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1. P.J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, The Cambridge History of India,* (Cambridge 1987), p. 77.

2. Willem Van Schendel, 'Economy of the Working Classes'. Sirajul Islam (ed.), *History of Bangladesh 1704-1971*, Vol. II, (Economic History), (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh 1992), pp. 542-99.

3. W.H. Morris-Jones, "Pakistan Post-Mortem and the Roots of Bangladesh", *Political Quarterly,* Vol. 18 (April-June), 1972, pp. 187-200.

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THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BANGLADESH
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DISPLAY AND REPRESENTATION OF OBJECTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SCULPTURES AT MAHASTHANGARH SITE MUSEUM, BOGURA

Maliha Nargis Ahmed[*] and Nurul Kabir[**]

Abstract

Mahasthangarh, the ancient Pundranagara is located in Bogura district of Bangladesh. By far it is one of the earliest urban settlements of Bangladesh being discovered and excavated. The site museum of Mahasthangarh was established almost after three decades since its excavation was done. At present the small hall room type museum houses a good number of Hindu and Buddhist sculptures (Stone, bronze and terracotta) which were collected from numerous parts of Varendra region (region where the site was discovered) through different attempts of excavation and as well as exploration. Ideally a site museum contains materials directly related to specific site and its surroundings which refers at current case to the Mahasthangarh citadel and its connecting sites. But this aspect was not followed as part of salvage archaeology and budget constraints resulting museum authority to comprise with the authenticity and integrity of the museum's nature. So major collection of this site museum is sculptures found, discovered or excavated not from the site only but the Varendra region ranging the time frame from Sunga to Sena period. The museum representing the sculptures as form of art object and aestheticism, was prioritized while the display was designed. The concept of musealization (contextualization) was never considered during planning and exhibiting the display. Visitors often may get confused while viewing the museum objects on what is from Mahasthangarh site area and what is from the neighboring districts of Bogura and how these objects are chronologically or culturally related with each other. Current researchers conducted museum visit in person to identify different categories of sculptures in terms of chronology, material and religious creed (mainly Brahmanical and Buddhist). Identification and observations drawn on this process provides logic to the necessity of rearranging the display of sculptures within a temporal and thematic framework to highlight the stylistic evolution of sculptural art. Thus this paper trys to offer a new modernist approach in museum display at Mahasthangarh site museum of Bogura.

Key words: Pundranagara, Site Museum, Display Contextualization, Sculptures, Temporal, Thematic

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Introduction

Mahasthangarh, one of the early historic sites of Bangladesh, exhibits the cultural phases of human settlement since the 4th century BCE. Cultural materials of the site (artefacts) collected through archaeological exploration, excavation and chance finds are preserved and displayed in this site museum. Mode of representation of objects is the final outcome of a museum gallery which depends on the methodology and planning of display design and approach. Like any other site museums of Bangladesh, Mahasthangarh museum has rich collection of stone and bronze sculptures of different religious creeds, cults and period. These exhibits are both excavated and chance find sculptures in sculpted panels, walled glass showcases along within open spaces of gallery and outside garden. The site museum, by its nature would provide information to museum visitors on this particular area of Mahasthangarh. This requires contextualization of objects discovered at the site to frame the display accordingly. The museum is lacking this perspective under current investigation. Sculptures exhibited as art objects provides inadequate information in text panel along with improper theme and chronology. This paper highlights these issues followed by propositions regarding an interactive display on certain themes to be contributing more effectively in knowledge sharing among the visitors.

Discovery of Mahasthangarh and its ancestry

Mahasthangarh – the ancient Pundranagara, is by far one of the earliest urban settlements of Bangladesh. The site and its citadel is located over the Barind tract, at the bank of river Korotoya. The ruins of Mahasthangarh was first recorded by Francis Buchanan Hamilton in 1808, later C.J.O' Donnell, E.V. Westmacott, Henry Beveridge. Cunningham described about the ancient city of Pundranagara. Alexander Cunningham first identified Mahasthangarh with ancient Pundranagara based on the account of Hieun Tsang. He visited the site in 1889. According to his statement, Hieun Tsang visited this 'Ponno-Fa-Ton-Na' or Pundravardhana during 639-645 CE in different Buddhist monasteries along with a particular monastery called 'Po-shi-po' (Bhasu vihara) located near (4 miles to the west of the city) the citadel area. According to his account around 700 Buddhist monks studied Mahayana philosophy in monasteries of Bhasu vihara. There, Hieun Tsang saw a memorial stupa which was sponsored by Emperor Asoka. The stupa was on the site where Buddha had explained his law to Devas. Near there Tsang saw a spot where the last four Buddhas had taken exercise and rested. He also mentioned about the traces of their (four Buddhas) foot

marks - were still to be seen.[1] Furthermore he mentioned about a nearby temple containing a statue of Avolokiteshvara which indicates the development of Vajrayana Philosophy after Mahayana phase in the region. The site Mahasthangarh and its vicinity show a continuity of human settlement for a long period of time which is clearly evident from the material culture discovered and excavated. Both Brahmanical and Buddhist religions had a dominant presence in this site till the advent of Islam. Gradually the territory came under Muslim supremacy (Sultanate and Mughal) though Hindu legacy continued its journey in the region simultaneously.

The origin of the name Pundra and Mahasthan

According to the account of Purana, the origin of the place's name was *Pundra*. Sudeshna, the queen of Asura king Bali begot 5 illegitimate sons from saint Dirghatama who were not allowed to legally inherit the Kingdom of Bali. As a result they came to East and established 5 separate kingdoms (Anga, Banga, Kalinga, Shumma and Pundra). Patanjali, the great commentator of Panini; mentioned about this in his *Mahabhasya*. In Ramayana, it is stated that people of East (Pundra and Banga) used to participate into intimate political relations with high born aristocrats of Ayodhya. According to Mahabharata, Karna, Krishna and Bhima undertook an eastern expedition against Pundraka and Vasudeva; the lord of the Pundra was eventually defeated and killed.

The name Mahasthan literally means great place, however it is also believed that the correct name of the place is Mahasnan- a great bathing place. However; the name Mahasthangarh first occurred in a *Sanad* dated 1685CE conferring the settlement of the land, comprised within the bend of the river together with its income, on a certain person for the service of the shrine of 'Mir Syed Sultan Mahmud Mahishawar. Some local Muslim termed the placed as *Mastangarh* which is associated with name of Majnu Shah Mastana Burhana, the fakir leader of Bengal. The Fakir Majnu Shah had his seat from 1763 to 1786 CE.

The discovery of a Sanskrit poetry book called 'Korotoya Mahattayam' written by pandit Porshuram further corroborated Cunningham's identification of Mahasthangarh as Pundranagara. In this book the place Mahasthan and Pundranagara were identified as the same place. This place has also been stated as the permanent abode of Hindu God Vishnu.

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1   Alexander Cunningham. (Reprint) *A Tour in Bihar and Bengal in 1879-1880 from Patna to Sonargaon Archaeological Survey of India Report*, Vol. XV, Rahul Publishing House, Delhi, 1994, pp.102-104

Historical lineage of Mahasthangarh in relation to the sites

The site Mahasthangarh exhibits long chronology of human habitation of almost seventeen hundred years. Both literary texts (Vedic Buddhist and Jaina) and material cultural evidence like building structures and artifacts revealed in excavation, clearly shows that human settlement developed in this region known as Pundra (encompassing *Varendri Mandala* along with those of *Anga*, *Banga*, *Kalinga*) and *Shumma* (Rarha/Radha) comprised the extreme outer belt of *Aryavarta* .

The sudden discovery of a limestone slab in 1931 by a farmer[2] bearing six lines in Prakrit Brahmi script is the first material evidence to identify the place as Pundranagara. The text appears to be a royal order of Magadha, issued during the reign of the Mauryan dynasty. It dates the antiquity of Mahasthangarh to 3[rd]century BCE.[3] Later discovery of yellowish bricks, semicircular ring stone, bronze mirror NBPW (Northern Black Polished Ware) Rouletted Ware, Sunga Terracotta figurines (Panchchura Yakshi) tiles, a seal of typical Gupta style and structural remains of Govinda Bhita and Bairagir Bhita clearly illustrate that Mahasthangarh was an important urban centre starting from Muaryan period till Late Gupta period. After the Fall of Gupta Empire, a feudal King of the former empire rose in the political power of Gaur and then the centre moved to Karnasubarna (Kansona) of present day Murshidabad. However, there are literary evidences that Bhasu vihara was still very prominent during post Gupta period. Yuang Chwang visited Bengal shortly after death of Shasanka and he mentioned about the existence of four kingdoms in Bengal: *Pundravardhana*, *Karna-Suvarna*, *Samatata*, and *Tamralipti*

Rampart wall, walls of Bairagi Bhita, a large pillared hall in the mazar area indicates the evidence of Pala-Sena period. In this instance, mention may be made of the site, Khodar Pathor Bhita near the mazar area was a Buddhist temple probably dedicated to Dhyani Buddha Akshobhyo[4].

The exposed top layer of Man Kalir Kundo Dhap exhibits the existence of a Sultanate mosque. The Mazar (Mausoleum) of Shah Sultan Mahishawar Balkhi and the single domed mosque of Farrukshiyar (1718) indicate the Mughal occupation in this area. The stones of a Hindu temple were reused in the tomb structure of Shah Sultan

2   কাজী মোহাম্মদ মিছের (দ্বিতীয় প্রকাশ), *বগুড়ার ইতিকাহিনী বৃহত্তর বগুড়া জেলার ইতিহাস*, গতিধারা, বাংলাবাজার ঢাকা, ২০১৩, পৃ. ২৪৩

3   Nazimuddin Ahmed (Reprint) (Third Edition), *Mahasthan*, Department of Archaeology & Museums Ministry of Sports & Culture Government of Bangladesh, 1981, p.5

4   Jena Francois Salles, Mahasthangarh, in Abdul Momin Chowdhury and Ranbir Chakravarti (eds.), *History of Bangladesh Early Bengal in Regional Perspectives up to C.1200 CE,* Vol.1, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 2018, p. 236

Mahishawar. One of the stones depicts a word called 'Narsimha Dasyasho' attests the tomb with its belonging to Hindu community. Several Sultanate coins (Iliyas Shahi and Later Iliyas Shahi) were discovered from Govind Bhita. The building walls of Parshuram's palace bear the evidence of small bricks with lime *surki* plaster and fine lime wash method showing interim building technology blended with ancient and medieval period. Two coins of British East India Company were also discovered from this site.

Exploration and Excavation work

Systematic archaeological excavation of Mahasthangarh was first started in 1928–29 under the guidance of K.N. Dikshit of the Archaeological Survey of India. The areas around Jahajghata, Munir Ghon and Bairagir Bhita were explored. The preliminary report of the excavation of Mahasthan was first published in the annual reports of ASI in 1928-1929 CE. During 1936 and 1937 T.N. Ramachandran continued Dikshit's incomplete excavations in Govinda Bhita. In the same year N.G. Majumdar conducted excavation at Gokul Medh. Since 1910 Varendra Research Society was involved in conducting exploratory survey of the buried mounds in Barind tract. Prabhash Chandra Sen, a lawyer of Bogura district explored a large number of mounds and published report with a map on behalf of Varendra Research Society (Mahasthan and its environs A Monograph). After the partition of 1947, Department of Archaeology, East Pakistan, did some sporadic excavations and some brief reports were published in Pakistan Archaeology and Pakistan Quarterly. Excavation was carried out in 1960 around the Mazar, Parasuramer Prasad, Mankalir kunda Dhap, Jiat Kunda and in a part of the northern rampart. In the next phase, excavation was carried out sporadically in parts of the east and north ramparts. The excavation work of 1960-1961, yielded a large number of punch-marked coins and cast copper coins and profuse amount of Northern black Pottery ware (200 BCE to 400BCE).

After the birth of Bangladesh in 1971, Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh conducted an archaeological survey work in greater Bogura district. The report of this extensive survey was published in 1986. In the period 1992–98, excavation was conducted in the area lying between Bairagir Bhita and the gateway which was exposed in 1991 under a Bangla-Franco joint venture - currently at second phase focusing excavations around the mazar in the western side of the citadel. An interim report (1993-1996) was published in 2001. Another exploration work was conducted in Bogura and along with other districts of Bangladesh by A.K.M. Zakaria on his private initiative. Annual excavations are being conducted by Department of Archaeology, GOB in Mahasthangarh citadel area, Bhasu vihara and Bairagir Bhita.

Antiquities

Excavation work at different sites of Mahasthangarh yielded different types of antiquities like punch marked and cast copper coins (circular and oblong in shape, these coins bear symbols on either side such as swastika, wheel, cross deer, elephant, bull, taurine and plant design within a railing). A hoard of silver punch marked coins were brought to light in the excavation of 1995 (Bangladesh France joint excavation). The coins are assigned to Mauryan period (at the end of 400 BCE and beginning of 300 BCE), most of the coins are rectangular or square and a few are roundish in shape[5].

Terracotta plaques (most plaques depict a female figurine with an elaborate head dress, bedecked richly with ornaments and usually had one hand akimbo and the other hand holding her girdle or a stalk of flower) terracotta balls, terracotta sculptures and head are also found in variety. Different types of seals are collected (circular and flat in shape bearing 3 stalks of a wheat plant united at the lower end in low relief which is enclosed by an inscription with 22 letters on the margin) from the site – mostly assigned to Gupta period.

A large number of potteries were excavated from the site, mostly of grey and red in color with embossed and stamped with beautiful designs in addition with NBPW variety, decorated ware and domestic ware.

Different types of beads, semi-precious stones (agate, cornelian, lapis lazuli, marble crystal, glass, chalcedony, onyx, white opal) metal objects (copper rings, bangles, antimony rods, copper medallions, iron spearhead, knife, razor, a bird shaped kohl container, nails, a collection of octo-alloy bangles and an ornamental gold amulet were also discovered in excavation.

A small sand stone image of Ganesha, a mutilated image of Narsimha, most probably a sand stone image of Buddha (executed in a crude manner), a fragmentary black stone Vishnupatta, several fragments of blue schist ring stone, depicting in panelled relief various motif such as couchant deer, tiger and elephant alternated by pitchers issuing festooned scroll or lotus design interspersed with flying *Gandharava* figures; jeweller's moulds for ornaments, an image of Nandi in black stone, fragment of a black stone statue depicting a stupa, fragmented piece of a red sand stone ring-stone were also found from the site.

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5   Shafiqul Alam, Jean Francoise Salles (ed.), *France-Bangladesh Joint Venture Excavations at Mahasthangarh First Interim Report* 1993-1999. Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of the Peoples of Bangladesh, 2001, pp. 237-239

Most of the antiquities yielded in earlier excavations were taken to Indian Museum and Ashutosh Museum of Indian Art, Kolkata; a few pieces were housed in Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. After the museum was established some similar antiquities were placed in display gallery. Several stone sculptures of Buddhist and Brahmanical creed were putted in for display. A greyish sand stone sculpture of Buddha discovered from Bhasu vihara is now showcased in the museum gallery. Terracotta sculptures and plaques from Mangal kot - a nearby site of Mahasthangarh, can also be seen in the museum. The majority part of the display gallery is dominated by life size stone sculptures of both Buddhist and Brahmanical doctrine and these were discovered from different places of Bogura, Joypurhat, Naogaon and Rajshahi.

The Museum

The site museum of Mahasthangarh (fig.2a, 2b) is located on the north eastern part of citadel area (fig.1), almost opposite to an important site called the Govinda vita. The idea of setting up a site museum was to preserve the antiquities yielded in excavation and to arrange display for local people and all parts of the country. Another important aspect in this regard was to prevent the transfer of antiquities to the then Dhaka Museum or Varendra Research Museum. It is already mentioned that in earlier time antiquities which were revealed in excavation at Mahasthangarh and its neighbouring sites were transferred to Indian Museum, Kolkata, Ashutosh Museum of Indian Art, Kolkata and Varendra Research Museum Rajshahi.

The museum building at present consists of a rectangular hall with 42 wall mounted glass showcases on both sides. It was officially opened in 1967. Based on the original ground plan it is clear that initially the museum had 28 showcases within the oblong hall [with proposed extension based on ground plan approved in 1965] [(54ft x 22ft), see ground plan, Plan 1.1)], in later phase the hall room was extended on north-south axis and the building got its present form. The oblong hall can be entered through a projected square porch located at the middle of the building on east side, the front part of the wall is a solid structure, the top centre of the wall bears the replica of a sealing (fig.3g) which was discovered from excavation at Mahasthangarh area. Museum visitors can enter from both sideways of the porch. Just opposite to the entrance of the hallway another opening can be seen on the west wall which is a verandah. At present the opening is not in use and the door is covered with a curtain and an exhibit [(a wooden carved door collected from Belamla, Jaypurhat) (fig.6)]. Just beside the door (northern direction) two black stone sculptures of Vishnu (fig.9a, 9b) can be seen mounted on the wall. The label only states the word Vishnu. No information about its provenance and date can be found in text panel.

Display pattern of objects

When visitors enter the hall room they come across with a red sand stone sculpture called double sided standing Buddha (fig.7, 8) icon. It was discovered from Bara Tangra er Dhap Namuja, Bogura. The side of the icon facing the east entrance is more adorned and accompanied by two standing Buddhas, the entire sculpture has no other decoration or attending figures. The central figure is standing in slightly *abhanga* mudra, showing *varada mudra* in the right hand and holding his robe in his left hand. The two accompanying Buddhas are depicted on the shoulder of the central figure. They are standing on a *padma*. The back slab ends in round arch; the lower most part of the image is shorn off. The image seems to depict the miracle of Sravasti[6]. The other side of the icon facing west wall is an image of Buddha, he is headless with right arm and feet missing and his left arm holding the robe. This side of sculpture was carved in 8th/9th century CE. The stela was broken later and the head was lost, then the slab was reused for executing the other sculpture.

Just beside the double-sided Buddha, a large storage jar is installed (fig.4) (the exact find spot is not mentioned in text panel) and just beside the jar the shaft of a stone pillar (fig.5) is installed on a low platform.

There are some freestanding life size sculptures on north and south wall of the gallery. On the north wall black stone sculptures of Subharmanya (Kartikeya and Mahasena), Avolokiteshvara and Ambika /Sasthi (fig.11a, 11b, and 11c) are being displayed. (Regarding the identification of the female icon, it must be mentioned that this sculpture was identified as Ambika. Later Enamul Haque identified it as Sashthi). All these sculptures are placed on concrete platform of tri-ratha design. On the south wall, sandstone sculpture of Hara Gauri from Bogura 9th century CE, Vishnu from Khtelal, Bogura 12th century CE, and Dattatreya 10th century CE Bogura is placed for display.

The garden outside the museum building exhibits some fragmented sculptures, mention may be made of a fragmented colossal image of Dhyani Buddha (fig.3d), and fragmented parts of building structures (fig.3f,3h) like lintel beams (fig3b), stone pillars with carved images (fig.3c), doorways (fig.3e) etc.

The wall mounted showcases on west and east wall are divided into two parts; the upper part covered with glass is used for exhibition and the lower part covered with wooden shutter is used for storage purpose. Above the showcase level, ventilators

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6   Enamul Haque and Albert J. Gail (eds.), *Sculptures in Bangladesh An inventory of Select Hindu Buddhist and Jain Stone and Bronze Images in Museums and Collections of Bangladesh (up to 13th Century)*. ICSBA (International Centre for the Study of Bengal Art), Dhaka, 2008, p. 247

(fixed and movable) are placed near to ceiling. The dado of the north and south wall has small windows with grills and louvers to control air and natural light within the hall. The entire display is aided with artificial light.

The showcases are displayed with maps and ground plans of several archaeological sites of Mahasthangarh citadel (Jahajghata, Bairgir Bhita, the Mazar, Khodar Pathor Bhita, Man Kalir Kundo Dhap, Porshurm's palace, Jiyat Kunda, etc), Bhasu vihara, Gokul Medh and Mangal Kot.

Blackstone, sandstone and terracotta sculptures, terracotta plaques of Mangal Kot, and Bhasu vihara (fig.60) got special attention in separate showcases.

Terracotta images (both male and female) of Sunga period discovered in excavation, (fig.46, 47, 48, 49), sherds of domestic wares and Northern Black Polished Ware (fig.58) were placed in different showcases. One particular showcase is dedicated to Paharpur Buddhist monastery which displays a photograph of the central temple, one of the stupas and some terracotta plaques. The text panel of the showcase contains brief information on Paharpur.

Miniature fragmented stone sculptures of Ganesha, Parvati, embraced figures (either Hara Gauri or Uma Maheshwara), standing deity, Bodhisattva (fig. 53a, 53b, 53c, 53d, 53e, 53f, 53g) and terracotta sculptures like Surya, terracotta heads (fig. 54a, 54b, 54c, 54d) are also displayed in a different showcase. This particular showcase does not offer any detailed information about the primary context of these images.

Among other objects, a glass showcase exhibits uninscribed cast copper coins in upper shelf whereas the lower right shelf exhibits Sunga terracotta plaques and lower left shelf exhibits fragmented sculpted images in terracotta. Most of the Sunga terracotta are female deity (Pancha Chuda Yakshinis or mother Goddess), female deity's head, a horse driven chariot (Chariot of Sun God)[7], a plaque depicting two persons involved in a conversation.

Among other specimens, ornamental clay ball dated from 8th-10th century CE, fragmented parts of ring stones (fig. 59), clay seal inscribing three stalks of wheat with a border of (twenty two) 22 Brahmi letters also found their place in display.

One glass showcase exhibits the sherds of NBPW (Northern Black Polished Ware) discovered during the excavation of Bangladesh-France joint team in the mid or late 90's. Some photographs and information about the site can also be seen on the back wall of the showcase (fig.55a, 55b). Another glass showcase is assigned to the finds

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7   Saifuddin Chowdhury, *Early Terracotta Figurines of Bangladesh*, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 2000, p.30

of Bangladesh France joint excavation. This showcase is adorned with Sunga terracotta plaques (mostly representing female deities), a ring stone, an earthen oven (fig.56), a terracotta pinnacle (fig.57). The showcase beside this, represents some terracotta objects like terracotta lotus (11th-12th century CE), terracotta image of Durga and a terracotta panel (9th-10th century CE).

