



RAIGANJ UNIVERSITY

JOURNAL OF HISTORY

(Peer Reviewed)

Vol. II, 2023



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
RAIGANJ UNIVERSITY
RAIGANJ, UTTAR DINAJPUR
WEST BENGAL, INDIA

Raiganj University Journal of History
(Peer Reviewed)
Vol. II, 2023



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ISSN:

Price : Rs. 250.00

Published by:

The Registrar, Raiganj University, P.O-Raiganj, District – Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal, India, PIN – 733134

Printing by:- KUNAL BOOKS, 4648/21, 1st Floor, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj,
New Delhi- 110002. Ph: 23275069 Mob: 9811043697, 9868071411
Email:-kunalbooks@gmail.com Web:-www.kunalbooks.com



Editorial

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure that the volume of issue of the 'Raiganj University Journal of History' is being published after a gap of three Covid-years. The first volume of the Journal was published in 2019. In the subsequent period Covid-19 pandemic prevented the yearly publication of this Journal. However the process of submission of articles and peer-review was going on. We are grateful to the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Raiganj University for granting us permission to publish this Journal.

The present volume is comprised of five articles and the lecture delivered by Professor Amit De, Professor of History, University of Calcutta, at Raiganj University in the 'Raiganj University Department of History Lecture Series'. Professor De in his article 'Understanding Sufism in the Indian Subcontinent' has written at length about the history and development of Sufism in different parts of India during the medieval period, emphasising on the different Orders of Sufism. Babulal Bala, in his article 'Relevance of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Views on Social Justice', has focused on Dr. Ambedkar's activities in the backdrop of the nationalist movement and his striving for educating and organizing the people of the depressed classes.

Other articles in the present volume are mostly focusing on the history of the region or contributions of the personalities in nation building. Dr. Mrinal Chandra Das in his article 'Practical or Skill based Education is essential for solving the 'Bread and Butter' problems as advocated By Mahendranath Dutt (1869 - 1956), has brought to the fore the thoughts of Mahendranath Dutt, the illustrious brother of Narendranath or Swami Vivekananda, about the education and employment of the youth. He emphasised on the technical education for this, as is evident from his different writings. The article titled, 'The Progress of Primary Education in Dinajpur District from 1786 to 1947-A Study' by Moksed Ali has focused on the beginning of the colonial rule in Bengal changed the traditional education system and facilitated the spread of the primary education in Dinajpur district. Through this article an attempt has been made to analyse the progress of primary education in Dinajpur district during the colonial British rule. The author has given ample data in

support of his view. Niladri Shekhar Mondal, in his article ‘Conditions of Agricultural Community of Dinajpur District Under Company’s Rule from 1786 to 1857’ has focused on the Socio-economic condition, religious belief and political condition of the agricultural community of the Dinajpur District during the rule of the East India Company. Soumalya Mukhopadhyay in his article ‘Contributions of William Carey in the Growth of Bengal Renaissance, with Special Reference to Serampore Printing Press’ has analysed William Carey’s activities centering Serampore and how the Renaissance was facilitated in Bengal through the Printing Press that had been established by the Serampore Mission.

We sincerely hope that this issue will help the students and academics alike. We extend our sincere thanks to all concerned for helping us to publish this Journal.

March, 2023

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Understanding Sufism in the Indian Subcontinent

Dr. Amit Dey

The tenth century is very significant in the history of Islam. This period witnessed the rise of Turks on the ruins of the Abbasid Caliphate, as well as striking changes in the realm of ideas and beliefs. The domination of the Mutazila or rationalist school of Islam was terminated by the emergence of orthodox schools that put emphasis on the Quran and Hadith. The period was also marked by the rise to prominence of the sufi mystics and silsilahs (orders).¹

The Mutazilites or rationalists received the patronage of the Abbasid Caliphs and used their power to persecute their rivals. They also tried to systematize theology by applying reason (aql). The orthodox elements however, condemned them as religious skeptics and persecuted them. It is not surprising that famous sufi saint Mansur Hallaj was also executed in the tenth century A.D. for his unorthodox views. The collapse of rationalist school strengthened the hands of the 'traditionalists' which culminated in the advent of four schools of Islamic law. Of these, the Hanafi school was the most liberal. The eastern Turks who later migrated to India were the followers of this school, this partly explains why the Muslims in the subcontinent, unlike their counterparts elsewhere, were of ten comparatively flexible in matters of faith. The decline of the Mutazilites also contributed to the ascendancy of the sufi mystics.²

The Sufis emerged in Islam at a very early stage. Most of them were highly spiritual persons who were disgusted by the vulgar demonstration of wealth and degeneration of morals in the aftermath of Islam's politico-military triumph. Some of the sufi pioneers such as Hasan Basri and his disciple, the woman sufi Rabia(d. 8th century A.D.) reiterated the importance of prayer, continual fasting and unconditional love of God.³

The term sufi originated from the Persian word suf meaning coarse wool. The Islamic mystics of Central and West Asia used to wear a long garment (khirqa) manufactured by suf which caused constant pinching.

Such discomfort kept them awake throughout the night and reminded them about their spiritual duties such as zikr (reciting the name of God) and fiqr (remembering God).⁴

* *Asutosh Professor of Medieval and Modern Indian History, University of Calcutta. Annual Lecture delivered at Raigunj University, 2020*

Wearing of a patched garment of wool (suf) also indicated that the Sufis tried to follow the legacy of the prophets, and Christian apostles and ascetics who believed in simple living and high thinking. Simple and austere lifestyle made the Sufis very much acceptable to the poor Indian masses. At the same time their sophistication in terms of cultivating literature or theology enhanced their status among the aristocracy in general and Muslim aristocracy in particular. The sufi concept of fana or spiritual merger of the devoted with Allah antagonized the orthodox ulama. Mansur Hallaj's proclamation of the doctrine Anal-Haq (I am Truth/God) was actually a reflection of the sufi belief that unification with Allah was the highest stage of enlightenment. Sufi movement got its martyr when Mansur sacrificed his life for his beliefs. The tragic death of Mansur earned the Sufis the reputation of being men who were pure hearted, sincere and indifferent to worldly gains.

This was how an essentially quietist movement based on love, devotion and contemplation gradually became inclined towards ecstatic love with the potentiality to challenge existing social norms, religious beliefs and practices.⁵ Between the tenth and twelve centuries various

sufi orders or silsilah's emerged. During the same period khanqahs (sufi hospices) were also being established by the renowned Sufis. Apparently, the practices and organization of the khanqahs resembled the Buddhist and Christian monastic systems. The ambulatory Nath Panthi Yogis, with their markaz (headquarters) at Peshawar, familiarized the Sufis with the practices of hath-yoga. The translation of Amritkund, the Sanskrit book on hath-yoga, into both Arabic and Persian confirms the interaction between the yogis and Sufis which strengthened the composite nature of Indian culture in the medieval period.⁶ Like the wandering Yogis, the wandering Islamic mystics, popularly known as Qalandars had to encounter various religio-cultural groups in course of their traveling, and became liberal and unorthodox. However, they were denounced as be-shara (those who do not act in conformity with the sharia) Sufis by the orthodox elements. Many present-day qawwalisingers show their respect to these qalandars and thus reflect their appreciation for India's multiculturalism. There are also Sufis who function in tune with the sharia (canon law of Islam) and are known as ba-shara. This is one of the reasons why sufi movement should be studied as a heterogeneous movement.

Sanai (d.1131), Rumi (d.1273) and many other Persian poets spread the sufi message of mystic union and love far and wide. Imbued with the spirit of humanity and tolerance, their verses created ripples in the Indian subcontinent. It is not surprising that the eclectic Mughal Emperor Akbar was a great admirer of Rumi.⁷

Some of the Sufis were fond of musical gatherings (sama) in which a state of ecstasy was created. This created consternation among the orthodox ulama who argued that music is not permitted in Islam.⁸ The Chishti Sufis were amongst earliest Islamic mystic migrants to south asia. This sufi silsilah tried to appropriate various aspects of Indian cultural traditions, such as music, and became extremely popular in the subcontinent. They supported sama.

In the thirteenth century, Delhi emerged as one of the major centres (markaz) of the Chishtis. This was possible largely due to the activities of the illustrious Chishti saint Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, who left his birthplace in Transoxiana and arrived in Delhi in the

early 1220s. He was warmly welcomed by Sultan Iltutmish.⁹ It is useful to note that following the Mongol devastations of Central and West Asia, Delhi emerged as an inviting place before many eminent scholars, religious divines and fugitive princes. After coming to Delhi, Kaki met the challenge both of the ulama and the Suhrawardis. The former wanted to oust him from Delhi and condemned Kaki as a heretic on the ground that the mystic was fond of Sama. This criticism had no impact upon Sultan Iltutmish who wanted to use sufi influence to counter the ulama. Once Kaki was about to leave Delhi for Ajmer, which is also an important centre of the Chishtis. But a huge crowd accompanied him outside the city for miles and he had to settle in Delhi. The magnitude of popularity the Chishti saints enjoyed in South Asia is amazing. However, the Suhrawardi silsilah, because of their orthodox approach, could not enjoy such popularity among the Delhiites.¹⁰ Why some of the Sultans of Delhi, such as Iltutmish, favoured charismatic Sufis like Kaki, should be studied in its broader historical perspective. The Turko-Afghan Sultans were trying to build up their empires in the Indian subcontinent where Muslim population was overwhelmed by the non-Muslim population. Particularly during the embryonic stage of empire building, strict observance of the sharia (canon law of Islam) would have antagonized the majority population. Establishment of the sharia rule in tune with the advice provided by the ulama, was not possible in the Indian environment. Many sultans who excelled in statecraft realized that an empire derives its strength from heterogeneity. Now many sufi saints epitomized India's composite culture in the sense that they had Hindu, Sikh and Muslim followers. Many Chisti and Qadiri Sufis believed in the policy of sulh-i-kul or 'peace with all'. Later on, Mughal Emperor Akbar could emerge as a great empire builder largely because of his capacity to translate this concept into practice. So offering patronage to some Sufis implied strengthening of the symbols of multiculturalism. Thus many Sultans were able to win the confidence and loyalty of the subject population who represented diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The two most prominent sufi orders in south Asia during the Sultanate period were the Chishti and the Suhrawardi. The Chishtis flourished in Delhi and in the surrounding area, including Rajasthan, parts of Punjab and modern UP. Bengal, Bihar, Malwa, Gujarat and later on the Deccan also experienced the waves of sufi movement. The Suhrawardis were influential mainly in Punjab and Sindh. Territories were divided between different pirs (leading sufis of different orders in such a way that Sufis of various orders could maintain a cordial relationship amongst themselves.¹¹ Indeed! the modern religious sects have much to learn from these predecessors.

Muinuddin Chishti, the doyen of the Chishti movement in South Asia moved to Ajmer around 1206 A.D. when Turkish hegemony was firmly established there and a sizeable Muslim population of Turkish ghazis and prisoners of war who had to embrace Islam under duress, came into being. The saint selected Ajmer as his centre because like Chisht (in Central Asia), it was a small town and away from the epicentre of political activity, Delhi. The saint believed that the environment in a small town was favourable for spiritual experimentation.¹² Similarly, great saint Hamiduddin settled down at Nagaur- another small town in Rajasthan. Khwaja Muinuddin was married, but led the life of an ascetic. His principal object was to enable the Muslim piety to lead a life of devotion to Allah. He was

not interested in conversions, since he believed faith was an individual concern.¹³ Interestingly, this same spirit was reflected in the activities of rulers such as Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and Emperor Akbar who used to venerate this saint.

It should be mentioned that many sufi saints actually became famous after their demise. Muinuddin was no exception. His image as a saintly man became larger after his death in 1235 A.D. Muhammad bin Tughluq visited his grave. Canonization of a sufi is marked by the erection of structures like dome or mosque on the tomb of the deceased sufi. For example a mosque was built near his tomb by Mahmud Khalji of Malwa during the 15th century. However, Muinuddin's stature as a saint reached its apex under Akbar who nurtured deep respect for him. Akbar could grasp the political importance of Ajmer. This far-sighted ruler also identified Muinuddin as the symbol of India's composite culture who was respected by all irrespective of religious beliefs. Akbar knew that in the volatile situation of Rajasthan such positive elements required strengthening.¹⁴ Muinuddin advised his followers to "develop river like generosity, sun like affection and earth like hospitality."¹⁵ River, sun and earth are sacred among the Hindus. In this way the sufi saints reflected their appropriating nature while addressing the common people in a language they understood. Such an approach increased the popularity of Chishti saints in medieval south asia.

