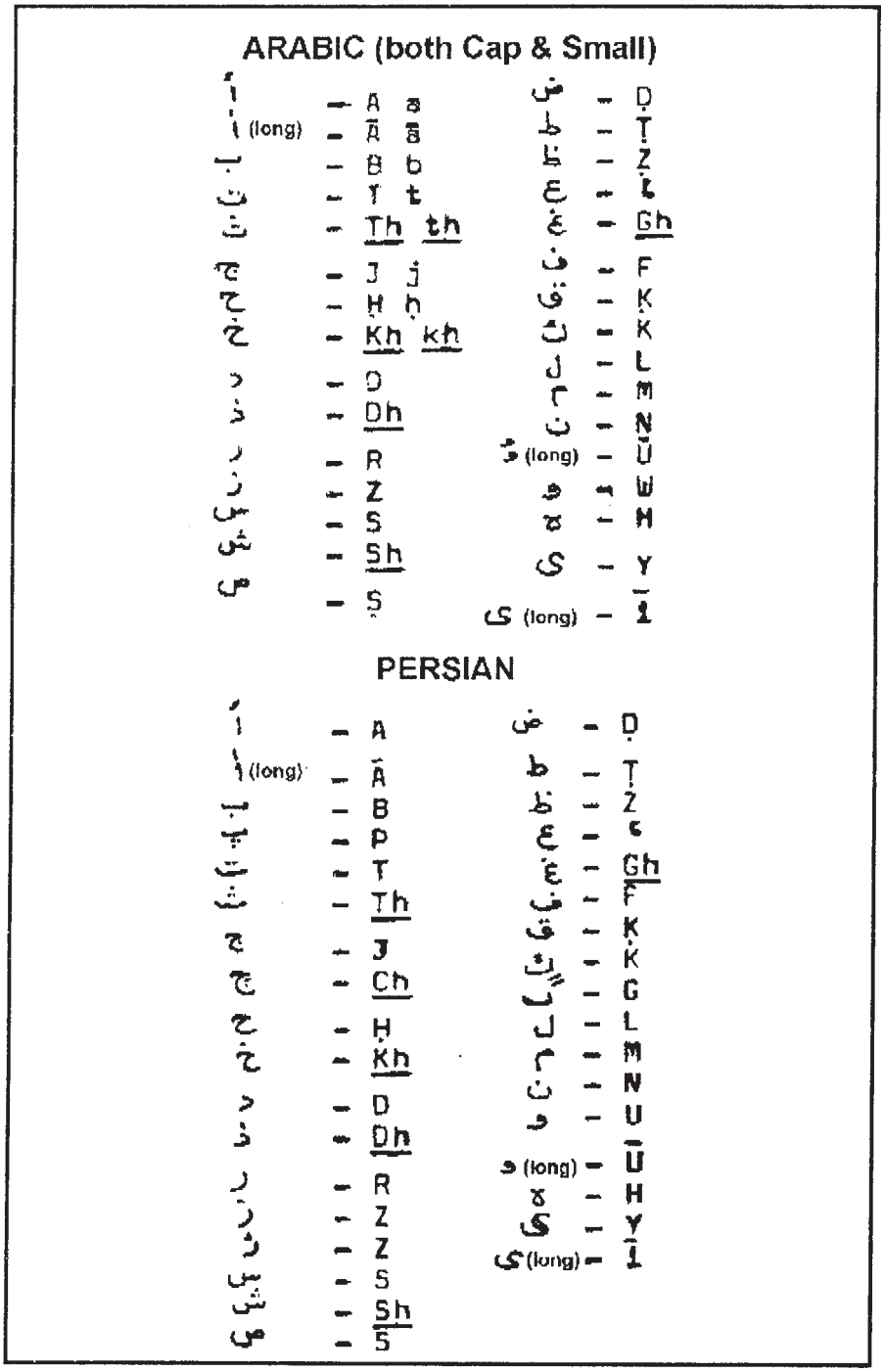
SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

SANSKRIT

आ = ā		ई = ī	
ऊ = ū		ऋ = ṛ	
ङ = ṅa		च = ca	
छ = cha		ञ = ña	
ट = ṭa		ठ = ṭha	
ड = ḍa		ढ = ḍha	
ण = ṇa		श = śa	
ष = ṣa		ं = ṁ	

TIBETAN

ཀ = ka	ཁ = kha	ག = ga	ང = ṅa/nga
ཅ = ca	ཆ = cha	ཇ = ja	ཉ = ña/nya
ཏ = ta	ཐ = tha	ད = da	ན = na
པ = pa	ཕ = pha	བ = ba	མ = ma
ཙ = tsa	ཚ = tsha	ཛ = dza	ཝ = wa
ཞ = zha	ཟ = za	འ = 'a	ཡ = ya
ར = ra	ལ = la	ཤ = śa/sha	ས = sa
ཧ = ha	ཨ = a	6	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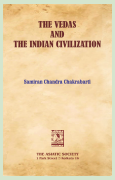

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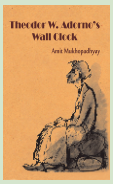

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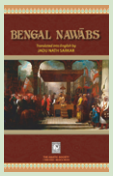

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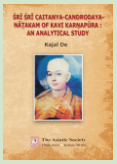

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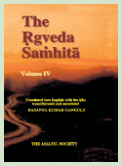

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Sir William Jones
on the publication of The Asiatic Society