Sculptures

The glass showcases mainly contain sculptures made out of black stone, sand stone, terracotta and bronze. The glass display was arranged based on their size and shapes rather than their religious identities (Brahmanical and Buddhism).

Sculptures exhibited in the gallery can be broadly categorized in several groups based on their timeline: (a) Sunga terracotta images from rampart area of Mahasthangarh (b) Gupta terracotta images from Mangal Kot (c) Post Gupta bronze sculptures of Bhasu vihara (d) stone sculptures of Pala Sena period and (e) sculptures of late mediaeval period. However these sculptures are not classified in display as mentioned above.

Among the Buddhist sculptures, mention may be made of black stone sculpture of standing Avolokiteshvara - 9th century CE (fig.11b) from Namuja, fragmented piece of Marichi - 11th century CE (fig. 42) from Mahadevpur, Jambhala - 9th century CE (fig.52) from Ullahpara Sirajganj, Bodhisattva - 9th-10th century CE (fig.40), Buddha in earth touching poses - 10th century CE (fig.39) from Khetlal Joypurhat, greyish sandstone standing Buddha, 7th century CE (fig.50) from Bhasu Vihara, sand stone Buddha - 6th-7th century CE (fig.41). Among bronze miniature sculptures from Bhasu vihara, mention may be made of standing image of Lokanatha, Avolokiteshvara, Dhyani Buddha Akshobhyo, Buddha in earth touching pose, Bodhishakti, female devotee etc. (fig.43,44,45).

Among black stone Brahmanical sculptures mention may be made of four armed Vishnu (Khetlal and Adam Dighi 12th century CE), two armed Surya (Naogaon 12th - 13th century CE (fig.20), Sherpur 12th century CE),Vishnu riding on Garuda [(Mahadevpur Naogaon 10th century CE) (fig.19)], Varaha Vishnu (10th century CE) Harihara [(Khetlal, Joypurhat 12th century CE) (fig.18)], Chaturmukha Sivalinga [(11th -12th century CE)(fig.35)] Sivalinga with Gauripatta [(Khtelal 18th century CE) (fig.19)], Sivalinga (18th century CE), Hara Gauri/ Uma Mahesvara [Bogura, 9th century CE, Adam Dighi, 11th century CE (fig. 12a), Khanjanpur, Joypurhat 12th century CE, Khetlal, Joypurhat12th century CE], Dattatreya [(Bogura 10th century CE) (fig.12c)], Sadyojata [(Khetlal, 11th-12th century CE)(fig.17)]. Ambika/Sasthi [(Khetlal, Joypurhat 11th century CE) (fig.11c)], Kanyakumari/ Chatusama? [(Tarash,

Sirajganj, 11th-12th century CE) (fig. 30)]. Narasimha Mahishamardini/Kokamukha Mahishamardini [(black stone Ullahpara, Sirajganj 10th-11th century CE) (fig.13)], Camunda [(Thalta Majhgram, Bogura, 10th-11th century CE) (fig.14)], Gauri [(12th century CE) (fig23)], Parvati/Lalita [(12th century CE) (fig.24)],Kaumari [(Govindaganj, Gaibandha 10th century CE) (fig. 28)], fragmented Kartikeya [(Mahadevpur, Nagaon) (fig.33)], Ganesha (11th-12th century CE), Dancing Ganesha [(Adam Dighi, 11th-12th century CE (Fig.22)], Pachbibi, Bogura 10th century CE), Subhramanya and Mahasena (Adam Dighi,10th century CE), Gaja Laksmi [(Namuja, Bogura 10th-11th century CE) (fig.25)], Saraswati [(Adam Dighi 10th-11th century CE) (fig.29)], Brahma [(Pachbibi, Adam Dighi, Naogaon 12th century CE) (fig.21)], Yogini Tara [(Khanjanpur, Jaypurhat) 5th-6th century CE (fig.27)], Manasa [(Adam Dighi, Mahadevpur) (11th-12th century CE)], Garuda (Pachbibi, 10th-11th century CE), Nandi (Mahadevpur, Balihar 18th century CE), Chamar bearer [(Ishwardi 9th-10th century CE)(fig.31)], incomplete Agni and Nairriti from Mahasthangarh 13th century CE.

Among other specimens, one Mahishamardini in terracotta medium [(Sherpur, Bogura 5th-6thcentury CE) (fig.15)], a miniature size temple most probably engraved with an image of Brahma [(Naogaon) (fig. 16)], unidentified six armed deity,[(Khetlal, Joypurhat 9th -10th century CE) (fig32)] NaniGopala, (Shibganj, 12th-13th century CE) (fig.36b), Benu Gopala Shibganj 12th-13th century CE) (fig. 36a), Ganesha in marble stone [Bogura (fig. 37)], Nandi in marble [(17th -18th century CE) (fig. 38)], several black stone Vishnupatta, fragmented Manasa (fig.26), Navagraha panel [(exhibiting Brihaspati, Sukra and Sani) (fig.34[8]] and Vidyadhara, Nandi etc. can be seen in the gallery showcases.

Observation and Proposed concept of display: Sculptures

The sculptures based on their sizes are accommodated in the galleries. Generally, life size sculptures like Avolokiteshwara, Subhramanya and Mahasena, Hara Gauri /Uma Maheswara, Ambika/ Sasthi, Dattatreya are displayed in open spaces of the gallery. Relatively smaller sculptures are kept in glass showcases on low platform. For example, three relatively smaller sculptures (two Nandis from Balihar and Mahadevpur of Naogaon and one Shivalinga from Khetlal, Jaypurhat) were placed in one glass showcase. These arrangements are prioritized only on the size or shape of the sculpture and ignore any sort of thematic or religious relationship among them.

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8   Enamul Haque and Albert J. Gail (eds.), *Sculptures in Bangladesh An inventory of Select Hindu Buddhist and Jain Stone and Bronze Images in Museums and Collections of Bangladesh (up to 13th Century*), ICSBA (International Centre for the Study of Bengal Art), Dhaka, 2008, pp. 247-266

All three sculptures are assigned to 18th century CE and refer to Shaiva cult, which was entirely ignored in this display. Therefore, it (the display) fails to provide knowledge and information to visitors. The display designer did not attempt to classify the Brahmanical sculptures in terms of their religious sects like Vaisnava, Shaiva, Saura, Shakto and Ganpatya cult. It is already an established fact that Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shakto cult predominated in this part of Bengal in early historic period, therefore one can find the abundance of Vishnu, Saiva, Mahishamardini variety more than any other sculptures. The museum could add this sort of texts in the text panel.

Another interesting example is the fragmented piece of Marichi's sculpture (fig.42), if a photograph and sketch drawing of the image of Marichi would accompany the text panel, museum visitors would get a clear idea of the image. Also Marichi is a Buddhist deity of Vajrayana (Tantric Buddhism) pantheon and his function is to remove darkness. His parallel entity of Brahmanical deity is Surya. Inclusion of this sort of facts would make the display more interesting and communicative.

The fragmented image of Kartikeya (Mahadevpur, Naogaon) is also not very clear to the visitors. In this composition, the mount of the God (peacock) is intact, by which experts recognized it to be the image of God Kartikeya riding on his mount, peacock. However for the general visitors, it is very difficult to understand or identify that God Kartikeya riding on his mount. It is already mentioned that a temple dedicated to Kartikeya was detected with a torso of a red sandstone image of Kartikeya at a site called Skandher Dhap near Mahasthangarh. The museum does not exhibit any information on these issues. Generally a temple dedicated to Lord Kartikeya rarely found in Bengal. In addition, the discovery of Kartikeya image in Naogaon and the composition of Subhramanya and Mahasena from AdamDighi, Bogura indicate the dominance of Saiva cult in this region. This information could have added valuable understandings for the visitors thought regarding cultural history of Bengal.

Same is the case for the fragmented piece of Navagraha panel, only image of Brihaspati, Sani and Sukra can be seen in a fragmented piece. If museum authority would put up a sketch of the entire composition and describe the role of these Grahas (nine planets) as subordinate deities, it would add a new dimension in the display.

Bronze images discovered from Bhasu vihara are displayed in a glass showcase but unfortunately the sculptures are so corroded that the body posture, attitude, attire and attributes are not very clear with bear eyes. Based on the excavation report of 1979, it is known that 42 bronze images and many fragments [9] were discovered in the

excavation of Bhasu Bihar in 1973-74 seasons. All these images (Buddha, Dhyani Buddha Akshobhyo, Bodhisattva Lokeshvara, Loknatha, Avolokiteshvara, Bodhishakti Tara, female devotee etc.) were discovered inside the monastic area and most of them were found in monastery cells. Based on the find spots of these images, it has been ascertained that these images were used by resident monks for private worship (the height of the sculptures varies from 2.5", 3", 3.5", 4.5", 7.5")[10]. The elongated and slim body of the Dhyani Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Bodhishakti and more developed features has assigned these sculptures to a later date than those of Mainamati miniature bronze sculptures. If the display designer would present replica or photographs of Mainamati and Jhewari bronze images with the Bhasu vihara specimens, the visitor would be able to understand the continuity of tradition of miniature bronze sculpture industry of southeast Bengal and North west Bengal.

Religious and Iconographic features should be incorporated in the text panels accompanying some rare sculptures like Gaja Lakshmi, Dattatreya, Sutonuka[11], Ambika/ Sashthi, Kanyakumari/Chatusama, Kaumari, Yogini Tara, Agni and Nairiti. Added texts would be helpful for museum visitors and researchers. The frequency of these varieties is relatively rare in the country.

Among the Sunga terracotta images the most common and popular subject was the Panchachuda Yakshini or mother Goddess. In the composition, the image is shown wearing five hair pins in the shape of five miniature weapons i.e., ankusa, vajra, trisula, dhavaja and parasu. Similar types of hairpins were also found on the head of famous terracotta Yakshini of Tamluk in West Bengal[12]. Other than Yaksini figures, images of Surya, Laksmi on or with lotus, Vasudhara in terracotta were also discovered. It may be mentioned that Sunga dynasty did not have any administrative unit in Bengal like the Mauryan dynasty. Their power was consolidated in and around Magadha but the tradition of terracotta art found its way to Bengal. It is also noticed by scholars that the modellers of Sunga terracotta images of Mahasthangarh concentrated more on the central human figure rather than the decoration of the background and vacant place around the figure. They only decorated the rim or border of the image. On other hand, in case of terracotta images form Kausambi and Mathura the vacant place around the central figure was filled up with rosettes and full

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[10]   Nazimuddin Ahmed. *Bangladesh Archaeology 1979*, Vol.1, Superintendent, Bangladesh Government Press, Dhaka, 1979, pp. 49-57

[11]   মাহাবুব-উল আলম. 'বাংলাদেশের প্রাচীন ভাস্কর্য সম্ভারে নতুন সংযোজন দত্তাত্রেয় ও সুতনুকা', প্রত্নতত্ত্ব , খণ্ড ১৫, প্রত্নতত্ত্ব বিভাগ, জাহাঙ্গীর নগর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, সাভার, ঢাকা, ২০০৯, পৃ. ৪৬

12   Saifuddin Chowdhury, *Early Terracotta Figurines of Bangladesh,* Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 2000, p. 91

bloomed flower. In some cases the central figure is accompanied by other divine figures. A display portraying the comparative study and representation of the Sunga terracotta sculptures of Mahasthangarh and those found from Tamluk, Ahichhatra, Kausambi and Mathura would be really helpful as well as entertaining for the visitors. One can realize and understand how indigenous terracotta art and design evolved and changed while produced regionally. The adornment, dress, ornaments, weapon, hair arrangement of these icons manifest the culture of the society. These traits were also not highlighted in the display showcase. The importance of mother cult in the contemporary society was also ignored.

The fragmented parts of life size terracotta images discovered from Mangal Kot temple (the site known as Mangal Nather Dhap is located about one mile south west of Mahasthangarh Museum) exhibit the head, half bust, fragmented bust of male and female figure. These images assigned to Gupta period has a unique indigenous art form and they (both male and female) bear serpent hood over their head. The existence of serpent hood indicates these were probably the images of Demi Gods and Goddesses[13]. These images manifests the popularity of Naga cult in the region. Scholars termed these sculptures as "Kushana based Gupta art form" based on the execution style and modelling of the facial parts of the images. It would be beneficial for the museum visitors if iconographic features of this group are shown through sketch and drawings on the background wall of the showcase. These objects can be a good case study for the students of art and archaeology alongside with general visitors.

Regarding the discovery of these images, it should be mentioned that they were found piled up under the foundation wall of a small temple (ground plan is mounted on the wall of the glass showcase) of later phase. The way the terracotta images are displayed with the background of a ground plan of the temple may create confusion among the visitors, as the text panel does not mention anything on the timeline or chronology of the site. Thus both spatial and temporal context of the sculptures were overlooked.

The sculptures of Chamara bearer (Chamara Dharini) deserve special attention. Both this sculptures do not represent any divinities rather they are attending figures beside the main deity or sometimes depicted on the door seals, lintel beams of temple. However, museum visitors will not be able to distinguish the difference as no explanation was provided in the text panel.

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13   Saifuddin Chowdhury, *Ibid*., p.56

The function of the Dikpalas are also not clear in the display, moreover the incomplete statues of these sculptures (Agni and Nairiti) indicating the chisel marks on the rock exhibits how the sculptures were outlined, carved and finally scrubbed to create the polished effect of the entire composition.

It was noticed from the collection of the museum that life size stone sculptures were discovered from outskirts of Mahasthangarh citadel area, for example Adam Dighi, Pachbibi, Joypurhat, Kahaloo, Akkelpur - places can be regarded as the hinterland of Mahasthangarh citadel and Korotoya river. Stone sculptures mostly belonging to Late Gupta, Pala and Sena period were found from the hinterland of Mahasthangarh, whereas the smaller terracotta sculptures specially- Sunga and Gupta images were discovered from the citadel and other neighbouring religious establishments. It would be helpful if the provenance, frequency, find spots of these sculptures (spatial pattern) are documented in a map and displayed in a showcase of the gallery.

Concluding Remarks

Mahasthangarh being a site museum, in reality serves the purpose of a regional museum. In terms of the number of antiquities the display gallery is not large enough. That is why it is very difficult to create thematic display arrangements for the sculptures collected from different parts of Bogura district and yielded from excavation. The display designer simply placed the sculptures in a linear pattern, put up a text panel with some basic information about the object and did not take any attempt to relate these sculptures with the site itself. As a result, the objects do not disseminate detailed knowledge about the religious and cultural past of the locality. To the museum visitors' the sculptures are mere representation of art form of a particular period and dynasty. Religious, social and cultural aspects of these images were not taken under consideration in the display gallery. The definition and function of museums has changed over the course of time. Museums have now become a full-fledged learning centre for mass people. It is a parallel educational institution and display of the museum needs to be improvised, rather than being a cabinet of curiosity. The cabinets should be more interactive, communicative and informative for its visitors. Excavation at Mahasthangarh is still in progress and many mounds are yet to be uncovered but the type of sculptures the museum has in the display can be contextualized in relation to their primary context and one can get a bigger picture of these images other than being an object.
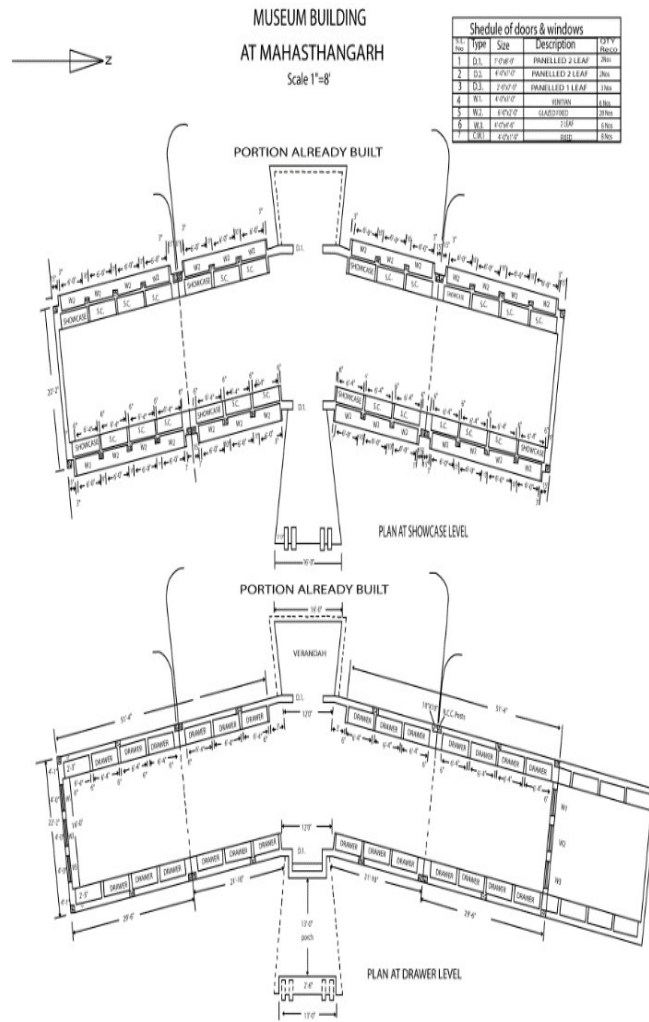
Plan 1.1 Ground Plan of Mahasthangarh Site Museum

Fig1: The plan of Mahasthangarh Citadel area
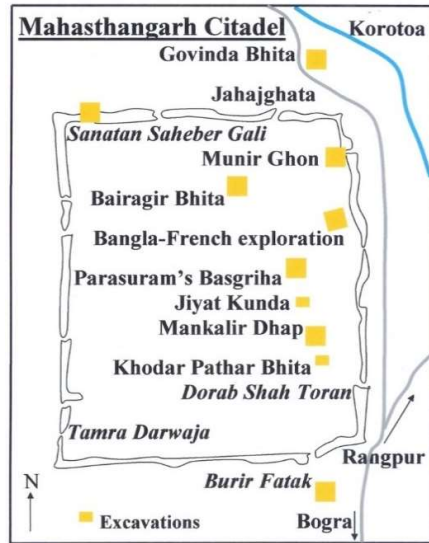
Fig2a: Exterior view of the Mahasthangarh Museum

Fig2b: Entrance of the Museum

Fig 3a: A stone Sivalinga

Fig 3b: Stone lintel beam

Fig 3c: Stone pillar with carved images

Fig 3d: Fragmented Dhyani Buddha

Fig 3e Stone doorway of 18th century

Fig 3f: Stone Objects in the garden area

Fig 3g: Replica of the sealing on outer wall of the building

Fig 5: The shaft of a pillar carved with an

Fig 7: Double sided Buddha, side facing the entrance (east) door of

Fig8: Double sided Buddha side facing the verandah

Fig 6: A carved wooden door placed against the entrance of the verandah on the west

Fig 9a: Vishnu sculpture mounted on wall

Fig 9b: Vishnu sculpture mounted on wall

Fig 10 a, 10b, 10 c General view of the gallery,
Mahasthangarh Museum

Fig 11a, 11b, 11c: Blackstone sculptures
of Subramanya& Mahasena,

Fig 12a, 12b, 12c: Sculptures of HaraGauri/ Uma Maheshvara, Vishnu and Dattatreya

Fig13: Black stone sculpture of Narsimha Mahishamardini / Kokamukha Mahishamardini

Fig 14: Blackstone sculpture of Chamunda

Fig 15: Terracotta sculpture of Mahishamardini

Fig 16: Miniature temple

Fig 17: Sadyojata label reads Mother and child does not represent the myth

Fig 18: Sculpture of Harihara

Fig 19: Sculpture of Vishnu on Garuda

Fig 20: Sculpture of Surya

Fig 21: Sculpture of Brahma

Fig 22: Sculpture of dancing Ganesa

Fig 23: Sculpture of Gauri

Fig 24: Sculpture of Parvati/ Lalita

Fig 25: Sculpture of GajaLaksmi

Fig 26: Fragmented sculpture of Manasa

Fig 27: Sculpture of Yogini Tara

Fig 28: Sculpture of
Kaumari

Fig 29: Sculpture
of Saraswati

Fig 30: Sculpture
of Kanyakumari

Fig31: Sculpture
of Chamara

Fig 32:
unidentified 6
armed deity

Fig 33:
fragmented
Karitkeya

Fig 34: Brihaspati,
Sukra,   Sani's
image is visible

Fig 35: Chaturmuha
SivaLinga

Fig 36a, 36b: Image of
BenuGopala and Nani Gopala
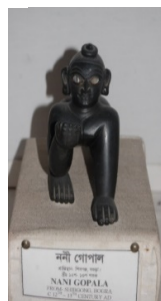
Fig 37: Image of Ganesha
marble stone

Fig 38: Image of
Nandi in marble
stone

Fig 39: Buddha in earth
touching pose

Fig 40: Sculpture
of Bodhisattva

Fig 41: Sculpture of sand
stone Buddha

Fig 42: Fragmented
sculpture of Marichi

Fig 43, 44, 45: Bronze sculptures of Loknatha and Buddha standing

Fig 46, 47 ,48, 49: Sunga Terracotta images revealed in excavation of Mahasthangarh

Fig 50: Greyish sandstone Buddha from Bhasu Bihar

Fig 51: Terracotta Image of Surya

Fig52: Sculpture of Jambhala

Fig 53 a, 53 b, 53 c, 53d, 53 e, 53 f, 53 g : Fragments of sculptures revealed in excavation at Mahasthangarh

Fig 54a, 54b, 54c, 54d, 54e: Terracotta sculptures of Mangal Kot, Mahasthangarh

Fig 55a. Glass showcase dedicated to find of Mahasthangarh excavation of Bangladesh and France team

Fig 56. Earthen oven

Fig 57 Terracotta Pinnacle

Fig 55b. Glass showcase dedicated to find of Mahasthangarh excavation of Bangladesh and France team

Fig 58: Sherd of NBPW

Fig 59: One red sandstone ring stone and several black stone ring

Fig 60: Glass showcase dedicated to objects of Bhasu Vihara and terracotta plaques

SOCIAL HISTORY OF CHOLERA AND DEVELOPMENT OF ORS IN BANGLADESH

Mohammad Bilal Hossain[*]

Abstract

The invention of oral rehydration solution (ORS) is one of the most significant triumphs of twentieth-century medicine history. Its extraordinary contribution to control mortality and morbidity associated with diarrhoea and cholera produced an excellent success story in the public health sector. The Bengal Delta was identified as the home of cholera, and so, the US experts established the Cholera Research Laboratory (CRL) in East Pakistan presently Bangladesh. By the efforts of the CRL, the successful trial of ORS was done in the late 1960s and early 1970s in Bangladesh, and thus it has been recognised as one of the most significant medical advancements in the century. The relatively simple technology of making ORS along with its social implementation technique was acknowledged to be the key behind its triumph. A detailed understanding of the social history of cholera and development of ORS thus might be beneficial to understand the historicity of cholera in Bangladesh and to identify the critical components behind the success stories of the trials of ORS, and that will pave the way of exploring the knowledge of public health.