It brings us to another great Chishti saint Baba Fariduddin Ganj-I-Shakkar, the most famous disciple of Kaki. Farid lived at Hansi in modern Haryana, then moved to Ajodhan which was on the Sutlej on the main route connecting Multan and Lahore.¹⁶ He put emphasis on poverty emulating the Prophet Muhammad who used to say "I take pride in my poverty." It is useful to note that many sufi saints used the image of the Prophet as a source of authority. This was a natural legitimizing process as they had to encounter the challenges of Islamic orthodoxy.¹⁷ Farid also put stress on renunciation of worldly goods and attachments, control of the senses by fasting and other austerities, humbleness and service to others.¹⁸ He was a saint of broad outlook and some of the verses, ascribed to him were included in the Guru Granth Sahib of Nanak.¹⁹ Nizamuddin Auliya(d.1325A.D.), a chief successor of Baba Farid was the most illustrious Chishti saint of Delhi where he worked for fifty years during a period of great political turmoil characterized by the collapse of Balban's dynasty and the ascendancy of Alauddin Khalji, volatility following the demise of Alauddin Khalji and the rise of the Tughluqs. He survived those frequent changes of dynasties and rulers because of the Chishti philosophy of keeping politics at bay and not associating with the rulers and nobles.²⁰

The Chishti saints laid emphasis on a life of simplicity, poverty, humility and selfless devotion to God. Many of them were so obsessed with the notion of poverty that they lived in mud covered thatched houses, wore patched clothes and encouraged prolonged fasting. Like the yogis, they considered that control of senses was necessary for spiritual uplift. Muinuddin Chishti interpreted the highest form of devotion to Allah in terms of redressing the misery of the miserable, helping the helpless and feeding the unfed. Nizamuddin Auliya regarded altruistic services as more important than obligatory prayers.²¹

At a time when the Turks turned a blind eye to the Islamic concept of brotherhood and looked down upon the ordinary people, the sufi attitude of non-discrimination helped to

reduce social tensions. The principal concern of the Sufis was the amelioration of the condition of Muslims. However, their care and concern did not exclude the Hindus. The Chishti saints freely interacted with Hindu and Jain yogis and discussed with them various matters, particularly yogic exercises. Once being greatly impressed by the devotion of a group of Hindus, Nizamuddin Auliya remarked before his friend poet Amir Khusrau "Every community has its own path and faith, and its own way of worship,"²²

Bahauddin Zakariya, the founder of the Suhrawardi silsilah in India, did not believe in starvation or self-mortification. Unlike the Chishtis, the Suhrawardis accepted royal grants and believed that money was necessary to help the poor. They also put emphasis on the external forms of religion, i.e. namaz (prayer), roza (fasting), hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) or zakat (charity). Though Bahauddin prescribed restricted visits to sama (sufi music), the orthodox ulama became hostile towards him on that issue. When the Chishtis tried to distance themselves from politics, Bahauddin believed that visits to royal courts enabled the saint to help the poor through royal support. On the other hand such visits enabled the Sultans and their associates to receive the spiritual blessings of saints.²³ The Suhrawardi order had the credit to be the first Sufi order that was introduced to Bengal by Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi (d.1225), a saint of India-wide fame. However, the Persian and Urdu works provide no information about his activities in Bengal. Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi (d.1642 A.D.) had devoted a few pages to Shaikh Jalaluddin in his famous work *Akhbar ul Akhyar* (in Persian), but is silent about the Shaikh's birth place (watane paidaish), and as regards Bengal, he only mentions that Shaikh Jalaluddin has started to move towards Bengal.²⁴ According to *Akhbar ul Akhyar*, Jalaluddin Tabrizi was initially a disciple of Shaikh Abu Said Tabrizi, and then after the latter's death, of Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi.²⁵ Now the silence of the Persian sources in connection with Shaikh Jalaluddin's activities in Bengal have led some scholars to depend on *Shek Subhodaya*, a later work in dog Sanskrit wrongly attributed to Halayudh Misra, a court poet of the last Sena king Lakshmana Sena. According to this book the birth place of Jalaluddin Tabrizi was Etawa (in modern U.P., India), the name of his father was Kafur and he had received education with the help of Ramadan Khan, a merchant. This book also mentions that Shaikh Jalaluddin arrived in Bengal before Bakhtyar Khalji's conquest of Nadia and foretold the impending Turkish invasion of Lakshmana Sena's kingdom. But according to modern scholars the stories in *Shek Subhodaya* are fictitious. The saint was born at Tabriz in Persia and not at Etawah.²⁶ Secondly, he could not have come to Bengal before Bakhtiyar Khalji's conquest. According to *Fawa'id ul Fuad* (in Persian) the saint came to Delhi when Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish was reigning.²⁷ Now Sultan Iltutmish ascended the throne in 1210 A.D. So the saint could not have come to Delhi before A.D. 1210, not to speak of his arrival in Bengal before that date (Lakshmana Sena died in A.D. 1206).²⁸ There is a set of buildings in Pandua (Malda) which go by the name of Bari Dargah or the shrine of Jalaluddin Tabrizi.²⁹ These buildings are (a) one Jami Mosque, (b) two Chillakhanas or places of (c) one Tanur Khanah (kitchen), (d) one bhandar khanah (store house), (e) Haji Ibrahim's tomb and (f) Salami Darwazah (entrance gate). The original shrine was built by Sultan Alauddin Ali Shah (A.H. 742-43/1341-42 A.D.) at the order of the saint in dream.³⁰ Probably the original mosque was also built by him, which was repaired in 1075 A.H./1664

A.D. by Shah Nimatullah.³¹ The Bhandar Khanah was erected by one Chand Khan in 1084 A.H./1673 A.D.³² The inscription attached to the Lakshmana Sena Dalan shows that Muhammad Ali of Burji had repaired the astanah (place of meditation) of Shaikh Jalal Tabrizi in the year 1134 A.H./1722 A.D.³³ The inscription in Tanur Khanah records that it was built by one Sadullah in 1093 A.H./1682 A.D.³⁴ The endowment to the shrine of the saint is known as Bais Hazari, its income having been twenty two thousand tankas.³⁵ From the developments mentioned above we can deduce that building activities around the tomb or shrine of a saint used to commence decades and sometimes more than a couple of centuries after his demise. Similar thing happened with Muinuddin Chishti's shrine. As a result, these saints sometimes became more famous after their deaths. Secondly, the sultans and nobles often contested among each other in showing their respect to the deceased saint through their involvements in building activities. It is useful to note that mainly the important, influential and popular shrines received the patronage of the sultans and nobles in medieval India. It was a common legitimizing process through which the rulers and aristocrats tried to enhance their images among the nobility and the subject population. Thirdly, the existence of mosque at the site was in conformity with the Suhrawardi preference for the external rituals of Islam. The discovery of Tanur Khanah (kitchen) at the site confirms the fact that the Suhrawardis were keen to sustain the sufi ritual called langar. The latter became a symbol of Islamic egalitarianism as the nobles and the commoners received the same food served at the sufi centers. Interestingly this practice is also common among the Sikhs.³⁶

Another great Suhrawardi Sufi of Bengal was Shah Jalal Mujarrad-i Yamani (d.1346A.D.). This reputed saint was also a great warrior, and was largely responsible for the propagation of Islam in the whole of Eastern Bengal and Western part of Assam.³⁷

The Chishtis also consolidated their position in Bengal. Shaikh Akhi Siraj (d.1357) was one of the most famous saints of this order who flourished in Bengal. Because of his sound knowledge, his spiritual guide Nizamuddin Awliya used to call him Aina-i-Hindustan (Mirror of India). Another illustrious Chisti saint of Bengal was Nur Qutb Alam (d.1415 A.D.). His tomb is in the town of Pandua (Malda). The Naqshbandi and the Qadiri Sufis flourished in Bengal after the collapse of the Delhi Sultanate. The Naqshbandis were orthodox, and expressed their hostility to the mystical folk songs of Bengal.³⁸

Bijapur in the Deccan flourished as an important centre of the Chishtis from 1300A.D. to 1700A.D. Apart from the Chishtis, the Qadiris and the Shattaris exercised their control in Bijapur. Another important Sufi centre in the Deccan was Gulbarga which was graced by the presence of Bandanawaz Gisudaraz (d.1422A.D.), the famous Chishti saint, who migrated there from Delhi. Bidar also emerged as an important markaz (centre) of the Qadiri silsilah, many of whom were Arab migrants. In course of time many successors of Gisudaraz became landed gentry or inamdar Sufis who received land as inam (grant) from the kingdom of Bijapur. In return for this patronage the Sufis had to pray for the perpetuity of the Kingdom. However, after Aurangzeb's campaign in that region, many of these Sufis switched over their allegiance to the Mughal Emperor who did not terminate the practice of offering inam to secure the loyalty of local Sufis. The mutually beneficial relationship between the

Kingdom of Bijapur and the sufi saints confirmed the fact that the latter did not always function in conformity with the Chishti concept of keeping politics at bay.³⁹ Apart from the Chishtis, the Naqshbandis also had their base in the Deccan. However, they were not as popular as the Chishtis. Awrangabad became an important centre of the Naqshbandis. The most illustrious Naqshbandi Sufis of Awrangabad were Baba Palangposh (d.1699) and Baba Musafir (d.1715A.D.). Baba Palangposh was born in a place near Bukhara. He permanently came to Deccan in 1683 and is lying buried in Awrangabad. Baba Shah Musafir was also of Central Asian origin. His father hailed from the Kubrawiyya sufi order and his mother belonged to a family of Sayyids (descendants of the Prophet).⁴⁰ Particularly the Naqshbandi Sufis used genealogy as a source of authority.⁴¹ Thus, in the Weberian sense, Baba Musafir could successfully combine hereditary charisma with acquired charisma.

If the focus is shifted towards western India it would be interesting to note that the commercial city of Ahmadabad can also be described as the city of dargahs because more than a dozen major dargahs are located here. Among the important dargahs of the city are those of Piranpir, Shah Abu Turab Shirazi, Shah Abdul Wahhab, the Senior and Junior Airdrus and Pir Muhammad Shah.⁴² We shall discuss the dargah of Pir Muhammad Shah for its representative value. He came to Ahmadabad from Bijapur in the eighteenth century. This renowned sufi hailed from a Qadiri background and was known for his profound scholarship and literary bent of mind. He was groomed under the paternal care of his uncle Sayyid Abdurrahman who not only exposed him to formal education in traditional religious lore but also initiated him into the basic tenets of the Qadiri silsilah from quite a young age. He visited Mecca and Medina and engrossed himself in the study of various religious sciences such as Quranic exegesis, hadith (tradition), and tasawwuf (Sufism) under the guidance of illustrious teachers.⁴³ It can be deduced from the above description that in those days many erudite Muslims regarded scriptural and mystical knowledge as complimentary to each other. This to a large extent buttressed their endeavours to accommodate diverse cultures and different interpretations. Logically this broadened the mental horizons of many medieval saints and contributed to the sustenance of India's composite culture. Pir Muhammad Shah died in May, 1750 A.D. and was buried within the walled city, near the haveli of Salahuddin Khan, where his disciples from the town of Kadi (District Mehsana) constructed his tomb, a mosque and a garden close by. The saint's mausoleum is a large domed building resembling a degenerate Mughal style.⁴⁴ The glory of the Mughal Empire was waning fast during that period particularly after the Persian and Afghan invasions spearheaded by Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali respectively. Signs of decay could be visible in the external, material and masculine world.

The internal spiritual world was still untouched by the ravages of wars and political intrigues that characterized the declining phase of the empire.⁴⁵ Apparently the vacuum in the external world was being compensated by the developments in the spiritual world. But still the Mughal Empire and the symbols which represented it were regarded as legitimizers. Hence the Mughal architectural pattern could be emulated while building a mausoleum for a deceased sufi saint such as Pir Muhammad Shah. This process and the magnitude of its success determined the spiritual position of a particular shrine or tomb or mausoleum in the hierarchy of similar buildings.

Gujarat was also famous in the Mughal era as a revenue rich province largely due to its long tradition of maritime trade. Seen from that angle it would be relevant to study the material implications of sufi establishments of Ahmadabad. Pir Muhammad Shah has a considerable following among the affluent trading community of Sunni Bohra Muslims domiciled in Ahmadabad and other important towns such as Surat, Patan and Baroda. Through the munificent offerings of these wealthy businessmen murids (disciples), the sufi establishment has, over the years, amassed huge landed property in and around the dargah(shrine). The value of these lands has risen considerably and the entire estate is maintained by a registered Board of Trustees known as the Dargah Pir Muhammad Shah Committee. Its members and those of its sub-committees are elected from among the members of the community.⁴⁶

The saint's Urs (death anniversary) is celebrated on a grand scale when hundreds of devotees from the city and distant places throng the mausoleum. In its spacious premises board and lodging facilities is offered to the pilgrims. On the first day the usual sandalwood ceremony is held. On the second day, the Quran is recited by a group of thirty trained people.⁴⁷ This event challenges the stereotyped notion that Sufis do not function in conformity with the sharia (canon law of Islam).