Key words: cholera, social history, ORS, diarrhoea, Bangladesh, epidemic, pandemic

Introduction

The term 'cholera' and 'diarrhoea' have a social conception in Bangladesh. The social belief system of cholera and diarrhoea has been constructed based on the severity of disease and its fatality. Cholera has been defined as the most severe condition of passing watery stools and vomiting with fatal and spreading nature of the illness; diarrhoea has been identified as the fluid loss through bowels with different dimensions, even regular loose bowels are also considered as diarrhoea. Bangladeshi people are appalled to pronounce the word cholera due to a horrible experience in the past. This researcher interviewed 15 elderly males and females from different districts of Bangladesh where they shared their experiences about cholera epidemics of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s; it was identified as one of the most formidable and fatal diseases. After the invention of ORS in 1968, due to the

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intervention of government and some organisations like ICDDR,B and BRAC, the mortality due to cholera declined since the 1980s. For exploring the social history of cholera and ORS, scientists, physicians, interdisciplinary experts were interviewed. Whole research is based on in-depth interviews of both the experts and people who received the services. Also, archival source, primary and secondary sources were used to accomplish the research. It is a qualitative research with descriptive writing.

However, cholera was one of the most dreadful diseases in Bangladesh for thousand of years, but the naming was different in a diverse situation. A healthy human can suddenly be affected by cholera and lose huge body fluid due to entering the germ of cholera in the stomach. David Arnold identified cholera as one of the epidemic diseases in 19th century British India as well as a highly political disease because it was deemed a threat to British colonial power in mixing with the indigenous society and depressed the British immigrant community to work with the host society.[1] Present Bangladesh was the part of British Colonial India, and so, there are social dimensions in the history of cholera and the development of ORS in Bangladesh. After the invention of ORS in 1968, the government and some organisations like ICDDR,B and BRAC initiated some programmes to remove the unawareness regarding ORS from society. Consequently, the epidemic situation was improved from the 1980s in the country. In this article, the history of cholera and the development of ORS in Bangladesh are discussed chronologically.

Cholera and Social Belief

Medical historian Macnamara identified cholera as the Asiatic Cholera, and he explained cholera-like;

> I mean a disease which is capable of being communicated to persons otherwise in sound health, through the dejecta of patients suffering from this malady; these forms are most commonly disseminated through a community, and taken into the system by means of drinking water—the dejecta finding their way by percolation through the soil or ill constituted drains into wells, or, it may be, being directly emptied into rivers from which drinking water is supplied. The disease can likewise be propagated by various articles of diet, such as milk, or in fact by anything swallowed which has been contaminated by the organic matter passed by cholera patients. In badly ventilated rooms the atmosphere may be so fully charged with the exhalation from the choleraic forms that people employed in nursing the sick may become poisoned. Fluids, and probably solids, exposed to air of this

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[1] David Arnold, "Cholera: Disease as Disorder," in *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Ninteenth Century India* (Berkeley Los Angeles London: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 159–99.

description absorb the organic matter, and may thus become the medium for transmitting the disease. In the same way, persons engaged in carrying the bodies of those who have died from cholera for burial, or in washing their soiled linen, may contract the malady.[2]

Dejecta is a term used to describe any solid and liquid wastes to emanate from the body. Understanding of Macnamara regarding the causation of cholera was the mixture of both science and social belief of a contemporary society. The nurse could be attacked by cholera due to inhalation of lousy air, and the persons who carried the dead bodies of cholera patients and washed the clothes could also be attacked by cholera. In fact, he could not accurately identify what the main reason for cholera was. That is why, the spectrum of disease causation was so broad and owing to the lack of the development of medical science and technology causation of cholera was not more specific.

WHO defines "Cholera is an acute diarrheal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*".[3] From an etiological point of view, cholera is a disease, causing of infection with the cholera microbe (up to 1993, *Vibrio cholerae O1*, in either its "classical" or its "El Tor" biotype).[4] The Lancet defines cholera as acute secretory diarrhoea caused by the Gram-negative Bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*.[5] Besides, cholera is defined as an acute watery diarrhoeal disease.[6] The term cholera was derived from the Greek words *chole* (bile) and *rein* (to flow), so the meaning of cholera is a flow of bile. Cockburn identified Bengal as the home of cholera where infection can exist over the years and decades after decades. "Bengal has the unenviable distinction of being the home of cholera and quite possibly is the only place on earth where the infection can exist all year round, decade after decade."[7]

Clemens and others mentioned that before the first pandemic in 1817 cholera was of the Asiatic origin and especially the disease of the Ganges Delta.[8] But Dhiman Barua,

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[2]   F. C. U. Macnamara, C, *A History of Asiatic Cholera* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1876), https://archive.org/details/b21363900.

[3]   WHO, "Cholera", Description of Diseases, *World Health Organization*, February 1, 2018, https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cholera.

[4]   Christopher Hamlin, *Cholera: The Biography*, Biographies of Disease (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 19.

[5]   Jason B Harris *et al.*, "Cholera", *The Lancet,* Vol. 379, No. 9835 (June 2012), pp.2466–76.

[6]   John D Clemens *et al*., "Cholera," *The Lancet,* Vol. 390, No. 10101 (September 2017), pp. 1539–49.

[7]   Thomas A. Cockburn, "Epidemic Crisis in East Pakistan, April-July, 1958," *Public Health Reports* 75, No. 1 (1960): 26–36, http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1929400/.

[8]   Clemens *et al.*, "Cholera."

renowned scholar on cholera, showed disagreement with the argument of place of origin of cholera. He pointed out that worldwide there is lack of literature on the local history of cholera and western writers identified Bengal as the home place, so it is recognised, but in the whole world, cholera-like disease existed for thousand years. He agreed on that, Bengal was the most susceptible to cholera in the world, but it was not the only home of classical cholera.[9]

Correspondingly, the researcher tried to understand the observation of older adults regarding the causations of cholera, symptoms of cholera and its remedy. They responded to the queries with awful expression, and nervousness even though they tried to avoid the questions. It was constructed due to their unpleasant experiences in the past. Conversely, the contemporary views of Bangladeshi people are: cholera is a deadly disease affected by having unpleasant foods and polluted water, using unhygienic sanitation and lack of cleanliness. Meanwhile, due to spread of education people became aware of the causation of cholera and its treatment. However, what were the views of senior generations in the 1960s or 1970s even 1980s? It was mainly superstition and full of fear.

Therefore, cholera considered as *kharap batash* (polluted air), *gorom batash* (hot air), *bala mosiboth* (curse and danger); causations were believed to be fraudulent activities in the society and disobeying the rules of God as well as lack of cleanliness. Main medicines were *jhaar fukh* (bouncing the thicket), *tabij* (so-called sacred thing filled on neck or hand), *pani pora* (sacred water), bori (made by herbal materials), prayer to Allah for the Muslims and worshiping to deities for Hindus and others and beside these, calling Allah's name, watching guard, firing at home, staying awake at night and avoiding some habits and manners. *Kabiraj*[10] (local doctor), *Fakir* (Muslim Saint)*, Molla* (Muslim learned man) and the religious persons were believed as the guardians for recovery. For example, Ajit Fakir was renowned fakir in Bashgari union of Kalkini sub-district in Madaripur district. He pronounced mantra (incantation) to remove cholera from humans. That was "*alir hate jol hukka, fatemar hate teer, jei pothe aichos bala, shei pothe fir*". The meaning of this incantation was- water bottle is in the hand of Ali (fourth caliph of Mohammad s.), arrows in the hand of Fatema (daughter of Mohammad (s), curse, go back to that way by which you came. It has no meaning, but people had theoretical knowledge about Ali and Fatema

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[9]   Dhiman Barua and William B. Greenough (ed.), "History of Cholera," in *Cholera*, Current Topics in Infectious Disease (New York: Plenum Medical Book Co., 1992), pp. 1-25.

[10] Kabiraj is a medical practitioner who follows the Ayruvedic system of treatment (Bengali to English Dictionary, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 2015 print)

and their power. So, by any means, fakir tried to sooth the patients and their relatives. Ultimately, it did not work.

There were some natural medications to cure the disease-like; having water of green coconut, juice of molasses, rice water, burley, *chira*[11] water. Coconut water has carbohydrates and electrolytes such as sodium, potassium, and magnesium which is perfect medicine against fluid loss. Molasses juice has carbohydrates, vitamin B6 and dietary minerals; rice water has carbohydrates and electrolytes, so, all the natural medications had positive effects on the patients. Consequently, some people escaped from the deadly disease, but credit went to Kabiraj, Fakir or other local healers. This natural healing system developed from the long-time experiences of people, but people could not keep confidence in those natural medications, for that reason, they were going to the local Kabiraj or Molla. Bagha Mojid[12] is one of the examples who only survived from cholera. Due to the existence of the necessary ingredients against fluid loss the natural items worked well whereas the patients kept away from drinking and feeding. It was believed that food and water were polluted, so patients should be held aside from all types of food. In that case, patients died within a short period.

The concept of *bibi* (mythic old lady with the white coloured dress) was familiar to the people, but the name of *bibi* was varied from one place to another place in Bangladesh like *ola bibi, jhola bibi, mon bibi*. When cholera broke out senior men and women of families gossiped about *bibi*, even they claimed to see the *bibi* at night. They drew a picture of *bibi* in their mind and tried to explain it to show their spiritual ability, which usually made the situation more mournful and dreadful.

The peak times of cholera attack were October-November (Katrik, the name of the 7th month in Bengali)[13] and April-May (Choitra, the name of the 12th month in

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[11] *Chira* (Bengali name) is a well-known food item prepared by frying wet paddy and then thrashing the grains into flattened size by a husking pedal (Bengali to English Dictionary, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 2015 print)

[12] Story of Mojid Khan, nickname Bagha Mojid, is one of the glaring examples of the fatality of cholera in Bangladesh. All brothers and sisters of Mojid Khan died from cholera and only he was alive. Mojid Khan was also affected by cholera several times but he was alive due to having so-called milk of tiger (in Bengali tiger means bagh) or dangerous animals, through this imaginary perception, so, popularly he is known as Bagha Mojid. Mr. Mojid told that his father married 7 women but everyone died from cholera and even his father also died from cholera. Now Mr. Mojid is the resident of Madaripur district in Bangladesh.

[13] Mohammad Golam Rabbani, "Mousumi Khuda: Bangladesher Uttarancholer Monga'r Otit o Bortoman Prekkhapot," *Unnayan Samikkhaya, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS),* 29 (2012): pp. 49–70.

Bengali). Cholera reached at peak in dry weather in May and waned after rainfall.[14] *Monga*[15] (starvation and malnutrition), *akal* (scarcity, miserable time), *durbhikkha* (famine), these were the common terminologies of Bengal to describe the shortage of food and miserable condition in these months.[16] Besides, *mora Katrik* and *mora Choitra* terms were used to describe the epidemic situation due to infectious diseases like cholera and smallpox in these months. *Mora* means dead; it was a symbolic term to identify the awful and dreadful situation of life due to sickness. People were in starvation and malnutrition because of the scarcity of food, unfortunately, at the same time cholera attacked the people of Bengal due to unhygienic food habit and polluted drinking water. So, on both sides misery made the situation of *mora* or dreadfulness.

Diarrhoea and Social Belief

Before the first cholera pandemic of 1817 in the world, diarrhoeal diseases were known to the people as the frequent passing of watery stools. It was one of the common diseases in the world. Experts and different health organisations gave some definitions and explained the causes of diseases.

> WHO defines diarrhoea "as the passage of three or more loose or liquid stools per day (or more frequent passage than is normal for the individual). Frequent passing of formed stools is not diarrhoea, nor is the passing of loose, "pasty" stools by breastfed babies. Diarrhoea is usually a symptom of an infection in the intestinal tract, which can be caused by a variety of bacterial, viral and parasitic organisms. Infection is spread through contaminated food or drinking-water, or from person-to-person as a result of poor hygiene".[17]

Usually, intestinal tract controls absorption and discharge of water and electrolyte to fulfil the physical needs of a human body. An adult intestine can re-absorb more than 98 per cent of 10 litres of water per day. In the case of entering over water in the abdominal stomach, the zone can release it by stool water also.[18] So, three or more stools in a day which are sufficiently liquid treated as diarrhoea.

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[14]   Cockburn, "Epidemic Crisis in East Pakistan, April-July, 1958."

[15]   General meaning of *monga* is starvation, scarcity of food and deficiency of nutrition. In the British Indian gazettes or documents the word *monga* was used as scarcity. Actually the word *monga* derived from *manga*, and *manga* means high price of goods. Due to scarcity of foods the price hike was happened and people could not buy the goods that was called *monga*. (Rabbani, 2012)

[16]   Rabbani, *op. cit.*

[17]   WHO, "Diarrheal Diseases," Description of Diseases, *World Health Organization*, May 2, 2017, https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/diarrhoeal-disease.

[18]   Gerald T. Keusch *et al.*, "Diarrheal Diseases," *Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries,* 2 (2006): pp. 371–388.

Diarrhoea is a descriptive term of medical science to identify different types of clinical disease related to passage of loose stools. Different societies have different cultures of preventing and curing the disease in Bangladesh; even diarrhoea has different names based on the nature of the impact. According to the intense study of BRAC, there are four folk terminologies of diarrhoea in rural Bangladesh; these are; *dud haga* (due to ingestion of breast milk by infants), *ajirno* (due to overeating), *amasha* (mucoid diarrhoea), *daeria* (cholera).[19]

Remarkably, every term has its course as well as prevention and curing method in society. (a) *Dud Haga*: English term of *dud* is milk and *haga* is stool; it is a disease of the infants during breastfeeding. Symptoms of *dud haga* are crying due to abdominal pain and watery loose stool; the colour of stool is different from natural colour. Polluted breast milk is believed as the cause of the *dud haga*; being questioned the cause the rural mother replied that it contaminated due to touching of bad air (*batash laga)* at the breast. For curing the disease people used sacred water (pani pora) bringing from elderly religious persons. In some cases mother stopped the breastfeeding or avoided meat, fish, and vegetables.

(b) *Ajirno*: it means indigestion of food due to overeating or food poisoning. Griping of the stomach, abdominal pain, irregularity in passing the stools and impatience are the common symptoms of *ajirno*. Rural people of Bangladesh do not consider it as an illness but try to give rest to the stomach. The villagers are not clear about the causes of the disease.[20]

(c) *Amasha*: English term of this Bengali word *amasha* is dysentery. People of all ages are the sufferers of the disease, stools are not watery but mixed with mucoid and sometimes contains blood. *Amasha* is considered an illness but people are not clear about the causes of the disease.

(d) *Daeria*: The term *daeria* means cholera. All symptoms of cholera exist in the so-called *daeria*; frequent passing of watery stools, vomiting, fluid loss, thirst are present. However, people are awful to pronounce the word cholera that's why identify

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[19]   A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury and Zarina N. Kabir, "Folk Terminology for Diarrhea in Rural Bangladesh," *Review of Infectious Diseases,* Vol. 13, No. Supplement 4 (1991): pp. S252–s254, http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/13/Supplement_4/S252.short.

[20]   A Mushtaque R Chowdhury and Richard A. Cash, "Perception of Diarrhea," in *A Simple Solution: Teaching Millions to Treat Diarrhea at Home*, Third (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2007), pp. 88–90.

it as *dieria*. It was believed that as the curse of God and people who worked against religion might be affected by this disease.[21]

From the perspective of clinical medicine there are three significant syndromes of diarrhoeal diseases; a) acute watery diarrhoea, b) acute bloody diarrhoea, and c) persistent diarrhoea. Besides, there are other syndromes like; antibiotic-related diarrhoea, travellers' diarrhoea, and specific food poisoning syndromes.[22] The acute watery diarrhoea is cholera; dysentery is the alternative name of acute bloody diarrhoea, protozoal infection is the major cause of persistent diarrhoea. Diagnosis of the persistent diarrhoea is serological, and its treatment is often difficult.[23]

Cholera in Bengal before 1817

The Bengal Delta was the home of cholera, and there was evidence of worshipping cholera deity in the name of *Ola Bibi*.[24] Macnamara identified the Ganges Delta as the home of cholera in the world; he wrote a chapter in his book on the history of Asiatic cholera before 1817.[25] Macnamara's main concentration was in British India, Bengal as the part of British India as well as the home of cholera, so it got priority in the history. He wrote the word '*Vishuchika*'[26] as the symptoms of cholera in ancient Sanskrit writings which were expressed by *Sushruta*[27] as the recurrent disease. Besides, Galen, Whang-shooho, and Hippocrates described this form of cholera in

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[21] Chowdhury and Cash.

[22] P. Kelly, "Diarrhoeal Disease," *Clinical Medicine* 11, No. 5 (October 1, 2011), pp. 488–91.

[23] Kelly, *op. cit.*

[24] David Arnold referred to Macnamara, C. 1876. A History of Asiatic Cholera, London, Macmillan; Hora, Sundar Lal, 1993, Worship of the Deities Ola, Jhola and Bon Bibi in Lower Bengal, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal n.s. 29:1-4; Basu 1963.

[25] F. C. U. Macnamara, C, "History of Cholera Prior to the Year 1817," in *A History of Asiatic Cholera* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1876), pp. 28–45.

[26] The word Vishuchika is now being used in Hindi language which is derived from Sanskrit language. In google translation Vishuchika means cholera. URL:https://translate.google.co.in/#view=home&op=translate&sl=hi&tl=en&text=%E0%A4%B5%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%B7%E0%A5%82%E0%A4%9A%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%95%E0%A4%BE, Retrieved on 15th January 2019.

[27] "Sushruta (c. 7th or 6th century BCE) was a physician in ancient India known today as the "Father of Indian Medicine" and "Father of Plastic Surgery" for inventing and developing surgical procedures. His work on the subject, the *Sushruta Samhita* (Sushruta's Compendium) is considered the oldest text in the world on plastic surgery and is highly regarded as one of the Great Trilogy of Ayurvedic Medicine; the other two being the *Charaka Samhita*, which preceded it, and the *Astanga Hridaya*, which followed it." Joshua J. Mark, "Sushruta, Definition", *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, published on 12 January 2018, URL: https://www.ancient.eu/sushruta/, Retrieved on 15th January 2019.

different countries where they lived; they never met the epidemic cholera as like Asiatic cholera epidemic. Polluted food and polluted air were identified as the leading causes of cholera. In the 15th century, Europeans entered into Indian lands and got interactions with each other. Europeans found the Ganges Delta as the home of cholera; it was not flourished to the West or the East due to absent of human migration for the difficulty of communications, but cholera existed in several places of India.[28]

Macnamara referred Gaspar Correa, a Portuguese, who wrote about the cholera epidemic of Calicut in 1503 and Goa in 1543 where mortality was high. Another Portuguese, Garcia d'Orta, described cholera of 1563 in Goa where mortality was severe in June and July. Although the origin of *Vibrio cholerae* was the Bengal Delta, it existed in different parts of Indian territory. Besides, Linschot, Thevenot, Dr. Fryr described the cholera epidemic of the coastal area of India in the 16th and 17th century. Macnamara highlighted the worshipping of the Goddess of cholera, *Ola Bibi*, in Lower Bengal for a long time. There was a temple of cholera Goddess in Kolkata. An English merchant donated in the year of 1720 to reconstruct the temple and Mr Duncan donated 6000 rupees for the development of the temple. For the first time, the Bengal Medical Board recorded cholera cases among the British troops in 1808, which was five in number. In 1814, a total of 46 cases were recorded where 11 deaths occurred. The disease appeared in the barrack of Fort William where newly recruited British troops were just stationed. Referring to Dr J Macpherson, Macnamara described that about sixty-four independent authors mentioned the presence of cholera in India from 1503 to 1817 where ten authors identified cholera epidemic in different parts of India and rest of the authors referred cholera to the Ganges Delta.[29]

Dhiman Barua denoted the Sanskrit word *vishuchika* as the origin of the contemporary concept of cholera. In the chapter of 'History of Cholera,' he raised the debate of either *Vibrio cholerae 01* was appeared in Europe before the first recognised cholera pandemic of 1817 or it only appeared in Bengal or different parts of India. He argued that through scientific means it is not possible to prove, a systematic review of literature nonetheless can guide the way. But except the works of *Sushruta*, there is no literature regarding cholera before the accounts of Portuguese settlers in 16th century.   Referring some scholars' writings, he concluded that cholera-like diseases were present in many parts of the world before 1817 and *Vibrio*

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[28]   Macnamara, C, *Op. cit.*
[29]   Macnamara, C.

cholerae was also present in different regions of India as well as in Bengal.[30] David Arnold identified the Bengal Delta as the origin of *Vibrio cholerae 01* based on the research of Macnamara and others; he mainly highlighted the worshipping of the Goddess of cholera in Bengal which indicates the long term existence of this fatal character of the disease.