Indeed! At times the Sufis can play a significant role in popularizing the basic tenets of Islam among the common people. During Urs a special dish of pulao called in popular parlance Pir Muhammad Shahi pulao is served among the participants. It is useful to note that in a dargah complex more than one sufi saint can be venerated. For example, the death anniversaries of Pir Muhammad Shah's uncle and first preceptor Sayyid Abdurrahman, of Shah Wajihuddin Alawi, and of the founder of the Qadiri order Sayyid Abdulqadir Jilani of Baghdad (d.1166A.D.), are also celebrated with the fatiha ceremonies and the distribution of sweets and eatables. In the month of Ramadan a special dish, halim, is prepared and served to fasting pilgrims who come to stay for tarawih (additional night prayers during Ramadan) prayers in the mosque.⁴⁸

The Dargah Trust is also involved in welfare and social service activities such as organizing training classes for girls and women, promoting education by offering scholarships, books and similar facilities. There is a spacious building attached to the dargah. In one wing of that building is a large library open to the public. There are some 3000 printed books in that library available in different languages such as Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Gujarati and English. Availability of books in so many languages is significant. It implies that many sufi centres by reflecting their broad and liberal outlook contribute to the nourishing of India's cultural pluralism. By making knowledge available in both oriental and occidental languages this particular sufi centre serves as a bridge between the east and the west. When the peace of our planet is being threatened by religious fundamentalism, sectarianism and cultural chauvinism, the UNESCO would do a great job by giving publicity to such sufi establishments in a meaningful manner. Besides, the library has a fine collection of about 2000 valuable Persian, Arabic and Urdu manuscripts covering different branches of Islamic learning and literature.⁴⁹

Pir Muhammad Shah was a poet by his own right who composed verses with 'Aqdas' and 'Shahid' as his poetic names. He has to his credit a number of tracts in Persian and Gujarati or Dakani verse. These priceless manuscripts are also preserved in the library. A number of his murids (disciples), both male and female, have composed verses in Persian and Urdu in his praise, as also mourning his death. Collections of these poems are also available in the library. These are extremely useful materials to assess Gujarat's contribution to Urdu language and literature.⁵⁰

The Piranpir's dargah in the Jamalpur quarter of the city was built in the seventeenth century over the grave of Shah Abdulkhalik whose origin was traced from the illustrious saint of Baghdad, Shaikh Abdulqadir Jilani (d.1166). Linking genealogy to the famous saints of Middle East is regarded as a form of legitimizer by the sufi silsilahs (orders) of South Asia. So far as its architectural pattern is concerned, the usual tomb style of perforated stone-screen walls has been adopted. Many visitors throng the dargah on certain weekdays. It attracts a larger number on the Urs anniversary of the buried saint, as well as of the founder of the silsilah (the Qadiri order), which falls on 11 Jumada I.⁵¹ It is useful to remember that veneration of illustrious sufi saints who never visited India is not unique among the pious Muslims of Gujarat. It is common in Bengali Muslim piety as well. Availability of their tazkiras (biographies), particularly the tazkira of Abdulqadir Jilani in the Bengali language confirms this fact. Majority of such biographies appeared during a period when the external, masculine and material world was being dominated by colonial presence. In the era of socio-economic and political challenges, Indian Muslim piety often used the world of the Sufis as the bastion of Islam from which they could derive peace, solace and inspiration. Like the Prophet Muhammad, the sufi pirs also emerged as their friends and their role models. However, it is useful to remember that all the pirs (sufi saints having many disciples) did not enjoy similar respect in the spiritual hierarchy. Some particular saints, such as Abdulqadir Jilani, were regarded as the universal symbols of Islam who can be surpassed only by the Prophet Muhammad. These universal symbols of Islam got priority over the local symbols of Islam (such as local pirs) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when resurgent and reformist Islam was moving from strength to strength. This was to facilitate the process of community solidarity among the Indian Muslims.⁵²

The rauza (tomb, mausoleum, shrine)⁵³ of Shaikh-al-Aidrus is situated in the Jhaveriwada locality and is a fine mausoleum of stone of the domed and perforated stone-screen-walls variety. Shaikh-al-Aidrus hailed from a renowned saintly family of Hadramout in southern Arabia. The saint migrated to Gujarat in the fifteenth century. The tomb attributed to his son Shaikh Abdulqadir al-Aidrus is not very far from his own tomb. Junior Aidrus is better known for his prolificity as a writer and poet of Arabic. He authored many books including *Al-Nur al-Safir li Ahl al-Qarn al-Ashir* which is regarded as an important source for the

cultural and literary history of sixteenth century Ahmadabad.⁵⁴ Junior Aidrus's case is unique from the linguistic point of view. Generally, the sufi writers and poets in South Asia manifested their creative faculties in the Persian language. There were also occasions when many sufi poets and writers expressed themselves in the vernacular languages which contributed

to the growth of those local languages.⁵⁵ But Junior Aidrus used Arabic as his medium of expression. Unlike Persian, Arabic was not the official language in medieval India. Nor was it a spoken language in India. But original Quran and hadith are available in Arabic. Considering this religious dimension of the language, the saint perhaps tried to legitimize his place in the spiritual hierarchy by cultivating this language. When a section of the orthodox ulama made it their habit to scrutinize different aspects of Sufism, such legitimizing drive was a natural response from sufi quarters.

The dargah of Shah Abu Turab, a scion of the Salami Sayyid family of Shiraz, rose to prominence at the time of Emperor Akbar's conquest of Gujarat in 1573.⁵⁶ It has been indicated elsewhere that like any other pragmatic ruler, Akbar understood the importance of maintaining a cordial relationship with the leading sufi establishments which were popular among both the Muslims and Hindus in order to enhance the stature of the Mughal Empire. Such legitimization was particularly necessary in a province like Gujarat which was being exposed to Mughal military and administrative mechanisms. Akbar trusted Shah Abu Turab who carried out negotiations with the nobility in Gujarat on behalf of the Mughal Emperor. In 1578, he was appointed as the amir-i-hajj (one who leads the hajj pilgrims) by Akbar. After performing hajj, Shah Abu Turab returned to Fatehpur Sikri with the qadam-i-rasul (the foot print of the Prophet), which was reverently received by Akbar.⁵⁷ The eclectic Emperor Akbar knew how to resolve the underlying tension between the veneration of a local pir (who at times may be interested in international networking as manifested in the case of Shah Turab who led the hajj pilgrims.) and the emphasis on the universal symbols of Islam such as the qadam-i-rasul or the hajj. Thus, qadam-i-rasul and hajj could be used as source of authority both by the Sufis and the sultans in medievalsouth asia. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that Shah Turab's dargah, which is situated in the old Asawal locality, to the south of the Calico Mills, seems to have been venerated mainly on account of the qadam-i-rasul, which was there until the middle of the eighteenth century. It is stated that during the Maratha insurgence, it was removed to the walled city. It has been argued, that later the descendants of Shah Abu Turab, shifted it to Cambey, to which place they belonged.⁵⁸ Majority of the Sufi saints in South Asia accepted the concept of wahadat al-wujud or 'Unity of Being'. They believe that "The world is so closely related to Him that every thing is He."⁵⁹ (Hama Ust or 'Every thing is He'). In other words God is reflected in every thing. It implies that God is also reflected in a Hindu, so a Hindu should not be denounced as a kafir (infidel). Such an inclusive approach contributed to the strengthening of India's composite culture and further enhanced the popularity of many Sufi saints. It should be mentioned that there were also Sufis who did not share this liberal approach and embarked on a policy of exclusion. They believed in the exclusion of Hindus from important administrative and military positions and expected the Muslim rulers to administer the state in strict conformity with the sharia (canon law of Islam). That is why it is often difficult to draw a demarcating line between a section of Sufis and the orthodox ulama.

The Sufis played a significant role in the growth and efflorescence of vernacular literature such as Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Deccani and other regional languages. The classical language Persian continued to receive patronage from the court as the language of power and

administration. The Sufis massively contributed to the spread of poetry and music. The Chishtis used song and dance techniques of concentration and for creating spiritual ecstasy.⁶⁰

Some of the early Bengali poets had been sufi-poets such as Sayid Sultan, Shah Barid Khan and Alaol. Bengali folk music, such as the baul and jari songs also owed much to Sufism.⁶¹ Sufis also appropriated ritual dynamics prevalent in a region or locality.⁶² For example mention can be made about votive offerings at dargah (burial place of a Muslim saint), burning incense and tying bricks at holy places with the expectation of securing fertility among women.⁶³ In this way Sufism significantly contributed to the formation of regional identities in different parts of South Asia.

If Sufis learnt from non-Muslim traditions, the local, Indic, traditions (local, foreign, Indic are sensitive categories which must be handled with care), were also influenced by the principles of Islam as represented by the Sufis. The dynamics of Sufi Islam was resonated in the teachings of Kabir and Nanak as they criticized idolatry, and meaningless rituals and laid emphasis on monotheism and egalitarianism. In the case of Sikhism, important sections of the Guru Granth Saheb are borrowed from Sufi poetry.⁶⁴

The proximity of the Sufis to non-Muslim traditions helped the former to play an important role in conversion and Islamization, even if many of them may not be working with a concrete agenda of this sort. Yet the presence of charismatic Sufis was the principal factor in the conversion of large sections of south asian population to Islam. Sufi institutions, khanqahs (sufi dwelling) and dargahs, emerged as centres where Muslims and non-Muslims assembled for worship and sought blessings and benediction. The process of conversion commenced with devotion towards a particular Sufi, leading to the emergence of syncretic sects, symbolizing only half conversion. Eventually, there emerged communities of Muslims who professed Islam formally, but continued with their practice of local customs and traditions, which invited the criticism of puritanical, reformist Islam. Reformist movements gathered momentum from 18th-19th centuries onwards.⁶⁵

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48. *Ibid.*, p.93. Fatiha recitations after death: Some Muslims hold gatherings on the third, seventh, tenth, fifteenth or fortieth days after the death of a person, in which passages of the Quran are recited and meals served. However, these practices are not compulsory (*farz*) and were not done by the Prophet. They are simply expressions of respect towards the memory of the dead person, and condolence towards the bereaved left behind, and are really matters of culture and not of Islam. It is quite incorrect to imagine that the soul of the departed one will benefit from these gatherings and practices, or that the soul would suffer in some way or be punished if these things were not done. We can always cherish the memory of our deceased, and pray for them- but the intensity or number of our prayers are not the basis on which Allah will judge the soul. If a person believes he or she is more compassionate or just than Allah and therefore can beg, bribe or influence Him to change His will towards any particular soul, this is really a form of *shirk* (polytheism). It is certainly misguided. There is nothing special that happens to the soul of the deceased on these days. Vide, Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood, *A Basic Dictionary of Islam*, New Delhi, 1998, rpt. 2000, p.71. Muslim ambivalence towards some ritual dynamics associated with Sufism is reflected in the above paragraph.
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53. Makhdoom Sabri, Concise Twentieth Century Dictionary; Urdu Into English, Delhi, 2001, p.409.
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57. Ibid. The veneration of qadam-i-rasul was not unique in Gujarat. This happened in medieval Bengal as well in the Gaur-Pandua(Malda district) region. I carried out fieldwork in Bangladesh in the year 1996. I was escorted by two Dhaka based poets, Asim Saha and Kajalendu De along the river Sitalakshma until we reached a place where qadam-i-rasul was being venerated. The place was in the vicinity of Narayangunj, near Dhaka. Initially the caretaker of that shrine was skeptical about the purpose of our visit. We understood that under the spell of aggressive Islamization, practices such as the veneration of qadam-i-rasul were being condemned as shirk (polytheism) and bida (innovation). But when the caretaker was convinced that we were not journalists sponsored by Islamic orthodoxy, he even allowed us to take photographs of the shrine and the ritual dynamics related to the veneration of qadam-i-rasul.
58. Ibid. Late maritime historian, Ashin Dasgupta has shown that trade and commercial activities flourished during hajj which led to the growth of Hajj Market in the Arab world. Like Emperor Akbar, sufi Abu Turab, who led the hajj pilgrims, must have been aware of this market. It would be interesting to study Sufism in this broader context of trade and commercial activities. In this context we can mention that in the ancient period, the Buddhist monasteries often flourished along the established trade routes. Professor Ashin Dasgupta discussed hajj market in his Bengali book entitled Upakule Juganta: Sholo Satak, Portuguese Abhighat O Asiar Banijyer Punarbinyas, Kolkata, 1999, pp.18-21.
59. Neeru Misra edited, Sufis And Sufism; Some Reflections, New Delhi, 2004, See Iqbal Sabir's article 'Impact of Ibn Arabi's Mystical thought...'
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Relevance of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Views on Social Justice

Dr. Babulal Bala

One of the greatest children of Mother India, *Bharat Ratna* - Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was a man of multi-dimensional genius. He was a brilliant academician, a popular attorney, an erudite scholar, a powerful writer, a journalist, an economist, a great constitutional Pundit and what not. In spite of all these he is mostly remembered as a great social rebel, a militant reformer and emancipator as well as champion of the rights and liberties of the dumb, down-trodden and oppressed masses of the sub-continent.¹

It is perhaps known to all that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar hailed from a socially 'stigmatized' Mahar family of Maharashtra. He was born on 14th April, 1891 as the fourteenth offspring of Subedar Ramji Sakpal and Bhimabai. His mother expired when he was only six years old. In School life – as a boy he was meted out with a separatist and inhuman treatment by his teachers and classmates. As a consequence of the rigidity of caste system, the teachers did not touch his notebooks, nor did some of them even ask him to recite poems or put questions to him for fear of being polluted.² When he felt thirsty in the school he turned his mouth upward and then somebody would kindly pour drinking water into his mouth like a funnel. After that Ambedkar was admitted into Maratha High School and later on Elphinstone High School in Bombay where he experienced the same prejudices and hatreds. The school was a miniature reflection of the vast insulting outside world to him. The caste rigidities were so alarming during the time that even the untouchables were prohibited from learning Sanskrit.³ However, in spite of huge financial constrain and facing insulting, time and again on the ground of racial discrimination based on casteism, but by dint of his merit, perseverance, honesty, sincerity and hard work he was able to accomplish his higher studies i.e. he did his

- i. M.A. from Columbia University for his thesis on '*Ancient Indian Commerce*' in 1915
- ii. Ph. D. from Columbia University for his thesis on '*National Dividend of India – A Historic and Analytical Study*' in 1916
- iii. M.Sc. from London University for his thesis on '*Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance in British India*' in 1922
- iv. D.Sc. from London University for his thesis on '*The Problem of Rupee*' in 1923

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v. Bar-at-Law from London University in 1923.⁴

It is easy to imagine that a man of such high qualities could easily lead his life in a fantastic way or be settled himself in the foreign land for his personal enjoyment. But, Ambedkar wanted to sacrifice himself for the cause of humanity and instead of his personal happiness he devoted himself to change the society on the principle of liberty, equality and fraternity. It is noteworthy that personal humiliation and inhuman treatment made Ambedkar search for ways to reconstruct the society on the lines of social justice and democracy.⁵ Ambedkar wanted to provide opportunities to the suppressed classes so that they could enjoy equality in society instead of humiliation and oppression from the social, economic and political point of view.⁶

It is noteworthy that in spite of extreme poverty and atrocities of caste system, after completion of his studies Ambedkar started legal practicing in Bombay from June, 1923. But, here also he had to suffer humiliation due to the stigma of his caste. In this way after being humiliated again and again the humanistic soul of Ambedkar cried out and he went for the protection of human rights specially for the downtrodden. He demanded separate electorates and reserved seats for protecting the untouchable peoples. He wanted to organize the untouchables under one banner and established an organization accordingly namely 'Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha' on 20th July, 1924. He presided at the provincial depressed class conference, held at Nipani on 10th and 11th April, 1925. It was at this place where he publicly asserted that Gandhiji was not giving due importance to the untouchability problem that he was giving to Khadi propagation and Hindu-Muslim unity.⁷

Ambedkar started publishing a paper entitled 'Bahishkrit Bharat' through which the grievances of the depressed classes would come into forefront. He launched a successful Satyagraha at Mahad in the Kolaba district where untouchables were denied access to a tank. He gave evidence in 1926 before the Royal Commission on Currency and Finance and was nominated along with Dr. Solanki in the Bombay Legislative Council in 1927. He was also invited to *Ahilaya Ashram*, Poona, where a big students' conference was held. It was in that conference the 'Samata Sangha Party' of the students was established with the aim of improving discipline and self-control amongst the students. He stressed the need for organizing the Hindu Society on the principle of Human Rights and equality for all. The conference declared the *Manusmriti*, a gospel of physical and mental serfdom of the Sudras. On 29th May, 1928 he submitted a memorandum concerning the safeguard for protection of the depressed classes to the Simon Commission.⁸

As a liberator of the downtrodden untouchables, Ambedkar emphasized the necessity of the depressed classes entry into public services of the country. At the Round Table Conferences held at London between 1930-32, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar worked on several sub-committees and persisted his demand for the recruitment of the depressed classes in the services. In that context a resolution was taken which was inter alia stated that –"The Sub-committee desires that generous policy be adopted in the matter of employment of the Depressed Classes in the public services; and it particularly recommends that the recruitment of the police and the military, from which they are now excluded, should be thrown open to them".⁹ It is mention

worthy that the resolution was duly passed and along with this in the 'Minorities Sub-Committee' he spoke of his 'scheme of political safeguards for the Depressed Classes in the future Constitution of India'.¹⁰ His participation and role in the Round Table Conference brought him into the limelight as the leader of the untouchables and he established himself in real sense as the mouthpiece of the crores of untouchables of India. As a mark of spirited leader he categorically pointed out the shortcomings of the British attitudes towards the depressed class people of India. He demanded rights of equal citizenship with the other citizen of India, abolition of untouchability and all other forms of discrimination. He supported the demand of the Dominion Status along with other nationalists. As a ruthless critic, Ambedkar's charge against Gandhiji and the Congress party was that they did not care for the untouchables. In spite of Gandhiji's rigidity, Ambedkar voiced for separate electorate for the untouchables. He also demanded legislation against social persecution and rights to adequate representation in legislation by election and not by nomination. Naturally, Ambedkar's pleading for the protection of rights of the downtrodden in the Second Round Table Conference made him the undisputed leader as well as messiah of the crores of depressed class people in India.¹¹

It is found that M. K. Gandhi, the representative of the Indian National Congress at the Round Table Conferences, refused the views of Ambedkar that the Depressed Classes should be given political safeguards.¹² However, it is needless to say that as a result of the skilful persuasion of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in connection with the protection of rights and social justice for the depressed class people and the demands of Ambedkar were reflected up to a certain extent through the much-talked 'Communal Award', declared by Ramsay Mac Donald, the then Prime Minister of England on 10th August 1932.¹³ But, meanwhile, Gandhiji started his fast unto death in Yerwada jail in protest against the separate electorate for the depressed classes. This time Ambedkar received many threatening letters from caste Hindus. Actually, it was the policy of 'pressure tactics' made by Gandhiji in the form of his well known 'fast-unto-death' which as if compelled Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to soften his stand and accept the compromise formula of the Poona Pact (24th September, 1932), subject to adequate safeguard of the depressed classes.¹⁴ Under the circumstances, Ambedkar was extremely unhappy and in the long run it increased his bitterness with Mr. Gandhi and the Congress party. For Gandhiji, the Poona Pact may have been at best an emotional victory, but could hardly be viewed as a political victory.¹⁵ Remembering the situation Ambedkar said, "As to my-self, it is no exaggeration to say that no man was placed in a greater and graver dilemma than I was then. It was a baffling situation. I had to make a choice between two different alternatives. There was before me the duty which I vowed as a part of common humanity, to save Gandhi from sure death. There was before me the problem of saving for the untouchables, the political rights which the Prime –Minister had given them. I responded to the call of humanity and saved the life of Mr. Gandhi by agreeing to alter the Communal award in a manner satisfactory to Mr. Gandhi".¹⁶

Personal humiliation and inhuman treatment compelled Ambedkar search for ways to reconstruct society on the lines of social democracy. Ambedkar wanted to provide opportunities to the suppressed classes to raise themselves socially, economically and politically. He remarked

that Lord Buddha revolted against the *Vedas* and the *Brahmanas* who advocated the pattern of ideal society based on *Chaturvarna*. The main tenets of the *Chaturvarna* society were as follows:

- i. Society should be divided into four classes-Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras.
- ii. There cannot be social equality among these four classes. They must be bound together by the rule of graded inequality.
- iii. The four classes should observe a division of occupations. The occupations of the Brahmin should be learning and teaching and the performance of religious ceremonies. The occupations of the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras should be fighting, trade and service to the three superior classes respectively. These occupations assigned to different classes should be exclusive to each.
- iv. The right to education is given to the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Sudras and the Women have no right to education.
- v. A man's life is divided into four stages, *Brahmacharya*, *Garhastya*, *Vanaprastha* and *Sanyasa*.¹⁷

Ambedkar was very much influenced by the word of Lord Buddha that 'By birth is not one an outcast, by birth not one a Brahman, by deeds is one an outcast, by deeds is one a Brahmin'. By dint of his personal experience, it was very much clear to Ambedkar that the Brahmanical caste system was responsible for the most of the evils affecting of Indian society. He considered casteism is like a cancer which eats the vitality of society and is denial of social justice as well as killed the public spirit. The caste feeling is the mother of communalism. He knows well that humanity progress only when there is a spirit of cooperation.¹⁸

He was the critic of the Brahmanical pattern of society based on *Chaturvarna* which advocated the right to education only to the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Sudras and the Women had no right to education. Ambedkar would believe that a society, which does not preach equality between man and man, woman and man, is opposed to the principle of social justice. It is not worthy of surviving with dignity and self-respect without which man is mere cipher.¹⁹

Ambedkar demanded the rights of equal citizenship of the depressed class people along with the other citizens of India, abolition of untouchability and all other forms of discrimination. He demanded legislation against social persecution and rights to adequate representation in legislation by election not by nomination. In that case Ambedkar's voice was expressed through the writings in several periodicals namely *Muk Nayak*, *Vahishkrit Bharat (The Boycotted India)*, *Samata (Equality)*, *Janata (The People)* and so on.²⁰ In addition to these, he also organized protest marches like the *Mahad Satyagraha* and others to sensitize the depressed class people about their dignity and self-respect which generated unprecedented enthusiasm in the minds of Dalit people.

Ambedkar used to believe that the *Manusmriti* had bound the Shudras hand and foot and unless they revolted against it, they would never be able to shake off the shackles of

bondage. He was deeply influenced by the social reform movement of Jyoti Rao Phule particularly his efforts in the field of the education of women and Shudras. He believed that with the dissemination of knowledge of education, light would come to them. He also believed that it was their ignorance due to which their low condition had continued. So, he opened schools for girls. Considering the contributions of J.R. Phule in the field of the liberation of the downtrodden, Ambedkar dedicated his book titled *Who Were the Shudras?* to the memory of J.R. Phule.²¹

Ambedkar makes a clear distinction between the freedom of the country and the people of that country. To him, the freedom of a country is one thing and the freedom of the people living in that country is another. He emphasized on freedom of both. Freedom of a country without the freedom of its people is not true freedom. His main stress was on the freedom of the people. Without the freedom of the people, nationalism becomes a means of internal slavery, forced labour and organized tyranny for the poor and servile classes.²²

To Ambedkar, nationalism means the negation of caste-spirit and caste-spirit is nothing but a deep rooted communalism. Nationalism is a spiritual phenomenon rooted in humanism. The spirit of freedom and social emancipation developed in him a strong sense of nationalism. Nationalism is not mere a display of political manoeuvre. The real object of nationalism is the people. Without raising the whole level of the common masses, nationalism cannot long survive.²³

In whole life Ambedkar fought against the economic and social exploitation of the depressed class people. In order to secure rights of the downtrodden, he submitted a memorandum before Cabinet Mission and went to London in September, 1946 to plead for constitutional safeguards for the untouchables after the withdrawal of the British from India. However, as a result of whole hearted efforts of Mahapran Jogendra Nath Mandal,²⁴ he was elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal in November, 1946. In his first speech in the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar called for a United India. He urged patience, forbearance and sacrifice of the personal, party and group interests for the sake of peace and unity of the country.²⁵ Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, inducted Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as Law Minister in the New Cabinet of free India. Considering the safeguard of the depressed class people, Ambedkar joined the Cabinet because he thought he could serve the interests of the downtrodden better from within Government. In one of his statements, Ambedkar said, "I came into the Constituent Assembly with no greater aspiration than to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Castes".²⁶ The Constituent Assembly of India constituted a drafting committee with Ambedkar as the chairman on 29th August, 1947. Keeping in mind the constitutional knowledge and caliber of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India remarked, 'We could never make a decision which was or could be ever so right as when we put him on the Drafting Committee and made him its Chairman. He has not only justified selection but has added lustre to the work which he has done.'²⁷ Ambedkar had also different of opinion with Karl Marx on one point; that the suffering is not only due to economic exploitation but also due to social exploitation.²⁸ Self-respect is a most vital factor in life. Without it, man is a mere cipher.²⁹

As a forerunner of the upliftment of downtrodden, Ambedkar had a deep faith in man and his powers. He used to consider man is something more than God. He does not believe in God. He said, "You must abolish your slavery yourself. Do not depend for its abolition upon God or *Superman*. Your salvation lies in *political powers* and not in making pilgrimages and observance of fasts. Devotion to scriptures would not free you from your bondage, want and poverty. Your forefathers have been doing it for generations, but there has been neither respite nor even a slight difference in your miserable life in any way. Like your forefathers, you wear rags. Like them, you subsist one's livelihood on thrown-out crumbs of bread; like them, you perish in utter slums and hovels; and like them, you fall easy victims to diseases with a death-rate that rages among poultry. Your religious fasts, austerities and penances have not saved you from starvation."³⁰

Ambedkar would strongly believe that all men are not equal in the society. Some are strong others are weak. Some might have more intelligence in comparison to others. But all they have to enter into what Darwin calls the 'struggle for existence' and 'survival of the fittest'. Therefore, only the fittest tend to survive. To Ambedkar, this is because of the rule of inequality. He said, "In the struggle for existence, if inequality be recognized as the rule of the game, the weakest will always go to the wall. Should this rule of inequality be allowed to be the rule of life?"³¹ Considering the above things, Ambedkar advocated for making modern India on the basis of social democracy based on liberty, equality, justice and fraternity. He always eager to end the centuries of oppression and inhuman treatment meted out to the depressed classes. He had conviction that could only be materialized with the formation of a 'secular state' which pursuit the inculcation of fellow feeling among the members of the other communities in the society, state and country.

It is needless to say that Ambedkar's thought processes are still relevant to help us scan the present day's modern society of India which occasionally passes through tension, blood-bath and certain irritabilities. He tried to expose the vacuum of the social order which is under the mask of casteism. What Ambedkar attempted was nothing but to organize social movements to eradicate man-made curse on humanity in the form of inhuman treatment of the depressed classes under the Brahmanical caste system. In case of ensuring social justice, how far Ambedkar was successful is yet to be decided, but it is true that his liberal steps, visions of future India are not reached to its desired goal. Till date the Indian society is not totally free from the burden of undesirable pressure of tradition i.e. casteism. Sometimes this pressure is being manifested in the form of atrocities or violence on the backward classes of different parts of India.