Brief History of Cholera in Bengal after 1817

After 1817 the world faced seven cholera pandemics; the first six originated in Bengal, and the last one was in Indonesia.[31] There are disagreements regarding dates and durations of the first six pandemics, most of the scholars agreed that all six happened within 1817 to 1923, the seventh pandemic was started in 1961 and continued roughly up to 2010. The infection of classical *Vibrio cholerae 01* was the causes of first six pandemics; the seventh pandemic initially caused by *01 El Tor biotype,* but *0139 biotypes* appeared in 1992. Bengal was a densely populated area with poor sanitation where people used to have the surface water from rivers, canals and ponds, where the temperature exceeds 17 Degree Celsius and humidity not less than 40 per cent for a long time. So, the disease or germ can survive decade after decade and becomes ready to create an epidemic situation in the particular seasons of every year.[32] There are debates on the time length of the cholera pandemic concerning the starting and ending time provided that here the time length is narrated based on the book of Barua and Greenough III.[33]

The First Pandemic (1817-1823): The first pandemic started from Jessore district of present Bangladesh in 1817 which is halfway between Kolkata and Dhaka. It rapidly spread in India then eastward to Japan and China and westward to the Mediterranean Sea area and Syrian border. It touched European Russia and Tiflis of Armenia.[34] Cholera epidemics were common in Bengal as well as in different parts of India before 1817. Some major outbreaks were 1781, 1783 and 1790 under colonial rule but why the outbreak of 1817 shaped as a pandemic. Responding to the question Greenwood quoted the historian Sticker:

> What was new (the event of 1817) in the history of Indian cholera and rightly caused apprehension there as well as there was the further intelligence that this destructive

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[30]   Barua and Greenough, "History of Cholera", pp. 1-25.

[31]   Shyamapada Mandal *et al.*, "Cholera: A Great Global Concern," *Asian Pacific Journal of Tropical Medicine* 4, No. 7 (July 2011), pp. 573–80.

[32]   W. E. Van Heyningen and John R. Seal, *Cholera: The American Scientific Experience, 1947-1980* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1983).

[33]   Macnamara, C, *Op. cit.*

[34]   Van Heyningen and Seal, *Cholera.*

epidemic no longer confined itself to a particular area and at the accustomed season of the year appeared simultaneously in several places, but itself in motion, under the influence of some mysterious impulse began to travel, attaching itself to the lines of human intercourse, spread widely in various directions, exacting everywhere hecatombs of victims.[35]

An article in the Scientific American titled "The Year Without Summer" mentioned the causation of the epidemic of 1817. Bengali people could not harvest the land due to cold summer in 1816 followed by the eruption of a volcano in 1815 in the Dutch East Indies. So, starvation appeared in Bengal owing to the scarcity of food and famine, ultimately, cholera infection affected the humans, and it was fatal.[36] The 'Report on the Epidemic Cholera Morbus as It Visited the Territories Subject to the Presidency of Bengal in the Years 1817, 1818 and 1819' was written by James Jameson, Assistant Surgeon and Secretary to the Medical Board of India, narrated the rise, progress and symptoms of the epidemic. The primary objective of the report was to find out the hidden causes of the broad range disorder with 22 queries to investigate the epidemics. The report was prepared from the 100 valuable communications of individuals regarding the questions. According to the report, the higher latitudes of the disease limited to the latter part of summer and the beginning of the autumn and prevailed endemically during hot and rainy seasons of the year in the poorer provinces of India. It attacked the poor people who had an ungenerous diet, hard labour in the sun, no adequate clothes to cover in the cold and humid air of night.[37] Jameson identified the irritability of stomach and severe vomiting as the symptoms of the disease. His report was very subjective to the epidemic and showed the unfortunate situation as the cause of the disorder.

The Second Pandemic (1829-1851)

The cholera epidemic discovered in European Russia in August 1829, and it reached to Moscow in Autumn of 1830. Cholera germ persisted in Afghanistan from the first pandemic where cholera was rampant in 1929, it had travelled to Persia (Iran) and

[35] Major Greenwood, *Epidemics and Crowd Diseases: An Introduction to the Study of Epidemiology*, Public Health in America (New York: Arno Press, 1977).

[36] Henry Stommel and Elizabeth Stommel, "The Year without a Summer," *Scientific American* 240, No. 6 (June 1979), pp. 176–86.

[37] James Jameson, "Report on the Epidemic Cholera Morbus as It Visited the Territories Subject to the Presidency of Bengal in the Years 1817, 1818 and 1819" (The Government Gazzete Press, 1820), https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/bookviewer?PID=nlm:nlmuid-34720870R-bk#page/94/mode/2u.

Russia and spread out in Europe in the 1830s.[38] British military activities and commerce facilitated the pandemic movement of cholera from India to Russia and Western Europe.[39] Due to lack of proper diagnosis only severe patients were detected and restricted their movement; therefore the disease was spread out gradually to the West.[40] There was severe cholera outbreak in Paris in March of 1832, as border country Belgium was affected in the spring of 1832, progressively Norway, the Netherlands and other European countries were affected by the second pandemic. On the travel of the disease from Russia to England European countries Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Germany, Spain and all were affected by the second pandemic. It also affected Arabia, the shores of America and African countries.[41]

As cholera was rapidly spread out in European countries and America they could not manage the treatment process on a specific principle; nonetheless, the different ways of treatment made the process complicated and ineffective. Cholera experts agreed on something poisonous in human stool causing the disease but how the germ was induced was entirely unknown. So, for removing the poison, local doctors gave efforts from their knowledge and experiences from where some scientific bases were grounded.[42]

The Third Pandemic (1852-1859)

According to R. Pollitzer, "the third pandemic was the combined result of local recrudescence due to a temporary entrenchment of the infection and repeated importations of the disease"[43], but Macnamara pointed out that it would not be possible to detect the course of the pandemic due to sporadic outbreaks in previous.[44] Pollitzer showed the sequence of the outbreak of 1952 in India which was spread out in northern Europe, the USA, Mexico, and the West Indies. Greece and Turkey were affected because of the transportation of troops from southern France for the Crimean War. Southeast Asia and the Far East were affected by the third pandemic.[45] Cholera

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[38] Barua and Greenough, "History of Cholera."

[39] Macnamara, C, *A History of Asiatic Cholera*.

[40] Walter J. Daly and Herbert L. DuPont, "The Controversial and Short-Lived Early Use of Rehydration Therapy for Cholera," *Clinical Infectious Diseases* 47, No. 10 (November 15, 2008), pp. 1315–19.

[41] Barua and Greenough, *Op. cit*.

[42] Daly and DuPont, "The Controversial and Short-Lived Early Use of Rehydration Therapy for Cholera."

[43] Robert Pollitzer, *Cholera: With a Chapter on World Incidence*, 43 (World Health Organization, 1959).

[44] Macnamara, C, *Op. cit*.

[45] Pollitzer, *Op. cit*.

reached in Tuscany in Italy, Filippo Pacini studied the intestinal contents of some cholera patients and detected a large number of curbed bacteria in 1854, which later on called *Vibrio cholerae*.[46]

To remove the fearful situation of cholera international cooperation was begun and the first international meeting held in 1851 in Paris. From 1851 to 1938 total 14 international conferences were held. In 1903 the International Sanitary Convention was signed in Paris to inform the epidemics in the territories of the signatory countries to each other. The Health Organization of the League of Nations was established after the First World War, and it began to circulate weekly reports on cholera and other epidemic diseases. Following the sequence, the World Health Organization (WHO) was formed under the United Nations in 1948 to promote international public health.[47]

The Fourth Pandemic (1863-1879)

The fourth pandemic severely exposed in the Mecca pilgrimage of 1865. According to Macnamara, one-third of pilgrims died from cholera, about 30000 deaths out of 90000 pilgrims. There is a claim that the Indian pilgrims carried the cholera germ to Mecca, but Macnamara denied the argument and declared that cholera persisted in Mecca at that time and the assembling of Indian pilgrims who carried the germ made the situation worse.[48] The pilgrims who returned from Mecca to different parts of the world brought the cholera germ, and the pandemic was spread out in different parts of Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Turkey. Istanbul and Alexandria became the hub to spread out in the rest of the world.[49] The people of the East and Southeast parts of Asia were repeatedly sufferers of this pandemic.[50]

The Fifth Pandemic (1881-1896)

As the result of a severe cholera outbreak in British India in 1881 primarily in Punjab and Lahore, the fifth cholera pandemic was spread out. Pilgrims carried the germ from Mecca to Egypt, and the disease broke out in Alexandria, Cairo and several cities of Egypt. From the early pandemic, cholera remained in Spain, France, Italy and other countries of Europe. Spain severely suffered from cholera in the summer of 1885 when incidences were 160000 and deaths were 60000, cholera revisited this

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[46] Barua and Greenough, *Op. cit*.
[47] Barua and Greenough.
[48] Macnamara, C, *A History of Asiatic Cholera*.
[49] Pollitzer, *Cholera*.
[50] Barua and Greenough, "History of Cholera."

country in 1890.[51] Robert Koch studied cholera in Alexandria of Egypt and in Kolkata of India, where he detected the comma-shaped organism in 1883 which was marked as the cause of cholera. The fifth pandemic was spread out in South America, Asia, Africa, and European countries.[52]

The Sixth Pandemic (1899-1923)

The sixth pandemic was closely related to the exacerbation of the cholera situation of Bengal and Bombay in the year of 1899 to 1904; it lasted until 1923. After the fifth pandemic, the local recrudescence of cholera germ continued to persist the infection in Western Asia and some parts of Europe.[53] So, the point of spreading cholera germ from other places became auxiliary. Due to the mass movement and troops' transportation in the First World War, the cholera was rampant in various areas of the world. Due to the development of sanitation and other public health measures the cholera outbreaks were gradually decreased. From 1825 it was disappearing from the developed countries especially from Western Europe and the USA. From 1925 to 1961 two very significant incidents occured the invention of cholera toxin in 1953 and the improvement of the therapy by Robert A Phillips and his associates.[54] In the second half of the 20th century, the *Vibrio cholerae* more or less came back to its homeland in Bengal Delta with sporadic occurrences in Southeast Asian countries, some other parts of Asia and India but its virulence was very few.

The Seventh Pandemic (1961-2010)

In 1961, some cholera cases observed in Indonesia caused by El Tor vibrio, later on, it was spread out in neighbouring countries as a pandemic. Earlier six pandemics were caused by classical biotype *Vibrio cholerae 01*, but this new type made the public health authority unprepared, because, most of the areas became free of classical cholera for some years. However, cholera-prone areas were affected again by the new germ of cholera.[55] It continued roughly up to 2010 in different parts of the world especially in Asian countries.

History of the Development of ORS before 1960

The invention of oral rehydration therapy prevented millions of deaths in developing countries. The successful trial of ORS was done in the late 1960s and early 1970s in

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[51] Pollitzer, *Cholera*.
[52] Barua and Greenough, *Op. cit.*
[53] Pollitzer, *Op. cit.*
[54] Barua and Greenough, *Op. cit.*
[55] Barua and Greenough.

East Pakistan presently Bangladesh.[56] After the first pandemic started from Bengal, several reports were published in the British publications where the reports of James Jameson, Robert Steuart, and William Scott were remarkable. Jameson expressed the ineffectiveness of contemporary medicines, and he could not show any particular guideline in the treatment part of his report. According to the report;

> Bleeding, stimulants, sedatives, narcotics and other description of medicine were successively tried; according to analogical reasoning, or the peculiar opinions of various individuals, seemed to warrant their use. Each in turn failed, if not always, at least so often, as to prove the extraordinary depressing powers of the complaint, and the inefficacy of all curative means, to stop its progress, where the attack was in full violence.[57]

The second pandemic attacked Britain in 1831, and therefore three scientific advancements emerged; chemical analysis of body fluids, water, and salt treatment and the intravenous therapy of fluid.[58] David Barry recognised the violent disease of northern England as the outbreak of cholera, Sunderland was the first place affected by cholera in 1831.[59] By this time William Stevens established a different school of thought regarding tropical fever and severe diarrhoea. He detected that people with tropical fever and yellow fever grow darkness of blood and blackness of skin colour; he also detected that adding salt directly to the venous of blood turned the blood colour red. Consequently, he started to give a treatment to the severely affected patients with oral saline by which death rate decreased, but he had no clear understanding of the effect of salt and water in the blood.[60]

As cholera was spread out in Europe in the 1830s, it was observed that blueness or blackness developed in the severely dehydrated cholera patients and when Stevens used the technique of oral saline mortality rate significantly decreased. Meanwhile, he became familiar in the United States and Europe for his salt therapy. Stevens was in England during the cholera outbreak in 1832, and as he had a success story of

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[56] Richard L. Guerrant, Benedito A. Carneiro-Filho, and Rebecca A. Dillingham, "Cholera, Diarrhea, and Oral Rehydration Therapy: Triumph and Indictment," *Clinical Infectious Diseases,* Vol. 37, No. 3 (2003), pp. 398–405.

[57] Jameson, "Report on the Epidemic Cholera Morbus as It Visited the Territories Subject to the Presidency of Bengal in the Years 1817, 1818 and 1819."

[58] Daly and DuPont, "The Controversial and Short-Lived Early Use of Rehydration Therapy for Cholera."

[59] The Lancet, "Editorial Comment," 1832 1831.

[60] Daly and DuPont, *Op. cit*.

using oral saline, so he treated the patients in England with his prescribed mixture of sodium, potassium chloride and carbonated soda. He reported that more than 200 patients of the Cold Bath Field Prison in London were treated and one of every thirty patients died after administering the salt solution.[61]

However, William O'Shaughnessy identified a large amount of water, salt and carbonate in the blood of cholera patients who were treated by Stevens,[62] in response to the experiment of O'Shaughnessy, Stevens presented the argument that by this way he replaced the lost ingredients of blood, but others did not recognize his thorough change in thinking. British cholera expert David Barry along with O'Shaughnessy visited the Cold Bath Field Prison to observe the patients of Stevens and concluded that they were not the cholera patients.[63] Based on Stevens treatment debate was spread out among the experts of cholera in the whole world and many unpleasant correspondences exchanged through the Lancet and the American Journal of Medicine for the next two decades. Finally, Stevens published his book in 1853 and did not change his position regarding the oral saline and blamed David Barry and O'Shaughnessy for deliberately suppressing the information of his success.[64]

On the ground of O'Shaughnessy's analysis and experiment of the blood of cholera patients, Thomas William Latta tried to experiment with the intravenous fluid saline in 1832 using silver syringe and tube to treat the cholera patients.[65] Although treatment was not successful considering the recovery of the patients, it was the first successful trial of intravenous fluid saline in the history of medicine. Robley Dunglison suggested calomel, opiates and cupping on the abdomen as the treatment of cholera in 1848.[66] Austin Flint (in 1866) and Fredrick Roberts (in 1874) did not recommend the saline as the treatment of dehydration.[67] Thus many experiments,

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[61] Ibid.

[62] W.B. O'Shaughnessy, "Experiments on the Blood in Cholera.," *The Lancet,* Vol. 17, No. 435 (December 1831), p. 490.

[63] David Barry, "Letter to the Lancet," 1832 1831, II: 492-493.

[64] Daly and DuPont, "The Controversial and Short-Lived Early Use of Rehydration Therapy for Cholera."

[65] Thomas Latta, "Saline Venous Injection in cases of Malignant Cholera, Performed while in the Vapour-bath.," *The Lancet,* Vol. 19, No. 479 (November 1832), pp. 173–76.

[66] Robley Dunglison, *The Practice of Medicine and Treaties on Special Pathology and Therapeutics*, 3rd ed., vol. II (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1848), https://archive.org/details/practiceofmedici248dung/page/n6.

[67] Daly and DuPont, "The Controversial and Short-Lived Early Use of Rehydration Therapy for Cholera."

arguments, and counter-arguments came in the treatment process of dehydration, and by 1902 intravenous fluid saline got the standard of treatment.[68]

As it discussed that Stevens mixed sodium, potassium chloride and carbonated soda in his oral saline but the problem observed in the absorption of the stomach wall. Lewis (in 1832) suggested to utilise oral alkali for absorption, but he did not experiment it, later on, in 1910, Sellards demonstrated with oral alkali that could alkalinise the acid urine of a few patients which indicated the few amounts of absorption.[69] So, in the first half of the 20th century, the principal target of the study of oral saline was surrounded by the invention of career molecule for absorption in the stomach wall. During 1940s Daniel Darrow of the Yale University and Harrison of the Johns Hopkins Medical School advocated adding glucose with potassium and sodium chloride for oral rehydration solutions.[70]

Daniel Darrow's opening statement in the article of 1949 reflected his primary objective: "Effective replacement of water and electrolyte in patients with diarrhoea should be based on exact knowledge of changes in the composition of body fluids".[71] Without understanding the patients and what types of body fluids are lost the treatment process will not be permanent. Although he could not show the permanent treatment of the dehydration but advocated two significant things; adding of glucose in the oral solutions to contribute calories of the patients and understanding the amount of fluid loss from the body,[72] Harrison used glucose in the oral solution to treat mild diarrhoea based on the principle of the source of calories. Patients are becoming weak due to diarrhoea, and so he added glucose to give input of calories, but input and output measurement were not recorded accurately.[73] Chatterjee's article was published in the Lancet in 1953 on 'control of vomiting in cholera and oral replacement of fluid' focusing on the use of antiemetic and herbal medicine to treat cholera patients. Herbal medicine was used with salt, water, and glucose as an

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[68]   B A Foex, "How the Cholera Epidemic of 1831 Resulted in a New Technique for Fluid Resuscitation," *Emergency Medicine Journal* 20, No. 4 (July 1, 2003), pp. 316–18.

[69]   Richard A. Cash, "A History of the Development of Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT)," *Journal of Diarrhoeal Diseases Research* Vol. 5, Symposium Proceedings: Cereal-Based Oral Rehydration Therapy: Theory and Practice, No. No. 4 (December 1987), pp. 256–61.

[70]   Joshua Nalibow Ruxin, "Magic Bullet: The History of Oral Rehydration Therapy," *Medical History* 38, No. 04 (1994), pp. 363–397.

[71]   D. C. Darrow and E. L. Pratt, "Disturbances of Water and Electrolytes in Infantile Diarrhea," *Pediatrics* 3, No. 2 (February 1949), pp. 129–56.

[72]   Ruxin, "Magic Bullet."

[73]   Cash, "A History of the Development of Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT)."

oral therapy to treat less severe cholera patients and got favourable results.[74] During the 1950s the main focus of the study was to relate the link between sugar and salt absorption in the stomach, but it was on the experiment without conclusion. Thus the new decade of the 1960s was begun without well accepted and effective therapy.

The Cholera Research Laboratory and the Invention of ORS: The study of diarrhoeal disease was centred in Dhaka, capital of East Pakistan, by the establishment of The SEATO Cholera Research Laboratory (PSCRL) in 1960 to study cholera and cholera-related illness. Several physiologic studies were started around 1960 by Dr Robert A. Philips who was the director of the PSCRL; he was a US Navy captain in charge of the Navy research station in Taiwan. A cholera pandemic broke out in 1961 and Manila city of the Philippines was affected. In the cholera of next summer in 1962 Phillips added glucose with electrolyte solutions and used with two patients. He was amazed to see the absorption of sodium with the mixing of glucose.[75] He was the first scientist to discover that when glucose was added to saline through a plastic tube to the cholera patients, their net losses were remarkably decreased.[76] Daniel Darrow pointed out two things; adding glucose in the salt solution and understanding of patients' condition by measuring how much body fluid is being lost by the dehydration. The first question was settled down by many pathological types of research and finally by Dr Phillips A. Robert's experiment in the Philippines. Then two trials were done in the Philippines and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) before the solution of the second query of Danniel Darrow. Therefore, both tests failed.

The first trial was in the Philippines in remote villages; there were no available doctors and no trained medical people. In the first trial, they used an over concentrated solution of glucose and salts that would stop diarrhoea, but it did not stop, and five of the first 30 patients died. Moreover, then Phillips declared that he would never permit anyone to try this again. Subsequently, Dr Hirschhorn of cholera hospital and also Dr Pierce worked at the Hopkins' Calcutta Research Unit did physiologic studies confirming Phillips observation.[77] In 1965, David Sachar, Jim Taylor, and others demonstrated in the PSCRL that the increase of intestinal

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[74] H. N. Chatterjee, "Control of Vomiting in Cholera and Oral Replacement of Fluid," *Lancet (London, England),* Vol. 265, No. 6795 (November 21, 1953): p. 1063.

[75] Ruxin, "Magic Bullet."

[76] David Nalin, Interview of David Nalin, One of the Inventors of ORS, Skype Interview, June 27, 2018.

[77] *Ibid*.

transmural potential by adding glucose to the electrolyte solution but the investigators were not convinced that the oral solution would be a practical way to treat cholera.[78] The second trial was conducted in the Malumghat Christian Missionary Hospital in 1967 by the staff physicians of the PSCRL. They also were thinking that it had to be very simple because there could be no method for any doctor, but it failed.

In July 1967 Richard A. Cash and David Nalin came in Dhaka as the scientist of the PSCRL. Nalin was assigned by the National Institutes of Health to work on clinical research on cholera in Dhaka and Cash was assigned by the National Institute for Allergies and Infectious Disease to work on cholera in Dhaka.[79] In the same year, they attempted to treat the cholera patients by ORS in a missionary hospital of Malumghat, a small village between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. The first attempt was a failure because of either patient put out more stool than they drink saline water or treatment stopped due to vomiting.[80] Then the successful effort was made in the spring of 1968 when a cholera outbreak occurred in Dhaka.