Finally, we may recall that the ideologies of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar were to educate and organize the backward as well as oppressed communities to agitate against all sorts of injustice and exploitation.³² But this cannot be appreciated by the so-called exploiters who are ever out to suppress the human rights of the depressed classes of this country. This treatment is, however, nothing new because this group of people has no alternative but to brand Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a separatist, anti-nationalist and pro-British. This tradition is still going on with the support of some people who are always eager to mould the society according to their convenience.

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'Practical or Skilled Based Education is Essential for Solving the Bread and Butter Problems' as Advocated by Mahendranath Dutt (1869-1956)

Dr. Mrinal Chandra Das

Introduction

Education is the most important tool for any society's advancement. It has multifarious sequences in our life. Development of our society, economy, everything is associated with education. It makes people independent, self-reliant, intelligent, self-thinking and assiduous. It provides us knowledge, skill and gives positive outlook towards life and enables us to run our life in better way in the competitive world.¹Livelihood is also associated to education. Although our country is progressing but still we have the problem of '*Bread and Butter*' i.e. problem of hunger and want of employment. Youths are getting educated but remaining unemployed. This article makes an effort to present and analyze the views of Mohendranath Dutt (1869-1956) on practical and training based education to solve the 'Bread and Butter' problem.

Before going to the main theme, it needs a brief introduction about Mohendranath Dutt. He was a thinker, philosopher, writer and connoisseur of art of twentieth century Bengal. By relation he was younger brother of great sage Swami Vivekananda. Apart from this he had fame in the intellectual circle of that period of Bengal. Persons like Girish Chandra Ghosh, Nandalal Basu were his admirers. Nandalal Basu himself had admitted Mohendranath's contribution in his artistic life. He had great interest in all branches of knowledge like social science, natural science, philosophy and art and he had a thorough knowledge of these subjects.² He wrote a couple of books on various subjects such as *National Wealth*, *New Asia*, *Lectures on Education*, *Metaphysics*, *Federated Asia*, *Rights of Mankind*, *Cosmic Evolution*, *Theory of Sound*, *Formation of The Earth*, *Energy*, *Ego*, *Biology* and so on. He had also written few Bengali books on different subjects. In these writings he left his imperishable wisdom, which shows his progressive thinking in different aspects.

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Education and National Wealth

Increment of national wealth is directly related to the system of education. A best quality of education stimulates the progress of a nation or country. The national wealth will increase substantially if the people are educated and trained in a better way. Every man contributes his quota to the national prosperity through his own ingenuity and innovative invention.³Therefore the growth of the country's wealth and prosperity is heavily reliant on the country's comprehensive educational system.⁴

It is to be observed that if the people be trained, the national wealth will increase to a considerable degree. Every man by his own contrivance and new invention gives his quota to the national wealth.⁵No nation can prosper or stand in the keen competition of the present days, unless the mass be roused up from their national lethargy by better and modern system of education.⁶So our socio-economic progress has a direct link with the mode of education. To produce better human resources, education must be of better quality.

Present Mode of Education and its Relation with Unemployment

Problem of unemployment lies in the prevailing system of education. Some major shortcomings of contemporary system of education are outlined by Mohendranath Dutt. In the prevailing education system, the students are confined within the four walls of the classroom taught some unnecessary thing, which has no application in practical life.⁷He says that the tendency of present system of education is to produce a number of copying machines and make a versatile man by putting in so many subjects in the curriculum for providing clerks in some government and mercantile offices. Therefore they don't have mastery in any particular branch and only having smattering knowledge in different subjects.⁸

Aims of Education

In regard to the aims of education Dutt utters that the first principle of providing education is to '*Open up the Heart*'⁹of the pupils. In his word "When the heart is broad, intellect opens and the man becomes a giant of intellect; but when the heart is narrowed down by too many restrictions, the intelligence of a man is often, marred with selfish motives and grovelling thoughts and he becomes a vicious and mischievous in society".¹⁰Therefore teachers should always try to rouse up the '*Prana*' or Divinity into the heart of the pupils.¹¹They will explain the youth how to view '*Divinity*' in every object; young minds will be extremely vicious without it.¹²He was of the opinion that if the mind is trained in a scientific way, the material prosperity no doubt will be great; but without any knowledge of divinity, the young minds will be extremely selfish and vicious.¹³Therefore he says teacher should try to raise the noble ambition to emulate the great master of the world. All these will go to form the character of the student, who in after life, will try to become a great and mighty benefactor of humanity.

He suggested not to waste time and efforts of the youths because the educational institution is training ground for future life of the youths.¹⁵Bread problem is the great problem among the Asia races. To solve this problem; Asiatic nations need to be industrialised.

So he states that Industry and solution of 'Bread Problem' must be the motto of the today's education.¹⁶Therefore this motto must always be kept in view – how to solve the question of 'Bread and Butter' by education.¹⁷

Different Sorts of Curriculum for Different Kinds of Callings

As Mohendranath Dutt stated that along with the other noble aims of education earning money and solving of bread problem is to be the motto of education, therefore the pupil must be provided such types of education, training and skills so that after completion the desired course he or she can earn money and be able to solve '*Bread and Butter*' problems of his family and can contribute the society and nation. So he rigidly emphasised on practical and skill based education instead of merely providing theoretical instruction. Only theoretical knowledge can do nothing.

To produce different classes of persons, he thought, we require different sorts of training, because different persons have to fulfil different functions to contribute the nation. Therefore system of education should be framed according to the intended callings of different persons. So, that persons of different callings should have different sorts of training.¹⁸The same curriculum should not be enforced all through the country and on all sections of people. He says that a body of visionary and theoretical talkers cannot improve the material prosperity of a country. We require practical and scientifically trained men to improve the nation.¹⁹

Instruction on Machinery and Industry

In every industrial area big factories and machineries are much used. So here people are generally under the influence of factory and merchandise. Therefore, science of machineries, applied Chemistry and applied Electricity will be the main subjects of their education.²⁰

In early boyhood, the brain remains extremely plastic and susceptible to impression, so, if the drawing of machineries be presented before a little boy and if the scientific principles of the future calling of life be impressed on the mind in an interesting way, he will get much time and ample opportunities to think over the matter and to find out the defects in the actual working of the machines, and thus try to make improvement on them by his own independent thinking.²¹After theoretical class the teachers should take the students to working place of factory and explain the different parts of machinery.²²

If the learners get such commercial and scientific training, they can easily enter into a factory or a commercial house with full equipment of knowledge after completion of the course and will be independent. Every effort should be made to make the boys industrious and self-supporting to ward off and turn back the tide of lethargy and despondency that has overcome all the Asiatic countries. The Asiatic youths must stand on their own legs, and arrest their adamant will and firm determination to conquer the world and break down every obstacle in their path.²³

Practical Education and Demonstration on Farming

For better crops and high yielding in agriculture, proper scientific instruction and training should be given to the cultivators with demonstration. As for agricultural area, who are much engaged in agricultural activities, the curriculum should be somewhat reformed. The agrarian subjects should be up-to-date. For this matter, books on agriculture, cattle and poultry farming should be made out in convenience languages. The composition of soil, the manure, the different modes of ploughing and machinery for cultivation, the different systems of agriculture, either in small plots or collective farms and similar other things pertaining to agriculture.²⁴

Not only the science of agriculture, but also the process of preparing the by-products from farm and agricultural production as well as from the waste materials of the field should be ingrained into the mind of the pupils. So the boys might be scientific farmers; they will be able to solve the bread problem for themselves by an independent exertion.²⁵

Fruit rearing, artificial bee-hive, cocoon rearing, etc. should also be taught to the boys; and after theoretical class the learners should be taken to the field during the season and taught the different steps of agricultural operations, so that the idea of a thoroughgoing scientific farming, with up-to-date knowledge, is ingrained in them.²⁶ Therefore for this purpose instructional centre should be open in where instruction in manures, seeds, ploughs and similar things should be given to them.²⁷

Girls' Education and Training Based on Various Professions

Mohendranath Dutt had great faith on women's genius and potentiality, so he was in favour of women's independent mode of earning and respected state in society. He did not desire to keep women behind the curtain. He wanted women to come out of the curtain and contribute for the society and nation. Therefore he supported independent mode of earning for women. Without economic freedom social justice is not possible for women. Therefore, he advocated such a set of education and trainings for girl which will help them to have an independent mode of earning. In the curriculum of girls' education the art of teaching for lads is suggested, because art of teaching to lad is an inherent quality of women. This will enable then to have an independent mode of living.²⁸ In accordance with the books on health and medicine they ought to be taught that the family might be neat, clean and healthy and then women may be able to treat the ordinary diseases without calling a doctor and simultaneously they will find some means of independent earnings.²⁹

In his opinion short hand and type writing for women must be included in the curriculum of education. Girls are always clean and less prone to embezzlement than men. Therefore not only in domestic affairs but in office too, the girls should be largely employed. In big towns, factories and offices are opened, where stenographers and typists are much required. Thus girls will get independent means of earning. It is for this reason; girls should be taught short-hand and type-writing.³⁰ Natural gifts of arts, painting, photography, sculpture and clay-modelling are found in girls in a greater and better degree than in men because, their nerves

are so formed and developed that they are the best adepts in these art. Therefore on these subjects the curriculum should be framed accordingly for girls. It is not merely an art of delight but in future career, this knowledge might be turned into means for earning money. It is for delight as well as to give them an opening for independent living that these things should be taught. Academies should be opened in towns and wherever possible in villages also for imparting training in fine arts.³¹

Though music and dance are considered a means of recreation but it could be made profession or a means of earning for the girls. Therefore it should also be taught to the girls, for it is an inherent part of their nature. For, music and dance have debasing as well as elevating ideas. Put it on an elevating pedestal, it will be a divine one and it will be an expression of divinity through vocal and muscular movements. So music and dancing can also be made profession and means of earning.³²

Other Scientific and Practical Education

To solve the 'Bread and Butter' problem technical education and scientific education have core role. Therefore Mohendranath Dutt suggests that young pupils should be trained up in Chemistry, Electricity, Botany and similar other subjects as national need might require.³³In the present days, Applied Chemistry and Electricity are the two main factors in the development of a nation.³⁴

Along with theoretical Chemistry, its application is to be utilized. Theoretical, medical and commercial Chemistry are the three main branches of Chemistry. Commercial aspect of Chemistry has crucial role for the time being in our country to create a job opportunities in different commercial houses. The next is the Medical Chemistry. We have a long tradition in Medical Chemistry in our country thus Mohendranth Dutt suggested reviving our indigenous medical Chemistry with the help of modern medical Chemistry. This will create opportunities to the youth for independent earnings.³⁵

In the present state of the world, Chemistry and Electricity are the two main factors for the development of any country. The next subject is Electricity. Along with the theoretical knowledge of the Electricity practical aspect is also to be taught to the youths. The subject is divided into theoretical and commercial or applied Electricity. The practical or commercial aspect of Electricity should be made the subject of study for the students in the college. Thus after having a little practical training in some factory, they might come out as practical electricians.³⁶ This will bring ample opportunities in this field to have some jobs.

Botany is another significant subject. Herbals are abound in Asian countries. Asia's woods are home to a diverse range of plants and shrubs. Botany can be broken down into three categories: theoretical, medical and commercial Botany. The combination of commercial Botany and commercial Chemistry will bring the country considerable success. The loss and drainage of raw materials might be turned into gold with understanding of practical Botany and Chemistry. The medical side of Botany comes next.³⁷India, with its vast forests, provides a fertile ground for Botany and botanical Chemistry research, as well as Zoology research. Colleges are necessary to be established in the Himalayan region, in the forest of central

India, with the exclusive purpose of studying Botany.³⁸ Because India's environment varies from the Himalayas to Burma and Ceylon, the trees and herbs grown are diverse. As a result, one can become a master of the entire vegetable world by studying Indian Botany. India's young males should take up the issue and dedicate their lives to it.³⁹

The development of medical knowledge in the country should be appropriately addressed in order to promote education on all fronts. The Hindu system of medicine, the Mahomedan system of medicine and the Modern European system of medicine are the three most popular systems of medicine in India today. Now is the time to make an effort to teach students in all three schools; by fusing these schools, a new and modern Indian medical system will emerge, which will be the result of the three diverse systems.⁴⁰

District hospital is to be converted as preliminary medical school so that after the preliminary examination, the student can enter into the recognised medical college and study the higher course for one year or two.⁴¹ It will enable them to have ample opportunities towards independent earnings.

Mohendranath Dutt also promotes research in the field of science and other. Researchers should be provided with adequate compensation, facilities and benefits in order to make new discoveries and propose new theories. Both boys and girls should be accepted to research departments. None should be excluded from the process of natural development. Every individual person in the nation must be utilised for the national development.⁴² Every memorial building in India should be converted into a men's and women's research laboratory. Every zoological garden should be turned into research institutions. Zoology studies will be considerably aided as a result of this.⁴³

Along with these types of education, he suggested that book-keeping, short hand, typewriting, commercial correspondence with some knowledge of elementary mathematics should also be taught to the young lads so that these skills can offer some callings in their future life.⁴⁴ In his opinion skill was not inherent but it could be acquired.