Only adult male patients were dehydrated in the first successful study where a volume of diarrhoea was replaced by the oral solution. Over eighty per cent of IV solution was replaced by the oral solution. Twenty-nine adult patients were studied; all were admitted with severe dehydration and were rehydrated by the oral solution; in the result, they were cured. Immediately after the study conducted in Dhaka, the Indian Centre for Medical Research carried out a similar study in Kolkata. Specially effectiveness and feasibility of ORS were proved by the application of oral rehydration in the refugee camps in West Bengal in the winter of 1971 when the cholera outbreak occurred in the camps. Most of the cholera cases treated by the ORS where mortality was less than five per cent. Thus a successful demonstration of ORS was done in the PSCRL and the refugee camps after long time experiments in different places of the world.

David Nalin addressed the second point of Danniel Darrow to understand the condition of the patients, how much they were losing the electrolyte. As David Nalin described the whole story to the researcher like; there is a study in Malumghat which

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[78] Ruxin, "Magic Bullet."

[79] Ruxin.

[80] A. Mushtaque R. Chowdhury and Richard A. Cash, "Taking Science Where the Diarrhoea Is: From Scientific Discovery to Application," in *A Simple Solution: Teaching Millions to Treat Diarrhoea at Home*, 3rd ed. (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 2007), pp. 17–38.

David Nalin was asked to check on. The Deputy Director of the lab gave the same amount of oral fluid to all the patients. For example, in their system and all the patients were given to drink every hour. That study quickly failed, and David Nalin was analysing the results as part of his responsibility to check what was happening.

Moreover, at that moment he had the insight that oral therapy had to work, but their method failed because if anyone gave every patient one litre an hour and half of the patients were losing two litres an hour, they would get a shock. The patients were losing a quarter of a litre an hour and getting one litre to drink they would quickly become over hydrated and could go to the heart failed. So, all patients failed because they did not individualise the amount of oral therapy. So, David Nalin had the insight and immediately realised that if they did a new protocol where they match the drinking rate to the loss rate, it is the loss of fluids water and electrolytes or salts and that had to work. So they reorganised the study, and they started with the most severe patients in Dhaka in 1967 and the spring of 1968.[81]

Dr Phillips, the director of PSCRL, was against oral therapy despite his observations, he had left East Pakistan on a trip abroad. So, the Deputy Director told David Nalin to go ahead even though he was against it. David Nalin and Richard Cash redesigned the study. Moreover, two Bangladeshi Physicians Dr Rafiqul Islam and Dr Majid Molla who worked with them but they did not believe since this study which in Malumghat had not worked. It requires very close supervision. So, to make sure this study was safe and correctly done Dr Cash and David Nalin would work 12 hour shifts, morning and night and sleep in the room next to the patient. The test was conducted in the Cholera Hospital in Mohakhali, Dhaka.[82]

Even after the invention of ORS, there was a problem of taking the technique of ORS to the doorstep of the people. The measurement of sugar and salt was a fundamental problem to transfer the technology of ORS to ordinary people's household. Initially, it was suggested to use a spoon to measure sugar and salt. However, every family did not have a spoon available for the measurement. Moreover, there was a variation in the size of the spoon. So, it became difficult to standardise the size of a spoon and its measurement. MA Church first proposed using fingers for the measurement of sugar and salt. Later, BRAC and ICCDR'B worked on standardisation of the measurement using fingers. They concluded that one pinch of *labon* (salt) and two scoops of *gur* (unrefined sugar prepared at home either from sugarcane or date juice) would be the

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[81]   Nalin, Interview of David Nalin, One of the Inventors of ORS.

[82]   *Ibid*.

best solution and closest to the recommendation by the WHO. They also suggested using *gur* instead of sugar. There were three additional benefits in the use of *gur* in the ORS, a) it was widely available in the country, b) it was less expensive than sugar, c) *gur* has potassium, which is not available in refined sugar.

Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) and its Evolution: The components of ORS are electrolyte with sodium, chloride, potassium, and bicarbonate. These four things are lost due to dehydration, so through the ORS, these are rehydrated.[83] First the experiment of oral saline was started with this formula IV saline, but the concentration of its ingredients was so high, and so the result was negative. Then over the period, it was studied, and found that there are many aetiology of diarrhoea, diarrhoea due to cholera, diarrhoea due to rotavirus, diarrhoea due to dysentery, *Dud Haga*, so there are different types of diarrhoea. Patients with varying kinds of diarrhoea were coming to the hospital. How much salt dehydrated from the body in different types of diarrhoea? So, it observed that due to cholera deduction of sodium is high and due to rotavirus reduction of sodium is less and for an echoly average level of deduction. Only the oral salt solution increases diarrhoea, question was come to give a career molecule, based on physicist experiment amino acid can be the career, as amino acid glycine was chosen first and it worked very fine, but problem was glycine is very expensive, and it is not readily available, then experiment was started with carbohydrate that was glucose. Instead of glycine glucose was added and it showed it worked as like as glycine.[84] So, finally, salt, glucose, and water were recognised as the ingredients of ORS.

On the ground of ORS formula, it was observed that glucose was not available everywhere then experimented with sugar, but it was not also available in every household at that time. Then experimentation started with *gur* (molasses). Subsequently, BRAC's whole experiment was based on *gur* (molasses). Then instead of *gur* rice powder was added in the trial, rice powder is carbohydrate which produces glucose and sucrose, which is being broken down and work as career molecule. Advantage on using rice ORS was that it does not increase the episode of diarrhoea. In glucose ORS, first-time episodes of diarrhoea are increased then gradually decreased. Rice ORS takes time to be broken down, and it became easily adjusted which is not seen in glucose ORS. It was a question of a load of electrolyte, glucose, sodium so, episodes increased. Rice is multi carbohydrate food, so how it

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83   Interview of M. Yunus, Emiretus Scientist of ICDDR,B, Face to Face, June 26, 2018.
84   Interview of M A Wahed, Retired Scientist of ICDDR,B, Face to Face, June 21, 2018.

would be adjusted for the required amount of glucose? For 20-gram glucose, 40-gram rice was needed because it is 50-50 in ratio. Thus, the evolution of ORS, LGS and Rice ORS were accomplished.[85]

Conclusion

People were afraid about cholera in Bangladesh even they were not willing to accept the fact. Now the population of Bangladesh is twice than in 1968 and people in the capital city Dhaka is six times higher than that time, but cholera patients are less in number. In 1967, Richard Cash and David Nalin worked in the Malumghat Missionary Hospital; it located in between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh. There were cholera patients, but they were not coming to the hospital due to a religious barrier as well as the lack of proper knowledge about the hospital. So, hospital staffs moved to the people to bring them into the hospital.[86] By 2000, thirty years of chronicles made the situation alter; people are going to hospitals, they are aware of the diarrhoeal diseases and can make LGS at home. Even the packet ORS is available in grocery shops.

Death due to diarrhoea is nothing but unawareness of how to rehydrate the patients. Diarrhoea caused the fluid and electrolyte loss; treatment is to rehydrate the fluid and electrolyte. If anyone can replace this with their own medicine and then a doctor is not required. It became easy after invention; otherwise, the dehydration was the deadly ailment of the human. Generally, if the salt solution is used orally, diarrhoea is being increased. If it is gone to IV it is worked due to the system of the body, so for feeding orally, career molecule is important by which it will circulate in the blood, but IV fluid has no career molecule.[87] During cholera time fluid of vein is becoming drained through watery stools. Main things of ORS are it is readily available, and people can easily carry out the solution. Moreover, production of the enormous amount of IV saline is not possible in Bangladesh as there are many stories of cholera here. From that perspective, researchers started the study and finally got success in developing the ORS formula in Bangladesh.

Traditionally, it was practised that all types of feedings to diarrhoea patients were stopped which resulted in the severe malnutrition; then the ICDDR,B started a campaign to continue regular food during diarrhoea. BRAC participated in the

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[85] Wahed.

[86] Richard A. Cash, Interview of Richard A. Cash, One of the Inventors of ORS, Face to Face, August 5, 2018.

[87] Interview of M A Wahed.

campaign. Awareness was built like food would be maintained what the patients wanted to eat. There is a book on "Diarrhoea and Malnutrition" edited by Lincoln Chen where it is marked as a vicious cycle. Either due to diarrhoea malnutrition happened or due to malnutrition diarrhoea occurs, they got by experiment that it would be both hands from both sides.[88]

The major indigenous health practitioners in the villages of Bangladesh are allopathic *daktars* (derived from the word 'doctor'), homeopathic *daktars*, religious healers, and *kabiraj*. In maximum cases, allopathic *daktars* and homeopathic *daktars* are not formally trained up from medical institutions. They are trained up by another *daktar* or self-trained up. Some have the training of a short course from government or government-approved private training institutions. *Daktars* are considered as quacks, and they are giving medicine for all types of diseases. Initially, they were not willing to prescribe or sell ORS for diarrheal diseases. IV saline is effective medicine as well as beneficial for the quacks, due to some technicalities they get more income for pushing IV saline. Gradually, Government, Non-Governments organizations gave importance to their support for spreading the knowledge of ORS. However, over time, they accepted the formula of ORS and prescribed to the patients. On the other hand*, Fakir, Maulana, Guru* got priority for treating the diarrhoea patients based on religious faith. Religious healers administered holy water (pani pora), blow over the patients, prayed for the improvement of patients and gave *tabiz* for hanging on neck or hand. They gained faith of the patients based on so-called spiritual ability or meditation or study of holy books. *Kabirajs* got knowledge from yunani or ayurvedic formula of medicine; they also used shamanistic components in their treatment process.

In the article of Lancet, it was declared that the invention of ORS is a miracle in the history of 20th-century medicine. On the 50th anniversary day of the ORS, David Nalin and Richard Cash commented on 18th August of 2018 in the Lancet titled '50 years of oral rehydration therapy: the solution is still simple',[89] this is truly simple. It is a simple solution due to simplifying the answer to the problem and effective therapy against dehydration due to cholera and diarrhoeal diseases. David Nalin, Richard Cash, Rafiqul Islam, and Majid Molla were the inventors of the solution.

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[88] Lincoln C. Chen and Nevin S. Scrimshaw, eds., *Diarrhea and Malnutrition* (Boston, MA: Springer US, 1983), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-9284-6.
[89] David R Nalin and Richard A Cash, "50 Years of Oral Rehydration Therapy: The Solution Is Still Simple," *The Lancet*, Vol. 392, No. 10147 (August 2018), pp. 536–38.

THE MEANING OF HUMOUR IN SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER VALUES AND IDENTITY AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

In this paper, we explore the way in which humour in social media recreates prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination particularly against the historically and culturally disadvantaged group such as girls and women. To do so, we review the contents of humour to investigate the intertwined aspect of humour and gender construction in line with construction of appearance, character traits, reason and reasoning in mathematics, role segregation in personal and professional spheres, and the process of becoming subordinated by power. Drawn from the grounded theory method to analyze qualitative study, we argue that humour in social media (re)produces and sustains cultural prejudice. We suggest that contents of humour that challenge the stereotypic belief and normative tolerance of discrimination and inequalities would be beneficial for adolescents to construct ethics and values about gender justice and fairness besides accessing amusement and social networking opportunities.

Key words: Humour, social media, gender values, prejudice, adolescents.

Introduction

The rapid and enthusiastic integration of digital space into the everyday life of adolescents involve not only benefits but also risks concerning formation of ethics and values. While the benefits may include easy access to shared fun, and social networking with friends and others; the risk factor entails possibility to respond to normative ideology implied by social media due to partially developed critical judgment skills and self-regulation among many adolescents. Recent research supports the idea that adolescents' use of internet involves searching for entertainment and Humour.[1] Humour refers to "a medium for communicating derision …that activates a conversational rule to switch from the usual serious

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1 A. Radovic, T. Gmelin, B. D. Stein and E. Miller, "Depressed Adolescents' Positive and Negative Use of Social Media", *J. Adolesc*, Vol. 55, 2017, pp. 5-15.

mindset to a playful or noncritical mindset for interpreting the underlying message".[2] "Internet has become a major actor in the production and distribution of humour"[3] and humour supports the process of "socialization or enculturation by the socially permissible manner of controlling and enforcing social norms, reinforcing group values, and supporting group identity".[4]

Notably, the increased internet coverage,[5] and easy access to mobile devises[6] enable adolescents in Bangladesh to meet their great interests of using social media such as YouTube, Facebook and other social networking sites.[7] Adolescents of "internet generation" in general spend significant amount of their time in each day by engaging with these social networking sites. Such intensive engagement clearly reflects the important role that social media plays as the pervasive and influential socializing agent in the lives of many adolescents. Hence, similar to school and family; social media or the digital landscape of social networking sites appears as the most powerful and dominant sites for adolescents' construction of ethics, values, and morals in general and corresponding identity in particular.

Prior research on adolescent identity formation shows the way in which identity relates to individual values, and use of internet. For Pujazon-Zazik and Park (2010), "an important developmental task of adolescence is identity formation … and a stable identity consists of one's personal values and moral beliefs".[8] In discussing off/online

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2   T. E. Ford, E. R. Wentzel and J. Lorion, "Effects of Exposure to Sexist Humour on Perceptions of Normative Tolerance of Sexism", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, 2001, p. 679

3   L. Shifman, "Humour in the Age of Digital Reproduction: Continuity and Change in Internet-Based Comic Texts", *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 1, 2007, p. 187.

4   C. Dormann and R. Biddle, "A Review of Humour for Computer Games: Play, Laugh and More", *Simulation and Gaming*, Vol. 40 (6), 2009, pp. 802 – 824

5   BTRC: Internet subscribers in Bangladesh, [Online] Available: http://www. btrc.gov.bd/ content/internet-subscribers-bangladesh-april-2016 (January 2, 2018). (2016); A. Islam and Z. Hossin, "Prevalence and Risk Factors of Problematic Internet Use and the associated Psychological Distress among Graduate Students of Bangladesh", *Asian Journal of Gambling Issues and Public Health*, Vol. 6 (11), 2016, pp. 1 –14.

6   A. Kalam and S. Ainul, "Research Design and Methodology". Amin Sajeda (ed.), *Urban Adolescents Needs Assessment Survey in Bangladesh* (p. 11). (BRAC Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University and Population Council 2015), p. 11

7   The Daily Star Online Report, "Teenagers Feel Helpless to Cyber-crime", [Online] Available: http://www. thedailystar.net/country/teenagers-feel-helpless-cyber-crime-study-179350 (January 2, 2018). (2015)

8   M. Z. Pujazon and J. Park, "To Tweet, or Not to Tweet: Gender Differences and Potential Positive and Negative Health Outcomes of Adolescents' Social Internet Use", *American Journal of Men's Health*, Vol. 4 (1), 2010, p. 78

identities of adolescents using a social networking site, Hughes et al (2016) indicate identity construction "as an evolving active construction that constantly sheds bits and adds bits, changing through dialectical interactions with the digital and non-digital world, involving psychological, social, and cultural agents".[9] For the digital age adolescents, the out-of-school reality powerfully relates with this digital world and heavily relies on the use of own mobile phone devises.[10] Hence, while peers, parents, and educators play a crucial role to impact adolescents' values and identity construction by everyday face-to-face interactions; "out-of-school life influenced by internet based entities plays an increasingly large role during the critical life stage of adolescence that is a time of self-discovery, increased social independence, and transformation into a unique individual".[11] In this process of transformation, internet induced humourous contents seem to have great implication in the development of ethics and values and a sense of self-identity among many adolescents.

In the general sense, humour can have negative effects when it is used sarcastically to place someone in an inferior position. There is evidence suggesting that "Humour, specifically disparagement humour (e.g. sexist humour), provides a socially acceptable mechanism for demeaning, harassing, and oppressing disadvantaged group (e.g. girls and women)".[12] Girls, in general, are more frequently the target of disparagement humour compared to boys.[13] "Disparagement of girls in a jovial manner through humour is more likely to create a perceive local norm of tolerance of sexism particularly among boys, high in hostile sexism, who use those normative standards as guides for evaluating their own (imagined) sexist behavior".[14] According to this evidence, the hidden preference of disparagement humour is to sustain shared

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9   Janette Hughes, Laura Morison and Stephanie Thompson, "Who do You Think You Are? Examining the Off/Online Identities of Adolescents Using a Social Networking Site". Walrave Michel, Ponnet Koen, Vanderhoven Ellen, Haers Jacques and Segaert Barbara (ed.), *Youth 2.0: Social Media and Adolescence: Connecting, Sharing, and Empowering*, (Springer International Publishing 2016), p. 4

10   Ibid, p.3

11   L. M. Cookingham and G. L. Ryan, "The Impact of Social Media on the Sexual or Social Wellness of Adolescents", *North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*, Vol. 28, 2015, pp. 2 – 5

12   T. E. Ford, E. R. Wentzel and J. Lorion, "Effects of Exposure to Sexist Humour on Perceptions of Normative Tolerance of Sexism", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, 2001, p. 677

13   J. A. Woodzicka and T. E. Ford, "A Framework for Thinking about the (not-so-funny) Effects of Sexist Humour", *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 3, 2010, p. 175

14   T. E. Ford, E. R. Wentzel and J. Lorion, "Effects of Exposure to Sexist Humour on Perceptions of Normative Tolerance of Sexism", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, 2001, pp. 677– 691.

stereotypes concerning gender discrimination. Hence, the basic assumption underlying this study is that besides functioning as a source of amusement, humour sustains its hidden preference of (re)creating the normative tolerance of discrimination against marginalized groups such as girls and women. Prior research on adolescent humour during face-to-face peer interaction suggests that adolescents create their own humour to communicate negative messages to the "less desirable" adolescents e.g. girls; to convey normative information concerning peer and adult culture often by challenging adult norms; and use jokes to bring up sensitive and/or prohibited words and information that involve sexuality; as well as to entertain, and establish one's sophisticated identity.[15] Research also examines gender and teenagers' language use on social network sites by exploring teenage chat sites, blogs, and dating sites.[16] Hardly any attention is paid in academic literature concerning adolescents' use of humour in social media and re(creation) of ethics and values about gender construction i.e. our formulated assumption. In order for exploring the assumption, we investigate the features of humour in social media that may influence ethics and values in line with cultural prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination concerning gender. To do so, among the range of theories on humour such as relief theory, incongruity theory, and superiority theory,[17] we have adopted the "prejudice norm theory" that "specifies the social-psychological processes by which exposure to disparagement humour uniquely affects normative tolerance of discrimination against members of groups targeted by the humour"[18] in order for engaging with our emerged theories from the data. A focus on the relations between humour and prejudice would provide insights into the way in which humour influences ethics and values concerning maintenance or transformation of the normative tolerance of discrimination against historically and culturally oppressed groups. Such focus would add to the literature on ethics and values and corresponding identity construction in line with gender. The insights of discriminatory processes gained from the qualitative research may also be used to

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15 S. Sanford, "Adolescent Humour During Peer Interaction", *Social Psychology Quarterly,* Vol. 47 (3), 1984, pp. 240 - 242

16 S. C. Herring and S. Kapidzic, "*Teens, Gender, and Self-Presentation in Social Media*" in: J. D. Wright (Ed.) International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2nd edition. Oxford: Elsevier (forthcoming). 2015.

17 C. Dormann and R. Biddle, "A Review of humour for Computer Games: Play, Laugh and More", *Simulation and Gaming*, Vol. 40 (6), 2009, pp. 802 – 824.

18 T. E. Ford and M. A. Ferguson, "Social Consequences of Disparagement Humour: A Prejudiced Norm Theory", *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 8 (1), 2004, p. 79

change of those processes that produce ethics and values concerning injustice, unfairness, and inequality.

The paper is organized into three sections. Section one introduces humour in social media taking into account the ethics, values and identity construction for adolescents and describes methodological choice adopted to explore the meanings constructed by internet based Humourous texts, metaphors, and symbols. Section two explores the way in which Humour influences values regarding prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination about gender justice, norms and attitude. Section three concludes.

Methodological Choice

We have adopted grounded theory method for qualitative data analysis to engage the emergent theory with existing literature and to study the concrete social *processes* by which humours create, reproduce, sustain or reform ideas about gender and construct meanings for adolescents' identity development. We emphasize on processes in order for developing relationships between constructs such as "Humour" influences "prejudice". This relationship between the constructs derived from websites based data. At the initial stage, data were collected following the nine domains of the ethics and values in school education analysis framework developed for the large scale Education Watch 2017 research. Initial exploration of data indicated that majority of the humour contents address concepts concerning gender justice, norms and attitudes. Hence, decision regarding further data collection (or sampling) on gender justice, norms and attitude is shaped by the close examination of initially collected data. In other words, this theoretical sampling directed us to collect more data on the emerged concepts, in this sense, "gender" which is "not only a cultural construction imposed upon identity" [19] but also "continues to be a salient element structuring society".[20]

In order for exploring the relationship between humour and cultural construction of gender and its role in structuring society, data analysis and sharing of initial findings started as soon as the data was available. Categories or particular conceptual labels were attached to a particular piece of data by analyzing verbal data line by line and visual data in accordance with its meanings following open coding. Some top-down categories or categories from the literature are also applied to the data for content analysis. In order for building relationships between constructs, categories were connected by constant comparison of instances of data. Decision regarding

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19 S. D. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (Vintage, 2010), Vol. 1, p. 34

20 S. Tosun *et al.*, "Is an Ideal Sense of Humour Gendered? A Cross-National Study", *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 9 (199), 2018, p. 2

discontinuation of data collection was made when theoretical saturation was reached i.e. when no new categories were emerging from the collected data sets.