Funds

To raise fund for this purpose Dutt suggested that fund should be raised from the excise duty on alcohol, from temples and endowed property by taxations and stamp duties etc. it should be entirely used for education purposes.⁴⁵ In his words, 'The enormous hoarded fund and the jewelleries of the ecclesiastics should be utilized to fund research laboratories and projects.'⁴⁶

System of education is dynamic. Need of people changes with time, therefore the system of education is needed to be changed accordingly. We require a body of thinkers who will think over the new mode of education according to the changing needs. So Mohendranath Dutt suggested that to put into practice all the suggestions, we require a body of thinkers who will take up the task in all sincerity, devote their whole life and energy to it, and devise means and ways for the spread of education, and direct the national course. But mere ephemeral reforms without any consistency of reasoning or any knowledge of past from which to draw conclusions for the future good are obstructions to national growth.⁴⁷

Conclusion

It can be said that the current employment situation in India is dismal, with millions of young people unable to find work. Once they've completed their course, they're unsure about their future. It's chiefly because they're learning information but not skills. As a result, people are having difficulty finding work. Theoretical knowledge on its own is useless; they need to put it into practice in order to combat the problem. In light of the current scenario, it is critical to think on MohendranathDutt's advice, which should be applied in order to handle the current issues. As a result, the problem of 'Bread and Butter' will be resolved. We will not only be able to solve the current problem through practical and skill-based education, but we will also be able to foster a scientific temperament among the learners, which will eventually lead to a developed society.

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The Progress of Primary Education in Dinajpur District from 1786 to 1947-A Study

Moksed Ali

The greater Dinajpur district has unique historical experiences. Due to administrative reasons the region of Dinajpur was constructed and de-constructed so frequently. Dinajpur has been ruled by both indigenous and colonial state systems. The term 'Dinajpur' embraces the area of Dinajpur in present Bangladesh and North Dinajpur and South Dinajpur in present West Bengal. It had a diversified and rich cultural heritage and history under the rule of Mauryan, Guptas, Sungas, Palas, Senas, Sultanate, Mughal, and British. In ancient times the vast northern region of Barendrabhumi of Bengal was called Dinajpur. During the Mughal period the Bengal Subha consisted of nineteen Sarkars and among them, five Sarkars namely Tajpur, Ghoraghat, Panjra, Barbokabad, and Jannatabad came under the boundary line of the Dinajpur district.¹ The East India Company got Dewani in 1765 and subsequently reconstructed the divisions of Bengal. The greater Dinajpur district had been initially formed in 1786 and Lord Cornwallis vested all judicial and administrative power in the hand of the District Collector and District Judge in 1790. In 1793 Lord Cornwallis divided the district into twenty-two Police Stations which remained unchanged until 1857.² Before independence there were 30 thanas and the district lies between 24°56' and 26° 23' north latitude and 88° 2' and 89° 19' east longitude. The area of the district was 3946 square miles with a population of 1,687,863 persons (Census of 1911). After the partition of India in 1947, the Dinajpur district was divided into two parts namely 'Dinajpur' and 'Paschim Dinajpur'. With 2/3 parts of the district Dinajpur is in Bangladesh and with 1/3 part of it, Paschim Dinajpur remains in West Bengal, India.³ The present study will focus on the progress of primary education in the undivided Dinajpur of the Colonial period.

In ancient India, the education system was run by Tols, Chotuspathis, Pathshalas etc. After the establishment of Muslim rule, education was imparted by Maktabs, Madrasas.⁴ Various subjects like Sanskrit, Grammar, Smriti, Theology, Debate, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Quran, and Hadith were taught in those institutions. Mainly religious-based education was given to the children. The accounts of Francis Buchanan (Hamilton) (1762-1829) "*A Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Description of the District, or Zila, of Dinajpur, in the Province,*

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or Subah, of Bengal” provides important information on the pre-colonial education system of the district.⁵ At the age of 5 generally most of the children entered into the school and after 5-6 months they learned to read and write. Then they began to write coding, and decoding of mathematics on Palmira leaves, some of them learned numeration, subdivisions of weights and measures, and Indian mathematics like multiplying, dividing, and subtracting for agriculture and commercial purposes. In the Muhammedan education system, there were numerous Maktabas and Madrasas where the Persian language along with Quran and hadith were taught. The Persian language was considered a gentlemanly language as in those days Persian was an Official and Court language. There was also a tradition among the Muslims to memorize Quran and hadith without understanding anything for ceremonial purposes.⁶ Arabic language, scientific knowledge, and mathematics were hardly imparted to the children in the Maktabas. Although some of the wealthy Muslims were instructed as their wish and requirement by the private tutors.

With the arrival of the British and establishment of the Colonial rule, the traditional Indian education system was changed. It also changed the education system of Dinajpur. After the establishment of colonial rule, the Christian Missionaries played an important role to spread primary education in Bengal in general and Dinajpur in particular. Because they were the earliest to establish a primary school in the district as in other parts of Bengal. The famous Christian Missionary William Carry established a primary school at Madnabati (then in Dinajpur now in Malda district) in 1796.⁷ The establishment of the school had a deep impact on the minds of the people of the district.

The Charter Act of 1813 made a state system of education in India. It was the first step by the Colonial ruler for educational development. Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 compelled the English East India Company to take responsibility for the Indian people for education by granting one lac rupees.⁸ But the debate began over whether the money would be spent on Vernacular education or Western education. The Macaulay’s Minute of 7th March, 1835 resolved the controversy. It suggested the promotion of European sciences and literature among the Indians. According to Macaulay, English was a much easier language than Sanskrit and Arabic and it led the Indians to learn easily all western sciences and works of literature. The then Governor General of India Lord William Bentinck had supported Macaulay’s Minute and declared that all government funds would be spent on imparting western education.⁹ As a result indigenous education got a great setback and western education began to flourish in India. The district of Dinajpur was not far behind. The first Middle school in Raiganj town was established in 1844. One of the famous teachers of this school was Pocha Mohan Pandit.¹⁰ The social reformer Bijay Chakraborty established a primary school near Dinajpur town in 1848 later it was shifted to the centre of the town of Dinajpur at the Kachari building of the King Maharaja Taraknath.¹¹ The education despatch of 1854 popularly known as Wood’s Despatch after the name of Charles Wood, the President of the Board of Control brought some changes in the education system of East India Company. It suggested establishing a Department of Public Instruction in provinces. It paid attention to providing trained teachers and suitable books in the schools. It decided to follow English along with Vernacular languages with European knowledge in the institutions. It started the

Grant-in-Aid system in schools like England. It also suggested establishing universities, and vocational institutions and realized the urgency of spreading education among women etc.¹² The Despatch also decided a set up a Government English school in each district of Bengal. As a result, the primary school in Dinajpur town had been upgraded into Government High School with the name 'Dinajpur Zilla School' in 1854.¹³

Table-1**Information of the educational status of the district from 1856-1871.14**

Classification of Schools	Number of Schools			Number of students		
	1856-57	1860-61	1870-71	1856-57	1860-61	1870-71
Aided English Elementary School	0	0	4	0	0	108
Aided Vernacular Elementary School	1	0	215	46	0	4836

The above table provides us with information regarding the Govt. English and Vernacular Schools and also Aided English and Vernacular schools of 15 years from 1856-1871. In these 15 years, the number of vernacular elementary schools was raised from 1 in the year 1856-57 to 215 in the year 1870-71. There was no aided English elementary school up to 1860-61, but in 1870-71 there were four aided schools with 108 students. One more noticeable point is that the number of aided vernacular elementary schools increased from one in 1856-57 to 215 in 1870-71 and the number of students increased immensely from 46 in 1856-57 to 4836 in 1870-71. It was also noticeable that the demand for vernacular schools was increasing than the English schools. Thus we can find the status of primary education in the district in this period.

In the 1860s onwards two primary schools were established in Raiganj town. Gopal Bandhab Pathshala was established at Bandar, its first head teacher was Gopal Chandra Mandal. This school is still running. Another one Basir Mastarer Pathashala was established at Mohanbati, its first head teacher was Basiruddin Ahmed and later on, Raj Mohammad Sarkar became its head teacher. This school was transferred elsewhere later on.¹⁵ The initiative might be influenced the people of Raiganj.

In 1872 Sir George Campbell's scheme for the spread of primary education was initiated in Dinajpur as in other parts of Bengal. With the initiation of the scheme of Sir George Campbell, village schoolmasters (the gurus) who had till then imparted primary education to the children, become eligible to receive financial aid not exceeding Rs.5 per month each from the government. But there were two conditions i) the medium of instruction was to be vernacular and ii) the Pathshalas were to be inspected frequently. Under this scheme the extra expenditure was to be met out of the provincial revenues, no extra tax or cess had been

taken from the people to meet this additional expenditure. It should also be noted that in this scheme there was no provision for the appointment of primary school teachers by the Government or by any local authority. As result, the number of schools increased to 456 in 1873 from 284 in 1872 and the number of students increased from 6267 in 1872 to 8174 in 1873.¹⁶ So we can say, the George Campbell's Scheme was very much successful in the district of Dinajpur as other parts of Bengal.

Table-2

Information about the 'Number of Schools and Students in Primary Schools' of the district from 1911-12 to 1920-21: 17

	1911-12	1912-13	1913-14	1914-15	1915-16	1916-17	1917-18	1918-19	1919-20	1920-21
Schools	947	939	1017	1137	1261	1330	1447	1425	1376	1566
Students	29214	28318	30233	32127	33745	36495	37681	35816	34930	39335

1911-12 to 1920-21: ¹⁷

Table-3 Number of Schools and Students in Primary Schools' from 1921-22 to 1930-31: ¹⁸

Year wise No. of Schools and Students	1921-22	1922-23	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26	1926-27	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31
Schools	1446	1527	1594	1603	1627	1620	1700	1788	1768	1772
Students	40271	43825	45443	48414	49254	50022	54284	54044	55324	52424

From the above table, it is revealed that the number of primary schools was 1446 in the year 1921-22 and the number of students in those schools was 40271. After 10 years in 1930-31, there were 1772 primary schools in the district with 52424 students. It means there was a normal rate of growth of schools and students. It is also noticed that only 326 primary schools and 12153 students were increased in 10 years. The maximum number of primary schools was shown in the year 1928-29 whereas the maximum number of students was shown in the year 1929-30.

Primary education got tremendous progress with the enactment of the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act of 1930. This Act constituted the District School Boards and these boards ever looked after the school education of the district. From then onwards government began to collect education cess to meet the extra expenditure on primary education in rural areas and primary education was being imparted in the district following this act.¹⁹ As a result a District Board was established in Dinajpur in 1930 and it had an important role in spreading elementary education in the whole district. We found a lot of primary schools were

established in the district in that decade. As an example, Free primary schools were established at Bhatun, Basian, Sonagaon, Antara, Bindole, Sangaon, Kailadangi, Khalsi, Burakamat, Dhuabisua, Baraduari, Bahin, Elengia, Hatia, Cheramati, Barua, Taherpur of Raiganj police station in 1934. So within a decade in 1941 we find a great increase in literacy rate. The percentage of literacy was 9.84% while it was 6.30% in 1931.20

Table-4

Information about the 'Proportion of Literates of the Dinajpur District' from 1891 to 1941:21

Year	Population	Literates	Percentage
1891	1555835	67078	4.31%
1901	1566079	83357	5.32%
1921	1690878	131688	7.78%
1931	1743048	109812	6.30%
1941	1926833	187744	9.84%

The above table provides important information regarding the number of literates and the percentage of literates. In 1891 the total population of the district was 1555835; among them, the total literates were 6078. This year the percentage was 4.31%. In 1901, the total population of the district was 1566079; among them, the total literates were 83357. This year the percentage was 5.32%. It is noticeable that from 1891 to 1901, the percentage of literacy slightly increased. The table also revealed that in the year 1931 the number of literate people decreased to 109812 persons while the number of same was 131688 persons 10 years before in 1921. But again the number of literates was increased to 187744 in 1941. This year the total population was 1926833. So this year the percentage was 9.84%. From 1891 to 1941 it is noticeable that the number of literate people was so high in the 1930s decade in the Dinajpur district.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the district has made significant progress in the field of primary education. However, they lag far behind compared to other neighbouring districts in terms of primary education. The conditions of primary schools were often unsatisfactory, many schools had very few teachers and many schools were established without considering the needs of the area. The school buildings were dilapidated and small in size and lacked adequate furniture. Due to low salaries, teachers often refrained from imparting proper education to the students. Despite various obstacles, it can be said that Dinajpur district has made significant progress in the field of primary education during my period of study.

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Conditions of Agricultural Community of Dinajpur District Under Company's Rule from 1786 to 1857

Niladri Shekhar Mondal

India is a major agricultural country and the people of India have been associated with agriculture since ancient times. The word 'agriculture' is derived from the Latin words, 'ager' means soil and 'culture' means cultivation. In an agriculture community, cultivating the land is the primary source of wealth. Agriculture has lot of inherited sustainable practices passed from one generation to another generation. Agriculture in Indian is not an occupation; it is a way of life. Agricultural community mainly lives in village. The agriculture community here does not refer to any particular race or class; it refers to the people who are involved in agricultural work.

The terms 'community' is generally associated with socio-economic inequalities. In most cases there are many levels of social structure.¹ The classification of agriculture system can be divided into two folds- firstly, the *Landlords* or *Zaminders*, Secondly those who do not have any land but they are farmers, they are known as Share croppers, Landless farmers, or agriculture labourers.² The agriculture community have supply most of the economic resources of this country. The economic status of a community cannot be evaluated without its social and political status. The present paper will try to explore the condition of the agricultural community of Dinajpur district during the rule of English East India Company. The commencement time of the present study is 1786, because this year Dinajpur district was formed by the company. The paper ends in 1857 because after that the Company's rule was ended.