Content analysis for this research included 230 verbal and visual humourous internet based texts such as sexist and neutral jokes, cartoons, and funny clips with or without statements that relate to gender construction. Data and information were collected from large, popular, and influential "Humour hubs" from YouTube and adolescents' Facebook. Jokes from YouTube were collected from an influential site. The site is managed by a Bangladeshi adolescent girl, Raba Khan, who creates and produces female humour in Bangla language and highlights adolescent girls and women's social life by illustrating conversation between a boy and a girl; between two girls regarding appearance and beauty, and problems of brides on the weeding day; between a mother and a daughter, between rich aunts etc. The range of humour created by Raba Khan illustrates "narrative form" and emphasizes the humour characteristic of "real life" i.e. "grounding the humour in real life experiences"[21] of adolescent girls and women of Bangladesh and thus adopts "locally oriented" category of humour i.e. "Humour is culture dependent as it relies on the symbols, stereotypes, codes, and knowledge systems specific to the place and time of its creation and reception".[22] Notably, research exploring gender difference in humour creation demonstrates that "women are specialized in producing more anecdotes, spontaneous stories and context-related humour compared to men who are reported to create and produce more hostile humour compared to women".[23] Interestingly, creation of such humour category influenced Raba khan to be enormously popular among the social media users and enabled her to receive great appreciation and admiration from the large number of humour recipients as the online remarks made by her humour recipients indicate.

Apart from this site of verbal humour, images and funny texts were collected from exploring pages of adolescent Facebook users. Anecdotal evidence suggests that one has to be at least thirteen years in order for creating a Facebook account. Hence, it was felt justified to select adolescents' Facebook as inclusion criteria. Humour

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21 S. Tosun *et al*., "Is an Ideal Sense of Humour Gendered? A Cross-National Study", *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 9 (199), 2018, p.2

22 L. Shifman, "Humour in the Age of Digital Reproduction: Continuity and Change in Internet-Based Comic Texts", *International Journal of Communication*, Vol 1, 2007, p. 189

23 M. Aillaud and A. Piolat. "Influence of Gender on Judgment of Dark and Nondark Humour", *Individual Differences Research*, Vol. 10 (4), 2012, p. 213

explored from these sites emphasizes both male and female characters but disparages girls more compared to boys. In general, many humourous images with or without text information in adolescents' Facebook represent "globally oriented" humour category that deals with "features or social categories that are common to cultures all over the world",[24] and "hostile/sarcasm" known as "satirical or biting humour".[25] Prior research on dark and non-dark humour suggests that "hostile humour items emphasize teasing, kidding, joking and relate closely to dark humour, in other words, humour that relies on broad negative content; serves negative interpersonal purposes; concerns with the deviation from values and morals and transgression of social norms; and consequently elicits higher level of surprise compared to non-dark humour".[26] In order for collecting data concerning dark and non-dark humour, consent was sought from an adolescent boy and an adolescent girl to collect data by observing their Facebook account and correspondingly friendship was made with them via Facebook accounts. Such friendship enabled us not only to collect humour items from these accounts but also to reach other adolescents' Facebook accounts and sarcasm site that many adolescents use widely. As we have selected one humour image in an adolescents' Facebook, it was possible to notice the reaction list and the Facebook bio-data of the individuals who have reacted on the specific humour. Searching of Facebook bio-data was useful to confirm selection of individuals who are adolescents and to collect further humour items that they have posted. When searching Facebook bio-data, emphasis was given on the selection of both adolescent boys and girls so that the representation of boys and girls can be equal.

In addition to adolescents' Facebook, content analysis from websites also included Bangla funny clips drawn from a popular magazine program "Ittadi". English funny clips produced on western cultures but telecasted in Bangla language are one of the common elements of the magazine program. Many of these clips were released in YouTube from 2007 and selected for this research as humour items. These humour clips emphasized not only male characters by introducing conversation between a male director and two male information seekers, between a male doctor and two male

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24 L. Shifman, "Humour in the Age of Digital Reproduction: Continuity and Change in Internet-Based Comic Texts", *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 1, 2007, p. 189

25 S. Tosun *et al*., "Is an Ideal Sense of Humour Gendered? A Cross-National Study", *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 9 (199), 2018, p.2

26 M. Aillaud and A. Piolat. "Influence of Gender on Judgment of Dark and Nondark Humour", *Individual Differences Research*, Vol. 10 (4), 2012, pp. 212-213

patients etc. but also included characters that involve both males and females. The humour items in general are great source of amusement and laugh and represent both verbal and visual aspects of humour.

Notably, between August and October 2017, verbal and visual data that were found useful for the analysis of gendered social life were collected from all three data sources i.e. humour created and produced by Raba Khan, adolescents' Facebooks that also include sarcasm site, and Ittadi magazine. Upon collecting the data sets, data were transcribed verbatim for analysis and theoretical and operational notes were used to finalize the theory concerning the influence of humour in the (re)production of cultural prejudice concerning gender.

1.   Humours Featuring Prejudices

What do humour representations in social media metaphorically say about ethics and values that influence systematic construction of gender stereotypes, differences and discrimination? We refer to gender as "a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power".[27] Drawn from Butler's (1990) formulation concerning gender and performance, in this section, we attempt to show that gender is a performance enforced by culture. In describing gender as an act, Butler (1990) suggests,

> As in other ritual social dramas, the action of gender requires a performance that is *repeated*. This repetition is at once a reenactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is the ritualized form of their legitimation … the performance is affected with the strategic aim of maintaining gender within its binary frame.[28]

In order for reflecting on the paradigm of gender binary that involves stereotypically assigned either "masculine" or "feminine" behaviors and competencies, we discuss the following five aspects of the social construction of gender.

Construction of appearance

The forms of disciplinary techniques applied to transform and improve appearance indicate boys as active and strong and girls as passive. "Painting of appearance like a tiger" and "engaging in body building activity" reflects boys' strength and mastery. Conversely, girls appear as passive beings as girls are encouraged to follow culturally

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27 J. W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 9 (5), 1986, p. 1067.
28 J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (Routledge 1990), Chapter 3, p. 140

prescribed dos and don'ts such as "to take care of beauty by staying at home instead of going out for a job", and to "regain lost bright complexion" and thus participation in public life appears as less valued for girls – an underlying factor that reinforces passivity. Moreover, emphasis on preference to private life in order for maintaining attractive look gives meaning to the opposite and hierarchical words progress/ regression that can be explained in relation to male and female. Additionally, despite that body image often creates negative conditions for improving adolescents' well-being, girls' body image concerns are appreciated by stating "*that is indeed right!*" as girls follow dietary regime that include "eating much less amount of rice". By encouraging girls' body image concerns, humour thus supports the cultural norm that "the feminine body is expected to be flesh, but discreetly so; it must be slim and not burdened with fat; toned, supple, robust".[29] These evidences concerning transformation of appearance following disciplinary measures emphasize femaleness, feminine attributes of beauty, passivity, and "docile body" that refers to "body that may be subjected, transformed and improved".[30] By indicating boys as active and girls as passive acquisition of stereotypic cultural capital of masculine and feminine identity is (re)produced in the process of transforming appearance.

In general, beauty in humour is more appreciated for girls compared to boys. Girls including "unmarried" and "fair complexion girls" are depicted as involved in transforming appearance. However, married girls and dark complexion girls are often more expected to transform appearance compared to unmarried girls and fair complexion girls. An unmarried girl is not encouraged to use make-up because "after marriage she will use cosmetics for her husband" suggesting that "she is not for herself but for a man and thus forbidden to develop individuality".[31] Additionally, this quote concerning unmarried girls' use of make-up for someone also recreates the opposite binary self/other and that can be illustrated in relation between masculine and feminine. Given that "fair complexion girls are naturally beautiful"; "dark complexion girls" are expected to use cosmetics such as "powder" as a technique to avoid the cultural weakness based on appearance. Furthermore, girls are expected to "take care of hair regularly to keep hair straight" – an important feature of beauty. Thus, according to these humours, girls' socially acceptable behavior to construct appearance and enhance beauty relates to the cultural dualism of attractive/

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29 S. D. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (Vintage, 2010), Vol. 1, p. 323
30 M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (Random House 1977), Part 3, p. 136
31 S. D. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (Vintage, 2010), Vol. 1, pp. 161, 197

unattractive look. Given that higher value is culturally attached to the former category, unattractive look seems to have great impact on girls' low self-esteem.

Notably, in accordance with cultural ideals and norms, "female appearance and body weight" is much valued in "finding a good marriage partner". Hence, greater pressure to attain "beauty enhancing practice" is symbolically imposed on girls in line with cultural stereotypic perception that may contribute to limit girls' ability to choose about public-private life. Such emphasis on the relationship between marriage and social construction of appearance may shape girls' mental conception concerning greater value of marriage and beauty compared to progression of girls' professional career.

In Humour, girls are expected to have expertise to transform own appearance. A girl's expression of her desire to look "as beautiful as a queen when she enters her wedding party" metaphorically reflects the girl's ability of such control. Notably, in many cultures, "women have traditionally been denied the same access to power and privilege as men, hence, attractiveness historically has been viewed as a means to gain such access".[32] However, representations of girls' character traits and qualities about success and recognition are uncommon in humour. Hardly girls are depicted to share "good news" such as "*I got a promotion in professional career and bought a new car*". Thus, in most instances, lack of depiction of girls' success raises question regarding girls' access to power and privilege particularly for those who live in a patriarchal society.

Humour sustains gender norms by assigning appropriate but different beauty preferences that justify historically and culturally constructed classification and hierarchical ordering between a (social) boy and a (social) girl. Given that "women's historical association with the body has resulted in her being judged by and valued for her appearance more than man",[33] girls are consistently shown as using a range of "visible cosmetics and jewelry" and transforming "hair e.g. by following different styles and cut, and using color that can be compared with horse tail and cow tail"; "eyebrows"; "nails"; and "hands using henna" to adjust, correct, and improve appearance and to appear as the symbol that (re)creates gendered social life. Importantly, only one example demonstrates the ways in which girls resist to follow

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32 N. A. Rudd and S. J. Lennon, "Body Image and Appearance-Management Behaviors in College Women", *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, Vol. 18 (3), 2000, pp.152 -162.
33 A, King, "The Prisoner of Gender: Foucault and the Disciplining of Female Body", *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 5, 2004, p. 36

imposed norms of using uncomfortable jewelry and cosmetics as the quote illustrates, "*Is it necessary to wear this [nose ring]? How would I drink water wearing this? Please remove the make-up, let me go to home, [I] cannot sit*." Concerning the social difference between boys and girls, there is evidence of 'girls' length of hair that does not reach shoulder'; however, only one example depicts "boys' length of hair that falls below shoulder". In general, the difference in boys' and girls' "length and color of hair", "body image concerns", and "use of handbags e.g. backpack for boys and small bags for girls" and eyeglasses e.g. black glass for boys and white glass for girls' also reflect different ideologies for boys and girls that sustain prejudices and values concerning cultural dichotomy of male/female. Additionally, normative statements such as "*As boys clean face, they feel fresh. As girls clean face, they lose all*" or the image that show a girl's desire to transform profile picture illustrates construction of gendered identity and behavior. Gender identity refers to "a person's persistence inner sense of belonging to either male or female gender category or one's self-concept of gender regardless of biological category".[34] Emphasizing attractiveness only as girls' concern, humour demonstrates the potential of designating individuals either as boy or as girl regardless of whether it is justified by their biological characteristics. These boys' and girls' differently embodied interactions with their surroundings should create different social experiences. Such culturally defined, stereotypic, acceptable, and normative gender values and boundaries in experiences seem to create opportunities for constructing gender dimensions of self.

Humour in social media demonstrates a range of techniques of controlling female body that also sustain gender difference. "High heeled feminine shoe" that often limits girl's ability to walk fast; and cultural expectations regarding girls' use of "narrow space while sitting and standing", and the shared prescription and ideologies regarding stereotypes in boys' and girls' "dress code" including "stylish and different types of clothing e.g. Sharee, Kamiz, Frock for girls" and "single type of clothing for boys" narrate, legitimate, and reinforce prejudice concerning constructed person with a sense of being and becoming masculine and feminine. Only, one example depicts a girl wearing "Jacket" and "Koti" – stereotypically perceived as male cloth. In general, girls who refuse to adopt feminine ideals of 'sitting and standing', wear 't-shirt and jeans', and keep 'the length of hair as boys' and thus deviate from the limits

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34 C. Moleiro and N. Pinto, "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: Review of Concepts, Controversies and Their Relation to Psychopathology Classification Systems", *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 6, 2015, p. 2

of normalized ideologies concerning appropriate "womanliness" are disparaged in humour and are asked often by males to "alter their ideals" by stating '*after few days, people will ask me how is your son*?' and '*do not look at in this way, I fall in love'*. Because boys often make such remarks, girls' social life is then influenced by male domination and patriarchal ideologies. By attaching such meanings, humour legitimizes operation of "mechanics of power" in everyday life. According to Foucault, mechanics of power defines "how one may have a hold over others' bodies, with the techniques and efficiency that one determines".[35] Justifying boy's ability to have a hold over the body of the "other", female body in humour thus appears as the object and target of male power and control. The gendered meanings created by the power relations both produce and restrict the normative concept of fixed binary opposition that asserts the meaning of male and female, masculine and feminine in accordance with category.

In sum, humour serves as organizing schema and guiding perception that function as powerful source to construct distinctive masculine and feminine worldview. In this worldview "being a man or a woman is not a predetermined state, it is a process of *becoming*, a condition actively under construction".[36] The examples of humour legitimate this process of becoming by showing the techniques of training and disciplining to produce transformed and improved appearance. By showing the process of transformation, humours signify meanings aligned with Beauvoir's formulations of gender that states, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman"[37] and that genetic influence emerged from "nature" i.e. the biological process depends on "nurture" i.e. socio-cultural influence. Due to this socio-cultural influence, individuals seem to differ in their self-endorsement of gender-stereotypic traits.

Character traits

Gender difference in academic and professional ambition expressed in humour reinforces the idea that boys are more *competent, assertive, and motivated by high achievement goals* compared to girls. Examples such as "he has spent six years to capture the picture", "today the boys achieved large sums of money, big house, and professional reward" despite that "they had nothing in the beginning" reflect cultural

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35 M. Foucault: *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (Random House, 1977) Part 3, p. 138

36 R. Connell, *Gender in World Perspective,* (Cambridge 2009), Chapter 1, p. 5

37 J. Butler, "Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's Second Sex", *Yale French Studies*, Vol. 72, 1986, p. 35

values and assumptions regarding boys' competitive mindset, assertiveness, and ability to set and achieve goals. By contrast, representation of girls' feelings such as "*being a girl is not so easy in our society ...[you] can't achieve your dream*", and a comment made to a girl, "*You [the girl] will not be able to do anything. You are neither good in studies nor you can do work*" suggest imposed social constraints on girls to be competent and achievement-oriented. Continuous exposure to such constraints of being a girl seems detrimental for ambition concerning personal achievement. Additionally, girls' expressions such as "what benefit will good performance bring", and "*What matters is money, result is not important*" justify girls' less motivation to compete and achieve goals. Moreover, example such as "age for women and financial achievement for men stand for success in social life" indicates that boys and girls should have different expectations and goals about academic and proffesional achivements.

Gender bias in values concerning *independent and masterful* is expressed by positioning a boy's "effienciency" and a girl's "lack of control" when driving a car and by showing that "boys have supernatural power to read and respond to human mind" and girls are "absentminded". Simialrly, other metaphoric examples of boys and girls' quality demonstrate that boys are "more proficient in using technology", "more organized in everyday life", "more masterful in packaging luggage", "more efeicient in utilizing time", and "more concerned about less amount of fincancial spending" compared to girls. One example specifically mentions, "*every girl needs a male bestie*" and thus supports the idea, "Girl does not think herself without boy… As man holds a privileged place in this world, he helps her out; in marrying her, he gives her social status; he gives her gifts; his economic and social independence permits his endeavors and innovations; he *gives* her the time he spends with her; she takes it: with pleasure, passion, or simply for entertainment".[38] Such norm that reinforces girls' lack of mastery is also evident in the context of girls' body. A humour depicts the uncomfortable feelings arising from a "leaking female body" during puberty. As Beauvoir (2010) states, "puberty transforms the girl's body and it is more fragile than before; female organs are vulnerable, their functioning delicate; strange and uncomfortable".[39] Notably, the cultural values concerning girls' lack of mastery to deal with such body reinforce the uncomfortable feelings given that a leaking body is culturally a shameful body. To conclude, except the one example that shows "girls as independent and masterful in learning mathematics using

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38 S. D. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (Vintage, 2010), Vol. 1, pp. 26, 319-320
39 Ibid, p. 396

technology", these depictions transmit cultural values and reproduce social bias regarding boys' traits i.e. masterful, reasonable, and fast and girls' feminine attributes i.e. detailed and hardworking, unreasonale, and slow. By imposing these differences between boys and girls, Humour items show the ways in which gender is acquired through repeated performance.

Gender category is also justified by protraying boys as *courageous* and girls as *timid*. In a range of images, boys are depicted as "freedom fighter", "police", and "involved in risk taking job" that indicate masculine qualities of bravery and fearlessness. Coversely, girls are mostly depicted as afraid of small insects. These images thus metaphorically signify boys and girls' difference in agentic qualities as well as taking bold step in social life. Behaviour (2010) describes the ways in which "society imposes laws and customs on boys and girls in an imaginable and sensible way"[40] that construct the myth of couragious/timid binary. As Beauvoir states,

> Whether ambitious, scatterbrained, or shy, when learning about the world, the young boy leaps toward an open future; he will be a sailor or an engineer, he will stay in the fields or will leave for the city, he will see the world, he will become rich; he feels free faced with a future where unexpected opportunities await him. In songs and tales, the young man sets off to seek the woman; he fights against dragons, he combats giants; and she is locked up in a palace waiting for her prince to come. The sphere she belongs to is closed everywhere, limited, dominated by the male universe: as high as she climbs, as far as she dares go, there will always be a ceiling over her head, walls that block her path. Because she is woman, the girl knows that the sea and the poles, a thousand adventures, a thousand joys, are forbidden to her: she is born on the wrong side. Because the girl will be wife, and mother; in many countries, most adolescent girls have no athletic training; like fights, climbing is forbidden to them, they only submit to their bodies passively; they are banned from exploring, daring, pushing back the limits of the possible. Hence, she does not dare to be enterprising, to revolt, to invent; doomed to docility, she can only accept a place that society has already made for her.[41]

These laws and customs imposed by culture keep girls as a group in a situation that offers few opportunities for them to question the culturally constructed trait of courageous/timid and corresponding gender hierarchy. Consequently, long held prejudice concerning girls as secondary beings continues to transmit. Gender ideals and prejudice also seem to be transmitted by Humour by depiting communal qualities. Girls are shown as having more "friend requests", "notifiocations", and "the number of message in social networking sites" as well as "spending much time in washroom for social networking using cellphone" and thus seem more *frindly* compared to boys. Despite that girls' *socialble* quality of connecting people in

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40 Ibid, p. 322
41 Ibid, pp. 352-398

friendly way is emphasized in Humour, it was also evident that girls are disparaged in Humour because of their sociable quality and quality of sefl-reflection and being humble when girls are in friendly relations. Two examples of such disparagement include "*Don't trust girls, they screenshot your message and send them to each other and laugh at your life*" and "*Those girls who say sorry for their mistakes are super awesome and do not exist*". Such kind of images that relate to boys communal quality is uncommon in Humour.

Boys and girls also differ in their qualities of being *warm*. An image metaphorically indicates "emotion that a girl acquires from her mother". Such warmth aspect of women and girls are also represented in a range of images by depicting girls being affectionate or kind towards "pet". Besides this cultural trait of warm, girls are potrayed as "obedinet" and "soft-spoken" in certain situation or in all situations and innocent who "*just thinks everyone has a good heart*". Conversely, boys' stereotypic cultural trait of aggresiveness, perhaps to indicate power and to engage in competition, is reflected by showing boys involved in "taking drugs"; "threatening men"; "hitting boys, girls, and animals", "murdering best friend, own child, and adult man" and "exploiting poor people financially or following different means". This form of society prescribed "natural" masculinity can be understood as power relations that exist both among boys themselves and between boys and girls. Despite that boys warm trait is represented by depicting boys' attitude of 'protecting a scared girl' and "showing kindness towards animals by giving animals food and warm cloth to sleep"; the number of boy's cultural trait of aggresiveness is shown higher compared to boys' warm trait. Humour thus justify that girls' warm trait is more common compared to boys and sex differences in regard to expression of warm trait are parmanent personal characteristics.

In the research context, Humour contents signify norm concerning expectable behaviour for girls. *Interdependence* is shown as one such expectable behvaiour. Girls' statements such as "*I am born for my parents*" and "*I want to see the world with you*" suggest mutual dependence and supportiveness between a girl and relevant individuals. Girls' quality as *unselfish* is reflected by an example that shows "a girl's generous attitude of protetcing a male peer from rain sacrifizing her own needs". The girls' kindness and helping attitude indicated in the interaction represent her unselfish way of behaving with someone "who often becomes self-centered and ignores her intentionally".

In Humour, representation of *expressive and relationship-oriented* quality of girls and *knowledge-seeking quality* of boys support gender construction. Examples of girls' stereotypic verbal and non-verbal behaviour include "saving life of a boy by transferring the heart of a girl", "*I miss your jokes"*, *"Now a days, girls love too much"*, "*a headshot can't stop women from talking"* specifically when she is with her partner and thus characterize girls' relationship focused quality and expressive trait. By contrast, representation of "*Too much IQ level in a single picture*" by indicating "many boys" stereotypically suggests boys' knowledge seeking qualiy. One Humour specifically compares such stereotypic quality of boys and girls by depicting "a boy and a girl both are reading book. At the time of reading book, the boy is relating his readings with hundreds of books that he has already read and the girl is thinking of romantic relationship". Interestingly, by such comparision, girls are wrongly and purposefully considered as the weaker sex compared to boys. Supporting the interwined aspect of men, knowledge, and power while emphasizing the relationship-orinted quality of girls, Humour (re)produces meaning that suggets that men have higher status and power in gender hierarchy.

In short, this research indicates that Humour in social media feature masculine and feminine stereotypical traits and qualities as complimentary. The traits and qualities are balancing in the sense that each gender group is represented as possesing a specific form of strength that is either agentic or communal.[42] Thus, Humour repeatedly provides cues for the social construction of sex difference and demonstrates potential to assist boys and girls to adjust with the culturally constructed gedner identity, believes, values, and prescribed behaviour. Notably, in the process of (re)producing traits and qualities as complementary, Humour sustains the vague notions, misleading, and traditional conceptions of oppositional categories of competent/incompetent, independent/interdependent, fast/slow, better/worse, courageous/scared, hard/soft, aggressive/warm, war/peace, knowldege seeking/ relationship focused and relate all former categories as boys and masculine and all later categories as girls and feminine. The feminine qualities of soft and warm indicate that femininity is also good, however, other forms of classification seem problematic for girls. According to Harding (1986), such calssification influences girls to be developed as devalued individuals. It is because "in virtually all cultures, whatever is thoughtof as manly is more highly valued than what is thought of as

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42 S. A. Eisenchlas, "Gender Roles and Expectations: Any Changes Online?", *SAGE Open*, 2013, pp. 1-11.

womanly".[43] Hence, those classificationsthat are problematic for girls assign girls particular position and status in a society. Thus, gendered behaviour can be reproduced as a product of these positioning in Humour. Interestingly, gendered behaviour leads to status difference and status difference leads to gendered behaviour. However, Humour encourages its users to persue the stereotypical traits and qualities in order for maintaining "cultural interest for a just and caring culture"[44] that sustains the power imbalabce between boys and girls. Hence, as the passive transmitter of culture, Humour seems to miantain cultural interest by sanctioning girls' traits and qualities that are consistent to cultural gender prescriptions. Indeed, "gender-stereotypic attitudes are often viewed as socially desirable".[45] Because of the "powerful influence of gender stereotypes",[46] it is likely that Humour that conforms to stereotypes will be supported by viewers compared to Humour that challenges sterotypes. However, stereotypic Humour seems to suatin status quo, assigns social power to boys and subordinate position to girls in social life that place girls at a disadvantage in regard to expectations in a range of areas including but not limited to girls' ability to reason and reasoning in academic life.

Capacity for reason and reasoning in Mathematics:

Humour in social media seems to reinforce values concerning gender divide and stereotypic belief in line with mathematical reason and reasoning by (re)producing the consistent and widespread myth about downgraded performance of girls, in other words, girls' lack of reasoning skills in Mathematics. An image indicates such gender injustice and unfairness by showing "a girl's incompetence in solving mathematical problems in order for proving a boy's creativity and reasoning in offering love message". Thus, in the name of amusement, the humour demonstrates gender construction by portraying a boy's higher ability to reason compared to a girl. In this way, humour positions girls into passivity and legitimates gender discrimination instead of challenging the stereotypic insights regarding gender difference in reason and reasoning in mathematics. In a similar manner, another humour explicitly illustrates a girl's lack of intelligence and confidence related to mathematical reasoning by questioning, "*is it possible to do mathematics alone?"* However, when

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43 S. Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism*. (Cornell University Press 1986) Chapter 1 and 3, p. 18
44 Ibid, p. 20
45 K. L. Mulvey and M. Killen, "Challenging Gender Stereotypes: Resistance and Exclusion" *Child Development*, Vol. 86 (3), 2015, p. 691
46 Ibid, p. 691

a girl demonstrates potentials for high attainment in all subjects including non-traditional subjects such as mathematics; it is felt improper to acknowledge her powerful ability in reason and reasoning. Hence, she is disparaged as "liar" because of an irrelevant remark she has made before the exam. Thus, instead of acknowledging a girl's academic success that is related to her self-respect or self-esteem or social recognition in terms of respect and admiration the humour emphasizes her lack of trustworthiness. Thus, humour represents the metaphor of "lack" that is associated with girls and legitimates the traditional notion that girls are poor performers in mathematics. In is way, humour reinforces the prescriptive aspect of gender role that suggests what is expected or desirable from girls, in other words, what is the "proper" performance for girls in mathematics.

Contrary to these examples, in almost all instances, the central feature of humour concerning boys represents "potential" aspect in mathematic achievement. Such potential is indicated by the chat style between two adolescent boys as they discuss their dedication and interest to complete mathematics homework on time. The conversation style also signifies confidence that these boys had in themselves and their ability to solve mathematical problems independently. Thus the humour recreates the idea that boys' performance in mathematics is based on brilliance and needed understanding of mathematical concepts. Similar to this chat style, a number of images feature boys' ability to conceptualize mathematical concepts such as "function". Such illustrations for girls are uncommon in humour.

Interestingly, representation of boys' and girls' achievement in mathematics differs considerably. When "a boy cannot solve an addition and needs help of the mathematics teacher", the boy's failure is represented in a funny way by stating, "*A friend in need is a friend indeed*". Likewise, when it comes to a boy's poor performance, a chat style conveys the meaning that "there is no effect of poor performance in one's life". The paradox here is that when a girl performs well in mathematics, she is "unconsciously blamed" as she said 'something different regarding her exam readiness'. Thus, in many different ways humour supports values concerning gender discrimination in Mathematics achievement.

In summary, humours in social media seem to create and perpetuate some form of implicit gendered meanings that help to sustain values concerning masculine and feminine stereotypes, prejudice, and tolerance of discrimination. According to this research, humour provides the "evidence" of stereotypical attributes of boys that portray boys as active, independent, and self-confident as well as traditional

stereotypes of girls that portray girls as passive, dependent, less confident, frightening, and hard working in relation to mathematics performance and thus construct cultural dichotomy of active/passive, dependent/independent, confident/ frightening etc. Given that the value-laden false beliefs regarding boys and masculinity are attached to the former and girls and femininity to the later in each dichotomy, such evidence of classification constantly proves the mathematical inferiority of girls to boys and thus creates the "truth about girls". Importantly, by creating such truth, the meanings and categories of gender difference continue to produce as signs that position girls as subordinate to boys. Positioning of girls as subordinate to boys is problematic given that girls' subordinate status in gender hierarchy influences greatly on girls' low self-esteem and confidence; however, girls are often wrongly blamed for lacking adequate confidence in Mathematics.

The hidden preference of positioning girls as subordinate to boys in reason and reasoning in mathematics can be understood based on historical considerations about gender discrimination. As stated by Walkerdine (1989),

> Since the Enlightenment, if not before, the rational self was profoundly masculine and deeply patriarchal from which the woman was excluded. Thus, male appeared as the 'thinking' subject; and the female provided both the biological prop to procreation and to serving the possibility of 'man'. The present legitimization of women's exclusion, inferior status, and practices of discrimination is based on such fact.[47]

According to this explanation, if girls are successful in Mathematics, girls' success will appear as a threat to masculine rationality, boys' position of academic superiority, and patriarchal power. Hence, prejudice related to girls' success in Mathematics is necessary to sustain the prevailing power imbalance between boys and girls (ibid). The hidden meaning to continue power imbalance resulted from different expectations between boys and girls in reasoning not only influences performance in academic life but also impacts expectation surrounding professional expertise and ability.

Role segregation into personal and professional spheres

Humour seems to sustain socially constructed traditional sharp distinction between public and private realms. Such cultural representation of men and women's expected roles is justified by depicting women as homemaker involved in fulfilling "all

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47 V. Walkerdine, "Femininity as Performance", *Oxford Review of Education,* Vol. 15 (3), 1989, p. 269

household duties" such as "childcare"; "cooking"; "cleaning of cloth, utensils, and household"; "serving food"; and "gathering firewood"; and men as breadwinner responsible for "administering public world" e.g. by "accumulating stones", "singing song at night in public space", and "supporting people by providing knowledge and information". Furthermore, humour perpetuates the idea that generation after generation and irrespective of class difference, only girls will be responsible for managing household chores. Consequently, girls will not be able to participate in public service specifically after giving birth of a child. Examples of quotes such as "*Now-a- days, it is difficult for us to find a female domestic help. How would the tasks be managed in your time? Who will help in cleaning cloth?", "In the absence of the female domestic help, the household cleaning task becomes difficult for the female land owner who is not used to in dealing with dust"*, and "*What will be the outcome of studying? You won't be able to continue job after giving birth of a child"* illustrate the rules and meanings constructed by culture about public-private dualism. Importantly, such depictions reflect men and women's stereotyped separate roles and (re)create conditions for structuring gender power relations. In this relation, women may experience powerless because their positioning within domestic or female space reproduces their invisible structure of work, justifies their exclusion from men's activities attached to society, and thus conforms women's lower rank, subordinate position, and unequal status in gendered hierarchical positions in everyday life. In addition, metaphoric explanation of cultural goods illustrated in the images of cooking and cleaning spaces signifies low height of instruments and machines such as stove and washing machine in order to justify the association of girls and women's roles with these objects. Representation of ideological construction of these feminine tools appropriate for use of girls and women (only) seem to legitimate and sustain girls' attachment in private space. Girls performing domestic labor in private space are often labeled as bearing stereotypical feminine traits of soft, noncompetitive, and subjective kinds of feelings and behavior. Such behavior is encouraged in pre-marital intimate relations. Communication between such partners e.g. "*You [girls] can go for a date just by using make- up. We [boys] have to manage the money for dating by dropping sweat from head to feet"* supports to sustain prejudice regarding girls' lack of self-reliant, incapability to provide for themselves, and their dependency, and passivity to the active male counterparts. Importantly, "girls and women's passive role within the home is essential to capitalist domination given that cooking and cleaning for male household members means men are fit, healthy enough to enter

workforce"[48] and they can demonstrate potential, brilliant academic career, visible nature of work, and control in public life. Thus, women appear primarily as social objects whose function involves "making men's intellectual enquiry relatively easy" and expanding the symbolic capital held by men.[49] These perspectives assign value and privilege concerning participation in public life on the basis of sex difference.

Given that public life is mostly administered by men, in private life, many men are often involved in child care activities with women, however, the nature of parenting response differs considerably by gender. Parental behavior and degree of intimacy with toddlers and young children indicate mothers as sensitive, supportive, responsive, playful, warm, and positive towards children and fathers as directive, power assertive, and demanding. Such depiction reproduces prejudice by transmitting the shared cultural meanings that indicate men are authoritative and women are supportive.

Importantly, in public space, ideology concerning gendered nature of professions is sustained following historically rooted arrangements between a man who hunts and a woman who gathers. For Harding (1986), such cultural basic arrangement is problematic for women because following the nature of "women as gatherers", women might be assigned to narrow range of "womanly" activities - a stereotype that label women as non-competitive and soft.[50] In humour items, such problematic nature of basic arrangement is maintained by positioning girls predominantly in "teaching elementary level children", and performing work as "assistant of a doctor", "cashier", and "domestic help" and boys in "science e.g. invention of tools and machine, experimenting chemical reactions, and involvement in astronomy, and photography; information technology e.g. Google, Microsoft, Reliance, Facebook, Zara, Alibaba, and Apple; politics; law; medicine e.g. doctor; economics; business; game making, and sports e.g. football; and entertainment e.g. art/painting, circus, film such as Mr. Bean, Spiderman, Harry Potter, and Chalie Chaplin" and thus humour in general depicts that boys hold important positions and they get higher wages compared to girls. Boys' are also positioned as "director" and "general manager" and "cook" in

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48 E. Delap, "Policy Arena. Child Housework in Urban Bangladesh: An Exploration of Intra-Household Labor Deployment", *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 12, 2000, p. 725.

49 E. B. Silva, "Gender, Home and Family in Cultural Capital Theory", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 56 (1), 2005, p. 96

50 S. Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism,* (Cornell University Press, 1986) Chapter 1 and 3, p. 61

public space. As such, a set of dualism such as objectivity/subjectivity, ruler/ruled, tough/soft, public/private are recreated by legitimizing men's intelligence, authority and related microstructures of power and gender privileges of men in social order. Unconscious interpretations and rationalizations of such gender difference have the potential to construct gender totemism in non-traditional professions; consequently, few numbers of girls may show interest to participate in non-traditional professions in public life.

Interestingly, when both men and women are engaged in public life, gendered metaphors of heavy/light and scientific/artistic are constructed by men's use of scientific instrument such as "heavy camera" and women's use of artistic objects such as "light chalk", "stick", and "pen and paper". There is evidence of space and gender construction by placing men and women's "masculinized" and "feminized" capitals in private space. While men's use of cameras is positioned on bed, women's use of tools is placed in kitchen and washroom. Thus, use and placing of men and women's objects in public and private spheres metaphorically indicate status and power difference in gender social relations. Humour thus assigns gender to 'non-human entities' and show tendency to award positions of power and authority more often to men compared to women.

Not surprisingly, values concerning gender difference in scientific contribution is sustained by acknowledging the ability of the man who was the "first person to walk to the moon" by adding his another personal quality such as "making pizza" but disparaging the intellectual power of a woman who was the "first computer programmer" by stating, "*That's why the language of computer is difficult to understand*" or by criticizing brilliance of a group of "female medical graduates" by depicting their "evil and mad facial expression" that suggests their unbalanced and unreliable psychological status. Notably, these kinds of unique contribution in science are culturally perceived as men's work, hence, it is crucial to control women's such power or capability or cultural traits of masculinity by gender-based exclusion from science. A recent research conducted on humour in a Malaysian radio phone-in program suggests that men are targeted for mockery for exhibiting stereotypical feminine characteristics … and women are mocked for embodying traits culturally ascribed to masculinity.[51] By targeting women for mockery because of women's distinctive contribution in science, humour justifies the critical judgment to

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51 M, Yoong, "Men and Women on Air: Gender Stereotypes in Humour Sequences in a Malaysian Radio Phone-in Program", *Gender and Language*, Vol. 11 (1), 2017

view science as masculine profession, hence, suggests preserving scientific tasks only for men.

Interestingly, not only in science, women's any kind of involvement in public space is disparaged strongly in humour. There is evidence of imposed norms to exclude women from risk taking job such as "fire service" as well as from "teaching profession" in order for reinforcing women's involvement in culturally expected gender-consistent roles. In general, "some men feel threatened by women's competition"[52] and that is indicated by a man's voice such as "every woman student who takes a position as doctor or lawyer is stealing a place from us suggesting that men's economic interests, the befts of women oppression as oppressor, and the feeling of superiority"[53] reinforces women to follow gender-consistent roles in public life. To this regard, humour explicitly symbolizes the social pressure on women to adopt gender values by stating, "*Woman, in whichever way you show your self-importance, there is always a kitchen and a fry-pan waiting for you*" and thus confines women to the kitchen and housework. This imposed prescriptive norm sustains the separation of two spheres: public for boys and private for girls and transmit symbolic meanings concerning men/women with society (collective)/ individual (personal), visibility (transparent) and concealment (opaque), and openness (accessible)/closure (sealed).[54] By recreating these meanings, it seems that humour marginally contributes to emancipate women from men's control given that the liberal opposition between public and private life perpetuates the structural subordination of women to men.[55] However, only one humour demonstrates a woman's negotiation with ideologies concerning regulation of her ability to compete in public space for instance "sports field" in order for redefining her downgraded position in gendered social life and thus to be taken seriously.

In summary, humour signifies values and ethics concerning gender construction in social media by reproducing socially constructed gender difference. Such difference is maintained by recreating scripts for "gendered task" and the segregated public and private spheres. The invisibility in and the exclusion of women from public life and

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52 S. D. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (Vintage, 2010), Vol. 1, p. 33

53 Ibid, p. 33

54 S. Susen, "Critical Notes on Habermas's Theory of the Public Sphere", *Sociological Analysis,* Vol. 5 (1), 2011, p. 40

55 C. Chinkin, "A Critique of the Public/Private Dimension", *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 10 (2), 1999, pp. 387-395.

associated less power and status of women in gender hierarchy sustain oppositional, dichotomous, and hierarchical situations of power/weak, superior/inferior, and inclusion/exclusion and operate as classificatory schemes of cognitive structures that helps to construct gendered social world. Given that higher value is assigned historically to all former traits of the symbolic oppositions of dichotomous system, it seems that the belief and behavior constructed from these humour would metaphorically fit with the meanings and behavior related to culturally approved stereotypical characteristics of masculine and feminine. Logically, the biologically set characteristics of males and females turn to socially constructed identities and practices that are associated with boys' "natural" position of power and subordination of girls in everyday life.

The process of subordination by power

The process of "male dominance and female submission" is common in humour. This finding is consistent with previous idea that states, "Dominant and submissive acts are perceived to be more stereotypic of men and women respectively".[56] In general, "when people expand themselves and take up a lot of space, they are perceived as dominant, whereas when they constrict themselves and take up little space, they are perceived as submissive".[57] In humour, this gendered pattern of domination and submission takes various forms.

Comparison between a boy and a girl's positioning depicts privilege of being a boy and marginalization of being a girl. The symbolic meaning of a humour reflects rewards and autonomy to a boy as "a gift box" is shown "coming from the sky targeting a little boy". By contrast, the humour depicts symbolic violence by showing an "explosive bomb coming from the sky targeting a little girl". Consequently, the girl is feeling powerless and helpless, becoming reasonably afraid observing the imposed danger, and submitting her to this threat and vulnerability in which she does not have any control. Another humour shows a crying girl who is protected by a boy and states "*Defend her in public and edit her in private*". This image indicates the boy's ability to set rules for the girl and that the girl is supposed to behave "properly feminine" to be a "true" a girl. Because the girl is portrayed as unfit to protect her from her social environment i.e. the public sphere, she needs support from a boy and,

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56 D. R. McCreary and N. D. Rhodes, "On the Gender-Typed Nature of Dominant and Submissive Acts", *Sex Roles*, Vol. 44 (5/6), 2001, p. 348.
57 L. Z. Tiedens and A. R. Fragale, "Power Moves: Complementarity in Dominant and Submissive Nonverbal Behavior", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 84 (3), 2003, p. 558

hence, she is characterized as the "dependent sex class" and "perceived being". In one word, she is metaphorically described as absence, lack of meaning, irrationality, and negativity. Thus, she is stereotypically expected to be helpless and to submit her to the male dominance. This perception adds prejudice for her being and labels her as the "weak sex", or the "second-rank citizen", consequently, she is not expected to exercise the same privilege as a boy enjoys in social life, and thus can never be equal to a boy. Conversely, the ideological expression of the boy's desire to protect, correct, and control the girl's mind and body positions the boy as the "strong sex" who must dominate both public and private spheres. Thus, the social descending of male/female gender organization is defined in humour in accordance with gender relations that are based on male power and domination.

Humour also suggests the masculine cultural identity of the patriarchal man who "alone chooses the purpose of family expenditure and thus controls family decisions". By attaching power to the men as family decision makers, humour seems to sustain women's subordination that refers to "having less power or authority than someone else in a group"[58] as well as women's economic privilege. However, by portraying such male-female interaction in everyday decision making, humour reproduces the idea that the social relations are by and large gender-oriented.

Humour depicts existence of covert power difference between male and female that cause girls' subjugation in pre-marital intimate relations. An important feature of the girls' subjugation is that she must adopt imposed feminine identity. Construction of such identity is influenced by boys' and girls' selection of ways to impress intimate partners. As indicated in humour, girls use "beauty" e.g. "*Am I not the most beautiful amongst your all ex-girlfriends*?" and boys use their "ability to buy 99 iPhones" to impress intimate partners. Furthermore, examples such as "girls will be waiting and boys will approach love message either verbally or by using text message", and girls are more likely than boys to "show concern about maintaining intimate relation" differ from the way boys perceive intimate relations. Despite that an example depicts boys' ways of valuing intimate relations by stating, *"She blocked me in facebook. But still I watch her profile from my another account"*; boys, in general, are shown to "maintain more than one girl friend and more than one wife at a time", "move from girl to girl"; and "engage in intimate relation for time passing". Interestingly, because of the concealed existence of male domination and female submission, according to

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58 A. Sultana, "Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis", *The Arts Faculty Journal*, 2011, p. 7

these examples, the relationships seem not "mutual".[59] It is because "men value autonomy … and women value relationships, and women are more concerned in their dealings with others to negotiate between opposing needs so that the relationship can be maintained".[60] Influenced by such patriarchal ideology, the subtle power process in pre-marital intimate relations is sustained and gender inequality is perpetuated.

Gender-based violence including sexual abuse reflects girls' assimilation to a weak sex and thereby their continuous subjugation that occurs in both public and private spaces. Humour shows the ways in which abusive experience is produced, maintained, and normalized and thus legitimates male dominance, and female subordination. Domination refers to "power over others in terms of one's capacity to carry out his own will despite resistance from other people – for example, getting people to do things they would not otherwise do".[61] Generally, the technique to perpetuate the ideology of exploitation and domination differs for boys and girls. Compared to boys, girls are more sexually abused. Making sexual comments, sexual looks, unwelcome touching, and rape are some forms of customary behavior that are viewed normative sexuality of boys. Abusive behavior is experienced from stranger, peer, partner, and family member as a way to control girls. Values concerning disrespecting girls' consent as well as boys' coercive power are featured in boy-girl pre-marital intimate relations by depicting a girl's lack of defensive skill to a boy's coercive power. Thus, humour indicates the "social powerlessness of girls and ability of boys to impose certain behavioral constraints on the powerless group, for instance, girls".[62] Portrayal of such interaction of male dominance and female submission in intimate relation, humour sustains boys' "heterosexual desire" that "does not mean desire for opposite sex, but a desire that is organized around eroticized dominance by men and submission of women and the process is seen as mutual".[63] Furthermore, representation of the quote "*men will be men"* in the context of abusive look justifies and normalizes male sexual drive behavior. Because of all these 'normal' masculine practices, girls are positioned in a social landscape of gendered power and

59 S. G. Turner and T. M. Maschi, "Feminist and Empowerment Theory and Social Work Practice", *Journal of Social Work Practice*, Vol. 29 (2), 2015, pp. 151–162.