Dinajpur District is one of the important districts of Bengal. Agriculture is the main livelihood of the inhabitants of this District. There is no local tradition regarding the origin of the name of Dinajpur, and it is also difficult to accept any satisfactory theory about the origin of the name.³ It is said that Dinajpur was named some forgotten prince or local kings, named Dinaj or Danuj. He was the original founder of the Dinajpur family and named his own branch of his family after his name.⁴ The District was formed in 1786 A.D. with 22 thanas. According to Buchanan Hamilton, Dinajpur District was triangular tract, with an area of 5,378 square miles.⁵

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After the death of Raja Ramnath, the rule of Dinajpur Raj Zamindari was entrusted to his successor Raja Vaidyanath (1770 A.D). In 1757, after the battle of Plassey the East India Company granted the *Diwani* of Bengal, which led to major changes in the system of administration in Dinajpur District.⁶ During the time of Raja Vaidyanath, as a first step during rule of the company, a draft was issued to collect revenue from Zamindari of Dinajpur. From this time onwards, Raja Vaidyanath's Zamindari gradually declined and his rule began to shrink. As a result the power of the Company increased and the power of the Zamindar decreased. During this time a new class, called *Izaradars* began to increase which led the company to settle a new Land revenue settlement with them in terms of revenue collection. During the periods of company's rule in the district, three new classes emerged. Although these three classes existed in the earlier society but they did not have much influence in the society. These are – Class- 1. Landholders ('*Zamindars*', '*Talukders*', '*Izaradars*') and Rich farmer ('*Jotdars*', '*Gantidars*', '*Haoladars*'). Class- 2. Self-reliant farmer ('*Ryot*'). Class- 3., Sharecropper ('*Bargadar*') and agriculture labourers. The whole agriculture community was formed in the rural society by all these classes. After the Permanent Settlement, the first and third classes created a new kind of economic relationship between the *Ryot* or the *Jotdar* and the Landless agriculture labourers and the *Bargadar*'s. This led to an increased in the number of land in the hands of one class. The numbers of Landless labourers continued to increase. As a result, the number of Self-reliant agriculture community continued to decline. After the introduction of Permanent Settlement, the new land revenue act was introduced to change the hereditary or chronologically tax collection of the former *Zamindars* and the land of the big *Zamindars* was divided and created some new owners of this divided lands. At that time, a new class was born as the landholders of those lands. The land passed from the traditional *Zamindars* to a new class of caterpillar traders and some unscrupulous employees and brokers of the East India Company. After that, all these classes increased the amount of land revenue rate. It was Rs.12,49,816 in pre Colonial period, but during the rule of company the amount of revenue rate was increased to probably Rs.18,28,144, and this amount of revenue increased considerable during the reign of Devi Sing.⁷

At the same time the rural industries of Bengal began to Decline in face of competition with the British industries and agriculture become the main livelihood of the rural people. Due to the increase of taxes, the condition of the agricultural laborers began to deteriorate. These poor classes continue to borrow money from lenders at huge interest and due to inability to repay of the loans, there lands were gradually taken over by the money lenders. As a result, two classes emerged in the agricultural society called the rich class and the poor class. Colebrook discussed a small number of privileges farmers was the majority of the agriculture community.⁸ In addition, they used their influence to introduce new taxes, giving some opportunities to powerful peasants.⁹ By the end of the eighteenth century, there were three types of farmers under the *Jotdars*- those who paid day by day revenue, sharecropper and labourers. Buchanan Hamilton shows the amount of cultivable land in Dinajpur District-7,194,000 Bighas. Out of

total amount 1,94,000 Bighas-was under small *Zamindars*, who leased the land to be cultivated by Sharecroppers, 40,000 Bighas of land-was in the occupancy of poor agriculture labourers, and 66,00 Bighas-were under principal *Izaradars*, all of whom an average of 165 Bighas of land. There was 88,00 large *Izaradars*, each with 75 Bighas of land,11,000 were middle condition *Izaradar s*, each with 60 Bighas of which land. 55,000 were poor *Izaradars*, each with average 30 Bighas of land,10,000 were deficient *Izaradars*, each with 15 Bighas of land. There were 1, 50,000 Sharecropper families, and agriculture labourers were 80,000 families.¹⁰

According to Hamilton's reports, the most rich conditions agricultural communities under the *Zamindars* were Muslims. The *Izaradars* were the main producers of food grains in the village in most cases they had a lot of net assets. Even after paying the price of their stock of grain, they remained be under an obligation.¹¹

The land system of Dinajpur District was unique. The number of *Zamindars* increased during the reign of Mughal emperor Akbar. The main reason for this was that those who were in- charge of revenue collection,they were the leader of the village and the belonging different dynastic. These gradually increased their influence and got the obligation of collecting revenue for the emperor in some different places. Those who were entrusted with the responsibility of collecting revenue are the Landholders or *Zaminders* and *Talukdar* belongs to the same classes.¹² The number of large, medium and small *Zamindars* in Dinajpur district was 49 persons. Most of those *Zamindars* of the District belonged to the Brahmins, Kayastha, and Tili communities, beside two *Zamindars* were Rajputs and five were Muslims.¹³ Apart from *Zamindars*, *Talukdar*, there was existed some middle man like *Jotdars*, *Ryots*, *Haoladars*, *Mandals*, etc.who were usually associated with physician, advocacy and teaching. Among these classes, some engaged in farming, some in business and some in money lenders. Professional Bengali middle class *Ryots* and rich aristocratic Muslims did not cultivated the land themselves. They used to employ agriculture labourers for their hand work. The *Zamindars* used to arrange share cropper for their *Khaslan*, to increase their income. This stratification of society was complicating in rural society. In 1798, Colebrook wrote about farmers, *Jotdars* landholder, agriculture labourers in the book named '*Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce of Bengal*'. He further said that the financial conditions of the Landless peasants and agriculture labourers in the village were very bad. On the other hand the Landlords or *Jotdars* and rich *Ryots* owned a lot of property.¹⁴ The monopolistic ownership of the *Ryot Zamindars* was evident during the survey of Buchanan Hamilton.¹⁵

Table: Landless Labour in Dinajpur District

Sharecropper	34.0
Agriculture Labourer	18.1
Total Landless Farmer	52.1

Source: Buchanan Geographical Description of Dinajpur PP.236,244

The *Jotdars* was only 6% of the total populations engaged in agricultural works in Dinajpur District. He also shows that the number of Landless agriculture labourers was 52.1%. They were always in financial trouble for paying 50% of crop produced the land revenue, on the other hand the *Zamindars* also received the higher revenue rate from the *Izaradar*.¹⁶ The poor agriculture family were always persuaded by *zamindars* moneylenders and government bureaucrat, on the other hand high level farmers used to live happily even though they were few in numbers.

Dinajpur District was underdeveloped Socially and economically since ancient time as compared to others districts of Bengal. At that time, Sanskrit, Bengali, Arabic, and Persian languages prevailed in the whole of Bengal as well as Dinajpur. The upper class Muslims studied in Arabic and Persian languages and Sanskrit and Bengali were the main languages of the Hindus. The aristocratic Hindus basically studies in Sanskrit and beside, they studied in some time Arabic languages. There were various barriers to the education of the students from poor agriculture family. After the establishment of the British rule, English education was widely spread in the whole District. But English did not have a special place among the lower class peasants of Dinajpur, like others District of the Bengal. Muslims were studied in *Madrasas*, *Maktabas* or *Khanakas*, which were managed by aristocratic people. Arabic and Persian languages were taught there. Hindu educational institutions were *Tols*, *Chatuspaties*, *Pathshalas*. Sanskrit was the medium of instruction of those institutions. According Buchanan Hamilton, first rudiments of education were usually given both Hindus and Muslims in small school called *Patshala*, under the tuition of teachers called '*Guru*'.¹⁷ At that time teachers did not get any financial support from the British government but some *Zamindars* helped them. The teacher depends entirely on their schools for subsistence. Probably the average fees for each student were 4 to 8 *Anna's* per month, and the teacher's income was 2 to 7 rupees per month. Out of 22 thanas or Police station in Dinajpur District, there were 199 primary schools and 9 were Persian schools covered 13 thanas and there were no schools in 9 thanas. The lower agriculture classes had no interest in the field of education. In 1854 the first government English school was established in Dinajpur District.

During the rule of company great changes took place in the education system of Bengal. The influence of Christian Missionaries can be seen in the classes which were financial backward in education system mainly among the agriculture labourer, Landless farmers, and poor agriculture communities of this District. The Missionaries were pioneers in initiating and expanding women's education in Dinajpur District. In the first half of nineteenth century, the rate of women education also increased. *Zamindars* and *Ryots* they used to send their sons and daughters to others state for education.¹⁸ At the time due to prevalence of the cast system in the society, the student from poor families could not able to go *Pathshala*. As a result Dinajpur District was lagging behind other District of Bengal in education system.

The style of house in Dinajpur District, where the cultivator lives was simple and primitive in the extreme. Their living house was constructed sometimes on a raised earthen plinth and

sometimes on the ground, with wooden or bamboo posters, bamboo mat walls and thatched roof. In part of the District where suitable earth was obtainable or the inhabitants are foreigners from the west, the walls of the houses were built of mud. Occasionally a well to do cultivator or small tenure holder has a more pretentious dwelling with corrugated iron roof and mud house of this kind. In generally the labourers classes lived in the house, which was four rooms, houses were made by straw bamboos and soil. The landholders or *Zaminders* mostly lived in old fashioned *Dalàns* or masonry buildings.¹⁹ The huts collectively sufficient for the accommodation of a family, are usually surrounded by a common fence, called 'Vati' or 'vari'. A rich farmer have 12 or 14 hut on his premises or *Vati*, who lived with brother, wife and children.²⁰

The furniture of the Muslim and Hindus were used nearly the same only the agriculture labourers or peasant required no apparatus for their worship, and the lower classes peasant required nothing except a knife, a mat, a bit of sackcloth.²¹ The jewels and ornaments worn by Muslims are quite different from those used by the Hindus. The Muslims used fewer ornaments of gold and silver than the Hindus and used Pearls and precious stones. The food items of the laboring people were inferior quality compared to the people of other prosperous communities. The higher classes farmer used to take fish, milk, and vegetables, meat etc. where the poor farmers used to take very seldom taste milk and their supply of fish was very scanty.

The British considered India as a 'land of dirt, disease and sudden death'. To them, India with its unfamiliar topography, unbearable climate, 'unknown plant and animal life' was 'an exotic and dangerous space'. The Colonial government had no such thoughts about improving the health system in Bengal. Government initiatives in the field of medical facilities came to the district much later. Due to the weakness of the medical system, many people died every year from fever, cholera and smallpox. There were no dispensaries in villages. The dispensaries were located in urban areas. Due to the lack of communication system the poor agriculture community rarely went to the town for medical treatment. They depended on *Kabirajs*, *Ojha* or *Fakirs* for treatment. From the above discussion it can be concluded that the condition of the agricultural community in Dinajpur district was not very good during the period under discussion.

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Contribution of William Carey in the Growth of Bengal Renaissance, with a Special Reference to Serampore Printing Press

Soumalya Mukhopadhyay

INTRODUCTION:

Against the British imperialist historiography, a group of middle-class Bengali intellectuals set out to preserve the traditional Hindu religion and culture, which was started by Bankimchandra. In this context, a revolutionary change took place in the social and cultural world of Bengal from the time after the Battle of Plassey to the early twentieth century. Many historians have referred to this situation as Bengal Renaissance. This renaissance got its desired destination through the activities of Rammohun, Dwarkanath, Debendranath, Derozio, and others, but the contribution of William Carey, the Baptist missionary of Serampore, to this Bengal renaissance was no less. His deep respect and love for Indian culture, especially the Hindu religion led him to serve the Indian society, which Derozio also did.

CAREY AT SERAMPORE:

According to Carey, Christianity involved a spirit of universal brotherhood, & the right of every man without distinction of races, color, or creed, to know the highest, & to realize his divine sonship & the noblest possibilities of his soul in a union with the Eternal Son of God. In this connection the publication of Carey's booklet '*An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians*' marks a distinct point of departure in the history of Christianity. The fact that this ideal in its fundamental features is now generally accepted by all friends of human progress, Christian & non Christian, in no way lessens the greatness of Carey's contribution to modern religious thinking and educational and social ideals^[1]. The officials of the British East India Company of those days were in general unfriendly to all missionary work. They were convinced that every attempt to promote missionary enterprise and educational enlightenment would result in universal unrest and the ultimate overthrow of British rule in India. For several years Carey was

Obliged to carry on his mission work in the capacity of an indigo planter in the retired

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and unhealthy district of Malda in Northern Bengal. Here he learned the Indian languages ^[2]. Meanwhile, Lord Wellesley was opposed to the printing industry. David Brown told him to introduce press censorship. Wellesley threatened to arrest the missionaries. On the other hand, in 1799, Carey was accompanied by John Marshman, William Ward, Dr. Ryland & Hannah Marshman. The Danish government took charge of the security of missionary activities in Serampore, as they were more experienced in missionary activity than the English. Advised by Charles Grant, Carey declared Serampore as a center of missionary activity and arrived in Serampore on 10 January 1800. When Rambasu asked Carey that why he came to India, he replied that before their arrival to Calcutta they were referred to as „papist or Pope’s Catholics, not Baptists, which feared the govt., hence they landed at Serampore ^[4].

Serampore Mission press:

Primarily Carey had no guide to understand the minds of the Indian people ^[5]. He started his journey on 13th June 1793 and reached Calcutta on 1st November. Along the way, he enriched himself by reading Cowper’s poems and the Bengali language [6]. The Serampore Mission Press was formed on 11 January through the efforts of Carey, Marshman & Ward which was the first Baptist mission in India ^[7]. The 1st step of Orientalism in India was „The code of Gentoo laws of N.B.Halhed. The next stage was the Asiatic Society of William Jones in 1784. Charles Wilkinson’s Bengali grammar was not so widely accepted later on. In this situation, Carey brought a revolution in the world of printing with the help of Panchanan Karmakar ^[8]. Carey wanted to translate Bible into various languages so that heathens could access God’s own words on their own, for this he learned the local language and developed a clear idea about the culture of Indian society ^[9]. The first Bengali printer of the printing press was Gauri Shankar

Bhattacharya, later on; Carey appointed Panchanan Karmakar & his son Manohar. Panchanan developed a typeface for Carey’s Bangla translation of the New Testament. In 1803, Karmakar developed a set of Devnagari scripts, the first Nagari type to be developed in India. Although this printing press initially faced some financial obstacles, it was later overcome. The first edition of the Bengali New Testament translated by Carey was published by Mission Press on 18 March, 1800 ^[10]. In that translation, he was assisted by Rambasu. A copy of this translation was sent to Lord Wellesley in 1801, he praised it ^[11]. On October 22, 1800, Carey & Brandson visited Rishra & watched that the Brahmins wearing *tilak* as a symbol of virtue. He learned many things about Hindu scriptures from the priests and gave them a Bengali Gospel ^[12]. When Matthew Gospel’s Bengali translation was made in 1800, he wrote to Ryland informing him that the Bengali translation was brand new to him. It was later published as Mangal Samachar on March 5, 1801^[13]. It was a major step in eradicating the superstitions of Bengal. . In 1801, at a cost of 612 pounds, 2,000 copies of Carey’s Bengali Bible were printed, which took about nine months to complete ^[14]. When the first copy of Carey’s New Testament arrived in England, Andrew Fuller delivered a copy to the 2nd Earl Spencer. He helped with 50 pounds for the translation of the Old Testament & requested that the copy be sent to George III ^[15] According to the mission, between 1800 and 1832, 21,200

books were printed in 40 languages. It was printed between 1800-34 books that were published in 50 different languages, of which 36 were translated by Carey ^[16]. Carey published the English translation of the Ramayana, „The Ramayana of Valmiki in the original Sanskrit with a prose translation and explanatory notes in 1806 which evoked a response not only among educated Europeans but also among students. The printing press was damaged in a devastating fire on March 11, 1812, and about Rs 70,000 worth of property was lost. According to Carey’s letter to Fuller dated March 25, 1812, Ward was injured in the fire, and although the factory was damaged, some could be recovered, but Sikh, Sanskrit, Telangana, Karnataka Assamese Bibles were destroyed ^[17]. Carey set in a treadmill which was first in India^[18]. Many other books were published from the mission press ^[19]. In this way, the language and literature of the colonial society Serampore were enriched through ‘printing culture’, which helped to introduce the vision of the native society to the educated society. A huge number of printed publications helped in the refinement and development of the language, as well as linguistically divided the society. Besides English, Carey was fluent in Bengali, Sanskrit, & Hindi. It was from this source that Carey was connected to Fort William College. He became a teacher of Bengali and Sanskrit at the college for a salary of 700 and later became a professor at a salary of 1800. As a result, Carey’s activities created a beautiful link between Serampore and Kolkata^[20]. Also, the first Bengali newspaper, Samachar Darpan, and the first Bengali monthly, Dighdarshan, were published from Serampore in 1818 under the initiative of Carey and edited by Marshman. With the gradual increase in the publication of the mission, the number of readers (Bangla) also increased, especially after the publication of Samachar Darpan^[21]. Carey’s contribution in religion:

Carey helped to unfold Christianity in Serampore. He converted many people without using force [22] A letter to Dr. Ryland dated 15 June 1801, states that Carey converted five Hindus. Among them were Krishnapal, Gokul ^[23], Krishnaprasad. In 1802, Krishnaprasad married Anandamayi, the daughter of Shudra Krishnapal, on the initiative of Carey. By 1804, the number of converted Brahmins stood at 48^[24]. After 1820, some local intellectuals tried to protect Hinduism, & Raja Rammohan Roy started this effort through their writings and newspapers. He tried to incorporate Christianity into the monotheistic Hindu religion through his writings ^[25]. In those days, the mission helped all the natives with money and shelter who were interested in converting. Lord Minto noticed that most of the natives came forward to convert because of the mission press job. Due to this, the Mission Press and Paper Mill authorities got a large number of employees. Most of the converts were from lower castes such as butchers, laundresses, carpenters, carpenters, and especially Muslim beggars. But no force was required ^[26]. The reason for not forcibly converting may be that if forced, missionaries may lose their support, in addition, the contribution of the native people to the development of the Serampore Mission Press was known by Carey. He embraced this duality of support on the one hand and propaganda on the other.

Spread of education & Carey:

On the 1st of June 1800 Carey with the help of other missionaries opened at Serampore a vernacular school for Indian boys which soon numbered 40 pupils. The first Sunday

school in India was opened at Serampore in 1803. The Serampore missionaries also established schools for European and Anglo-Indian children at Serampore and Calcutta. By 1817 forty-five schools for Indian children were established in a circle of about twenty miles around Serampore at the earnest request of the inhabitants. In these schools, two thousand children received the elements of knowledge in their own vernacular ^[27]. With the objective to teach science & art to all irrespective of race and religion and to spread Christianity Carey, Marshman, & Ward proposed the establishment of a college on July 15, 1817, it was called “college for the instruction of Asiatic, Christian, and European science” ^[28]. Later the college was named Serampore College & the Danish king Frederick.VI granted the college to give degree on 23 February 1827. John Mack, a famous chemistry professor at Serampore College, often gave lectures. Not only students but also contemporary intellectuals from Serampore, Barrackpore, & Calcutta used to come across to listen to such lectures by boat and were amazed by the variety of experiments ^[29].

Social Reforms:

In a letter to Ryland in 1799, Carey described the practice of chastity in the village of Noya Serai and spoke out against it. In 1803, Carey drew the government’s attention to the fact that 275 people had committed sati. Although the law was passed in 1812, the practice of chastity was not stopped yet ^[30]. In 1815, Raja Rammohan Roy sat down for talks with the missionaries of Serampore to stop the practice of Sati. At the instigation of Carey, Mrityunjaya Vidyalankar argued at the behest of the government that the practice of chastity was not scriptural at all ^[31]. Finally, after the law was passed in 1829, it was sent to Carey for Bengali translation ^[32].

Environment & Carey:

Nature lover Carey edited Flora India with 3200 species of trees with the help of Roskberg ^[33]. In 1819, he planted a garden on 5 acres of land in Serampore with 427 species of trees, there was a tree named Cary Hebacera. He published, Flora Indicia in 1820 from the Mission’s printing press. In the same year, he proposed to form an, Agricultural and Historical Society of India in the mission room ^[34].

Carey: A true lover of Hindu culture

Carey’s character will be clearer if we compare him with some contemporary civilized and educated English personalities. Although Christian missionaries’ views on India are generally similar to those of the Evangelists, Carey was a little different. Evangelists call Indian culture static or semi-barbaric. Charles Grant and John Shore believed in this doctrine. To change the „hideous state of Indian society, Grant spoke of observation, Western education, and Christianity ^[35]. But Carey did not condemn Indian or Hindu culture, what he wanted was an educated Indian society free of superstitions. From this point of view, imperialist James Mill was the complete opposite. Mill, a disciple of the utilitarian Bentham, considered Indian civilization to be static and degraded. According to him, only the British can free Indian

culture from this situation. He said that Muslim rule was better than Hindu rule, and British rule though not to be praised in unqualified terms was better than either ^[36]. Even Derozio, who was one of the leaders of the Bengal Renaissance, had a very radical and negative attitude towards Hinduism ^[37]. In fact, Carey did not strain the traditional relationship between the ruler and the exploiters when he came to India. In such a country of many god & goddess, William Carey was a missionary cum social reformer. He was a friend, philosopher & guide of the people of Bengal. Carey saw India not as a foreign country to be exploited but as the land of his heavenly father to be loved and protected. He liked to control and impress, intimidation was against his nature. He did not reject the worship of God as mysticism He preferred literature and culture instead of rejecting it as Maya ^[38].

Conclusion:

Carey's goal was to preach the religion and show the way to light for those who follow him. Rising from the ordinary level, he gained tremendous popularity with his talent. Before he died at Serampore on June 9, 1834, he wrote the last will and testament in his memoirs, which was later published as 'Thoughts of Discussion' ^[39]. Charles Metacafe mourned on Carey's death ^[40]. According to Marshman, Carey's extraordinary devotion to philanthropic work over 40 years has glorified his character. The reasons for Carey's excellence are documented by Marshman. Carey was very active in every charity, and his views were important as he was one of the oldest philanthropists in Bengal ^[41]. Carey's letter to Ryland on December 10, 1811, revealed his humanitarianism & self-sacrifice ^[42]. Carey was a missionary, he was not a theorist, and he devoted his life to applying the truth of God in real life. Carey felt that the monarchy needed to be abolished. He was called a faithful witness, whose goal was to „seek all the system of doctrines in the world of God ^[43]. He has been also called as „1st cultural Anthropologist of India ^[44]. Besides missionary activities, his revolutionary work not only transformed the lives of people but also their culture & practice. He combined the East and the West by translating the Gospel into the vernacular languages & the Ramayana into English, his Mission Press revolutionized the printing industry in Bengal as well as in India. In the next half-century, the printing press of Serampore won the driver's seat in Southeast Asia & the number of local readers also increased. And through this link in 1837 the press & the type foundry were removed to Calcutta to be combined with the Baptist Mission Press started in 1818 by Eustace Carey ^[45]. He established Serampore College and introduced modern scientific western education irrespective of caste or religion. He won the hearts of 3 million Bengalis by publishing various magazines in the Bengali language. He spread primary as well as higher education among the Bengalis especially Hindus. But all these constructive activities were not only the cause of disagreement between the native masses and the missionaries but also among the native masses. Although he was disliked by many European and indigenous elites for his caste free thinking, he didn't stop his activities. Carey's activities centered on Serampore had a profound effect on the cultural context of the Bengal Renaissance.

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16. Translation of the Bible (made and edited by Dr. Carey at Serampore)

First Published on

First Published on	
1801	Bengali New Testament old Testament in 1802 – 09
1811	Oriya New Testament old Testament in 1819
1824	Magdhi New Testament only
1815 – 19	Assamese New Testament old Testament in 1832
1824	Khari
1814 – 24	Manipoori
1808	Sanskrit New Testament old Testament in 1811 – 18
1809 – 11	Hindi New Testament old Testament in 1813 – 18

1815 – 22	Kanauji New Testament old only
1820	Khosali Gospel of Mathew only
1822	Oodeypoori New Testament only
1815	Jeypoori New Testament only
1821	Bhugeli New Testament only
1821	Marwari New Testament only
1822	Haraoti New Testament only
1823	Bikaneri New Testament only
1823	Oojeine New Testament only
1824	Bhatti New Testament only
1832	Palpa New Testament only
1826	Kumaoni New Testament only
1832	Gurhwali New Testament only
1821	Nepaleses New Testament only
1811	Marathi New Testament and old Testament in 1820
1820	Gujrathi New Testament only
1819	Konkan New Testament pentateach in 1821
1815	Punjabi New Testament pentateach and historical books - 1822
1819	Multani New Testament pentateach and historical books - 1822
1825	Sindhi Gospet of Mathew

1820	Kashmeeri new test & old test.
1820 –26	Dogri New Testament only
1819	Purhtoo New test old Test historical books
1819	Baloochi New Test and three Gospels
1818	Telugoo New Test and entateuch in 1820
1822	Kanarese New Test only, Maldivian 4 Gospels.

Edited and Printed only by Carey

Persian, Hindostani, Malayalam, Burmese, Singhalese Chinese (Dr. Marshman), Javanese, Malay-Mathews Gospel New Testament: 1st edition – 2nd edition – 1806 3rd edition – 1811 4th edition – 1816 (5000 copies) 8th edition – 1832

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- were called Firingi (see George Ella „*William Carey Using God’s Mean to convert the people of India*’, Thomas Schirmacher(ed)- *William Carey: Theologian, Linguist, Social Reformer*, Eugene Oregon,wipf & stock,2018)
23. When Gokul died, his coffin was carried by a converted Brahmin named Bhyrub and a Muslim named Peeru, beside Felix and Marshman (see George Ella „*William Carey Using God’s Mean to convert the people of India*’, Thomas Schirmacher(ed)- *William Carey: Theologian, Linguist, Social Reformer*, Eugene Oregon,wipf & stock,2018)
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Published by
The Registrar, Raiganj University, P.O-Raiganj, District – Uttar Dinajpur,
West Bengal, India, PIN – 733134