60 Patrocinio. P. Schweickart, 'Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading', Showalter, Elaine (ed.), *Speaking of Gender*, (Routledge 1989), p. 38

61 A. G. L. Romme, "Domination, Self-determination and Circular Organizing", *Organization Studies*, Vol. 20 (5), 1999, p. 803

62 D. G. Sunar, "Stereotypes of the Powerless: A Social Psychological Analysis", *Psychological Reports*, Vol. 43, 1978, p. 511

63 Sheila Jeffreys, 'Heterosexuality and the Desire for Gender'*,* Richardson, Diane (ed.), *Theorizing Heterosexuality: Telling it Straight*. (Open University Press, 1996) p. 76

established hierarchies. In this sense, power is meant "as the ability of some actors to influence the behavior of others, whether through the use of persuasion, authority, or coercion".[64] By legitimizing the prescribed sexual script that reads boys' sexually aggressive behavior as allowable and ordinary, and justify girls as object of sexual exploitation, boys are assigned to power in terms of authority and coercion that support to maintain gender hierarchies and hegemonies. Male sexuality in humour is thus portrayed as dominance, aggression, and desire; by contrast, female sexuality is depicted as passivity, vulnerability, and submissiveness. Consequently, a range of dichotomies such as oppressor/oppressed, subject/object, and agent/victim are constantly produced by Humour. Social media thus appears as a critical site that not only (re)produces stereotypes, prejudices and corresponding gender inequality but also (re)creates the intertwined aspect of gender, sexuality, and desire.

The societal attitude of blaming girls further constructs the link between gender and sexuality. In Humour, a girl is discouraged to "travel alone with a driver or a boyfriend in fear of blaming attitude of the guards". Furthermore, a girl is shown criticized by a male because she is labeled as a "slut" in public for being raped. This labeling is associated with reduced social dignity of girls, considering girls as weak, and holding girls responsible for their victimization. Furthermore, by emphasizing the "victim" perspective by the statement, "she is victim of rape", and avoiding any such statement in other situations of abusive experiences such as sexual comments, looks, and unwelcome touching; humour explicitly creates the division between "what is" and "what is not" violence and thus constructs the classification between "real rape" and everyday violence or "little rape". Girls' resistance to violence is rare. Only one humour portrays a girl's "momentary" resistance to subordination i.e. "fragmented and less visible than collective and organized mass movements".[65] "A girl's report to an adult male authority" indicates her active negotiation with the cultural practice of everyday little rape and resistance to refusal of the boy's sexual advantages. However, lack of response from the adult authority to such troubled experience justifies boys' normalized aggressive sexual behavior. The norm concerning boys' normalized sexual acts and sexual agency relates to the socialization process of boys in a culture that encourage male power particularly within the context of heterosexual relationships. In fact, the prevalent masculine ideology requires boys to be dominant and tough that increases boys' risk of

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64 R. Ryle, *Questioning Gender: A Sociological Exploration,* (Pine Forge Press, 2012) Chapter 11, p. 471
65 J. Okley, *Own or Other Culture,* (Routledge, 1996), Chapter 10, p. 230

committing sexual abuse of girls. However, the continued sense of insecurity that emerges from heterosexism or boys' heterosexual power often pushes girls to stay "at home" and encourages girls to "visit public space after marriage and with girls' spouses" who can protect girls from abusive experiences. Such practice of pushing girls towards private space and being dependent on male partners further (re)create conditions for social suppression.

In short, the examples stated to explain the process of being subordinated by power indicates the ways in which male domination persists in both family and society. Considered from a gender viewpoint, male domination is associated with women's lack of "authority". Thus social relations between men and women depicted in humour represent men as the capitalist economic exploiter, i.e. the "exploitation of man by man", who functions as the dominator and the provider and extends his power over the woman.[66] Consequently, culturally constructed sets of dualisms such as dominate/dominated, control/controlled, free/forced, aggressor/victim, dominant/submissive, protection/risk, little rape/real rape are created in humour mostly from girls' repeated subjugation and thus girls' inferiority to boys. Given that boys' attributes have higher status compared to girls' attributes in classification, (re)production of these gendering processes encourages girls to "be women, stay women, become women".[67] Creating conditions for such understanding of becoming women through repeated performance, humour justifies the idea that "gender is an aspect gradually acquired".[68]

3. Discussion

What kinds of normative beliefs about proper standards of conduct or preferred results regarding gender justice are promoted by humours? Drawn from the idea of the prejudice norm theory, in this paper, we have demonstrated that except few instances of similarity that exist in boys' and girls' dress code; length of hair; mastery and being warm; intellectual power; and ways of valuing intimate relation; as well as rare instances of girls' negotiation to reform stereotypic norms and beliefs, humour in social media functions as powerful and dominant site for sustaining ethics and values in line with normative tolerance of discrimination against marginalized social groups for instance girls and women. Our findings support the prior research on gender in

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66 K. G. N' Guessan, "Gender Hierarchy and the Social Construction of Femininity: The Imposed Mask", *Act AIassyensia Comparisons*, 2011, p. 185

67 S. D. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, (Vintage, 2010), Vol. 1, p. 23

68 J. Butler, "Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's Second Sex", *Yale French Studies*, Vol. 72, 1986, p. 35

popular internet humour that suggests that traditional stereotypical gender representation still prevails in regard to portraying women as more dependent, needy, emotional, talkative, nagging, and concerned with self-beautification and shopping compared to men.[69] We have noted that humour transmits cultural values for discrimination, power structure, and privilege in regard to gender following culturally constructed scripts that are rehearsed repeatedly in humour in order for legitimating the scripts as the integral part of adolescent social media users. Drawn from this research, we assume that stereotypic representations of Humour seem to have powerful influence either on reinforcing prejudice or cognitive dissonance among adolescents. In settings with little cultural exchange, deeply prejudicial and discriminatory contents of humour may reinforce stereotypic identity formation. In these settings, adolescents who are high in prejudice may continue to become uncritical of the meanings conveyed by stereotypic humour. Consequently, they may conceptualize the shared normative standards of tolerance of sexism functional in local context. They may also find it risky to challenge group norms in fear of being rejected as "out-group member". In fact, in these settings, adolescents who adopt identity that disrupts social norms, are likely to experience mockery due to deviation from normative ideologies. However, in a different setting where there is considerable interaction between adolescents and progressive ideologies in families, schools, and community concerning gender, it is possible that these adolescents will experience conflict and dilemma in accepting stereotypic, undesirable, or inappropriate beliefs and attitudes portrayed by humour because of the non-stereotypic insights that they have conceptualized from other sources apart from humour. Indeed, these adolescents low in prejudice may judge stereotypic humour as unacceptable and ignore the meta-message of humour due to their awareness of the harmful nature of prejudice and discrimination. However, in spite of these adolescents' recognition of moral objections to prejudice-based humour and their awareness surrounding potential social costs of approving these humours, these adolescents at times may belief that the depicted prejudices are real, hence, they may alter their behavior to practice stereotypic belief in order for reducing cognitive dissonance. Consequently, the social, cultural, and historical construction of gender identity may continue to exist with the construction of "not-me" perspective that sets the boundaries of identity formation. Thus, the dominant culture will appear as the

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69 L. Shifman and D. Lenish, "Between Feminism and Fun(ny)mism: Analyzing Gender in Popular Internet Humour", *Information, Communication and Society*, Vol. 13 (6), 2010, pp. 870 – 891.

norm often admitting patriarchal ideologies to continue to oppress girls that would play an important role in sustaining gender hierarchies and inequalities. The questions of gender identity which then arise are: Who decides about the content and goals of humour in social media? Who benefits? Do those who set contents and goals of humour items remote from the contexts in which humour items are used? Do they have a moral responsibility to understand how humours are used, how they affect the formation of gender identity, and how they become more sensitive to reform the oppressive patriarchal structure of Bangladeshi society?

Humour can be particularly important in developing identity, or sense of self, of adolescents. Considering the popularity of social media in adolescents' lives, contents of humour that challenge the traditional views of gender stereotypes and inequalities by reforming the dominant construction of masculinity and femininity could be an effective means to reduce gender-based prejudice. Additionally, consciousness raising of boys and girls about humour and prejudice from a very early age is necessary because early formed insights affect individual's perceptions in adolescent and adult life. We could not measure the impact of these humour items on adolescents' perceptions, cognitive dissonance, and identity formation. Telling and demonstrating gender based jokes and images to a group of adolescents and asking them to reflect on moral judgments on the verbal and visual images could be a key element for future research. More research is needed to examine the types of portrayals that have most effective influence on adolescents in promoting values concerning equality and justice. Future research could also examine the representations of humour concerning gender justice in other websites that enable adolescent users to participate in social networking.

Acknowledgement

Appendix

1. Construction of appearance

Now, do not be dark by doing a job under sun. Rather you take care of [your] beauty staying at home, you will find [a] good boy [groom]. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

You have never looked dark. You should not go under sun. Mix turmeric with ten glasses of milk and drink the mix in the morning. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

You have taken so less amount of rice, do you follow dieting? That is indeed right! Later on, if you gain weight, it would be problematic to arrange a marriage [for you]. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Beauty in humour is more appreciated for girls compared to boys

Are you going to coaching or fashion show? Before marriage, girls should not use so much make-up. After marriage, use make up for your husband. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Why do you use so much make-up? You are naturally beautiful. Which girls use make up? Those girls who are black, not beautiful. Why would you use powder? You are naturally bright. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Ish! When you were young, your hair looked so good. Now, by not taking care, your hair turned to curly. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Female appearance and body weight relate to finding a good marriage partner

You are not as beautiful as Aishwarya. Even a rickshaw puller will not marry you. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Strong desire to transform girls' appearance and rare reflection on success

When I enter the wedding my party, I should look like a queen. (Source: Raba Khan, YouTube)

Didn't you pass one year after your marriage? When would you pass on good news? There is good news Aunti. I got a promotion. And, I also bought a new car. Pray [for me]. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Girls are mostly shown using a range of visible cosmetics, jewelry, and transforming eye-brows, hair, and nails

My dress is silver. But my mother-in-law wants me to wear jewelry made of gold. That's fine. Why? Don't I have any desire? Don't I have any desire to look good? This is her son's marriage, ...She can wear gold, who said no? (Source: Raba Kahn, YouTube)

Is it necessary to wear this [nose ring]? How would I drink water wearing this? Please remove the make-up, let me go to home, [I] cannot sit (Source: Raba khan, YouTube)

Differences in Boys and girls style and color of hair, and use of eye-glasses

Construction of gendered identity and behavior

Girls who deviate from the limits of normalized ideologies are disparaged in Humour

Sit by positioning your leg appropriately. How do girls sit? In this way? And, you wear t-shirt and jeans … the length of your hair is short, after few days, people will ask me how is your son? (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

2. Character Traits

Boys are more competent, assertive, motivated by high achievement goals

"Men are using wide space for playing football". Interaction among the players shows that players are setting and achieving goal, demonstrating attitude of being competitive (Source: Ittadi Bangla funny clips, YouTube, published on May 18, 2007)

Imposed social constraints on girls to be competent and achievement-oriented

You will not be able to do anything. You are neither good in studies nor you can do work. (Source: Raba Khan, chat style between and mother and a daughter, You Tube)

What will happen by performing well in the exam? What will happen if you fail? (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Ok! What is the educational qualification of Bill Gates? He is so rich! What matters is money, result is not important. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Girls with communal qualities

What do you do in the washroom for such a long time? You will die by pressing and pressing the button of the phone. (Source: Raba Khan, conversation between a mother and a daughter, you tube)

3. Capacity for reason and reasoning in Mathematics

Ok, you say, did Sir ever teach us? He used to write on board and leave. He used to read newspaper for whole day and made quarrel with his wife. Is it possible to do Mathematics alone? I tried 100%. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

You will see, like everytime, Fareha will perform very well in exam this time as well. In every subject she will get A*. But, what did she say before the exam? Oh my God! I have no prep (preparation)! Lier! (Source: Raba Khan, YouTube)

4. Role segregation into personal and professional spheres

Your father is not bearing the expense of the ten domestic helps. I have to do all household works (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Remember one thing. Girls' fortune is the fortune of a female maid servant. You do not know even how to do a work. Now-a- days, it is difficult for us to find a female domestic help. How would this be managed in your time? Who will help in cleaning cloth? Will that be I? (Source: Raba Khan, chat style between a mother and a daughter, You Tube)

What will be the outcome of studying? You won't be able to continue job after giving birth of a child (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Communication between partners in pre-marital intimate relations

You (girls) can go for a date just by using make up. We (boys) have to manage the money for dating by dropping sweat from head to feet. (Source: Raba Khan, You Tube)

Women's involvement in public life

Now-a- days, it is difficult for us to find a female domestic help (Source, Raba Khan, YouTube)

"A woman is the assistant of a male doctor" (Source: Ittadi Bangla Funny clips, YouTube, published on December 16, 2016)

"When the man went to pay his bill, the woman informs him that he has to pay 13,800 Taka" (Source: Ittadi Bangla funny clips, YouTube, published on June 29, 2010)

Men's involvement in public life

"A woman is the assistant of a male doctor" (Source: Ittadi Bangla Funny clips, YouTube, published on December 16, 2016)

Gender difference in scientific contribution is sustained by acknowging the ability of the man and disparaging the intellectual power of women

Imposed norms to reinforce culturally expected gender-consistent roles

A woman's negotiation with ideologies concerning regulation of her ability in conpetative public space e.g. 'sports field'

5.   The process of subordination by power

Previliage of being a boy and marginalizatio of being a girl

The continued sense of insecurity that emerge from boy's heterosexual power often place girls at home and re(creates) dependency on male family member

My mother will not allow me to go such far away (Source: Raba Khan, YouTube)

There is no need to stay in your friend's house. After marriage, [you] can stay in [your] friend's house with [your] husband (Source: Raba Khan, YouTube)

BIRTH RITUAL, PRACTICES AND GENDER PREFERENCE FOR EXPECTING CHILD IN A MATRILINEAL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY: A CASE OF GAROS LIVING IN *SAINAMARI* VILLAGE, MADHUPUR, BANGLADESH

Tahura Enam Navile[*] and Jinat Hossain[**]

Abstract

This article explores the birth ritual and practices of a matrilineal indigenous community named Garo living in Bangladesh. Drawing on the concept of 'ritual' and building a theoretical framework of Medical Pluralism, the paper explores the birth ritual and birth practices that are performed among the Garo community. The study employed a quali-quantitative method (a qualitative method complemented by quantitative tools) in *Sainmari,* a Garo village of the *Tangail* district located in the northern part of Bangladesh. The findings indicate that, despite modern bio-medical facilities for birth practice, this ethnic community prefers their cultural inheritance through social learning. Also, the study identifies the changes that appeared in birth ritual, practices as well as gender preference in expecting child among this community reasoned from their religious conversion and socio-economic transformation.

Key words: birth ritual, birth practice, matrilineal, Garos, gender

1. Introduction

Ensuring safe childbirth and maternal health is one of the prior importance for the future generation of a country. Eliminating maternal and child mortality is a global challenge which is significantly emphasized and addressed through Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals.[1] Despite the global advancement of biomedicine and the development of traditional medical systems, many parents are often having a dilemma when making choices about the best healthcare services for the treatment of their children. Most of the developing countries in the world face enormous challenges with high maternal and child mortality.

Even a few decades ago, reducing maternal and child mortality was one of the major challenges for Bangladesh. In 1990 the under-five mortality rate in Bangladesh was 144 per 1,000.[2] After 25 years, Bangladesh made tremendous progress in reducing

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[1]   D. You, *et al.,* "*Levels and Trends in Child Mortality". Estimates Developed by The UN Inter Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation,* 2015

[2]   Unicef, UNICEF Annual Report, 2015

maternal and child mortality rates. According to UNICEF, in 2015 the child mortality rate dropped from 144 to 38 per 1,000, and the rate dropped by 73 percent.[3] However, until now, several kinds of birth delivery practices prevailed in Bangladesh. Medical pluralism, a concept denotes the plurality in the medical system is more visible in the child delivery system. Although there are numbers of ongoing criticism and debates on this plurality in medical practices, it is interesting to understand the dynamics through one specific case. In doing that, in this paper, we attempt to understand how one indigenous community group practices medical pluralism in the birth practice. The indigenous people in Bangladesh have less health care facilities compared to their Bengali neighbours.[4] Indigenous communities follow their own healthcare services, beliefs, traditions rooted in their rituals and cultures. Yet, because of the influence of modern healthcare practices, their health care services combine both traditional and modern medical facilities.[5]

Against this backdrop, this study narrowed down the focus to an indigenous Garo community in *Sainamari* village of *Madhupur* of *Tangail* district and explored their birth ritual and birth practices. To be specific, the study outlines the birth ritual and practices in Garo indigenous community.

In line to that, studying this community contains some relevance**,** first**,** research on such indigenous community is less covered in the existing literature, particularly highlighting their birth practice and rituals. Second**,** being a matrilineal community, it can be assumed that the Garo community contained a different family and gender role earlier before their conversion to Christianity. The community has been experiencing few changes over time and that certainly impacted changes in their birth practice, rituals, and gender preference. This study discloses these discussions through empirical insight. Third**,** several studies have stressed on of son preference among the Bengali patrilineal families.[6] A study of the Garo community would certainly be helpful to see similar practices among a matrilineal community in terms of their gender preferences.

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[3]   A. M. R. Chowdhury *et al.*, "The Bangladesh paradox: exceptional health achievement despite economic poverty", *The Lancet*, Vol. 382(9906), 2013, pp.1734-1745.

[4]   M. R. Islam *et al.,* "Antenatal and postnatal care seeking behavior in a matrilineal society: A Study on the Garo tribe of Bangladesh", *Journal of Family Welfare*, Vol. 55(1), 2009, pp. 62-69; S. M. Ahmed, *Health-care facilities, contraception and antenatal care services. Counting the hills: Assessing development in Chittagong Hill Tracts*, (Dhaka 2001), pp.151-160.

[5]   M. A. Sheikh and R. Islam, "Cultural and socio-economic factors in health, health services and prevention for indigenous people", *Antrocom Online Journal of Anthropology,* Vol. 6(2), 2010, pp. 263-273

[6]   S. Amin and L. Huq, *Marriage considerations in sending girls to school in Bangladesh: Some qualitative evidence*, (New York 2008); N. Chowdhury, "Bangladesh: Gender issues and politics in a patriarchy", *Women and Politics Worldwide*, 1994, pp. 94-113

The study explores the birth practices, rituals and gender preferences in expecting children among the Garo community.

2.   Theoretical Framework

To understand the birth practices of the Garo community, the authors theorize the concept- 'ritual'. According to Durkheim ritual is the approach through which collective beliefs and ideals are instantly generated, experienced, and acknowledged as fact within the community. Therefore, the ritual is the way by means of which individual views and behaviour are socially appropriated. So, ritual plays a crucial role in the collective representations of social lifestyles and a person's pastime.[7] On the other hand, a ritual is deeply connected with the individual or collective beliefs, as Shils stated that "beliefs could exist without rituals; rituals, however, could not exist without beliefs".[8] The study would explore the birth practice of Garo community based on the analysis of the concept of 'ritual'.

The theory of medical pluralism has gained wider applicability within health care discourses across the world. Given the fact that different societies and their people have different etiological models where different medical systems have to be used in their care practices and processes, medical pluralism became essential. As Kleinman states, health care 'described as a local cultural system composed of three overlapping parts: the popular, the professional and folk sectors'.[9] So, medical pluralism means the coexistence of multiple traditions of medicine. According to Kleinman's explanation, these three overlapping parts can be shown in the following Venn diagram.
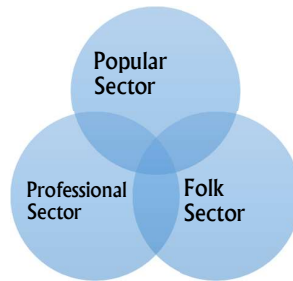
Figure 1: Venn Diagram of Kleinman's Medical Pluralism[10]

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7   C. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, (New York 1992), p. 19

8   Edward Shils, 'Ritual and Crisis', Donald R. Cutler (ed.), *The Religious Situation*, (Boston 1968), p. 736

9   A. Kleinman, "Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture: An Exploration of the Borderland between Anthropology"*, Medicine and Psychiatry*, Vol. 3, 1980

10   Steven M. Oberhelman, *Dreams, healing, and medicine in Greece: From antiquity to the present*, (Burlington 2013), pp. 1-10

As this study focuses on the cultural beliefs and practices in a plural setting thus the theory of Medical Pluralism is useful as it helps to understand the coexistence of multiple traditions of health care practices during childbirth in Garo indigenous community.

3. Methodological Approach

The study employed a qualitative method that includes interviews, focus group discussion, secondary data analysis and key informant's interview. Before applying the qualitative method, a household survey on 120 children in 46 households through using semi-structured questionnaire data was conducted to obtain a few basic information. These survey data gave an idea about a few key issues that lead us to continue using qualitative tools to get detail narratives. One-month intensive fieldwork has been conducted in village *Sainamari,* located at *Tangail* district among the indigenous Garo community. During the fieldwork, parents, village doctors, nurses, midwives, *Kabiraj (*traditional herbalists), *Khamal* (spiritual healer) were interviewed. Focus group discussion was conducted among twelve mothers. The key informant, interviewed was a 58-years-old midwife who is the most experienced in the field of childbirth in the village.

4. Context: [Re]-introducing Garo Indigenous Community

Garo community in Bangladesh live in the north-eastern parts of the country, such as Gazipur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Tangail, Sherpur, Jamalpur and some others are in the Sylhet district, closer to the Indian border.[11] The Garo lived on territory near the southern part of the Garo hills, most of which lies on the Indian side of the borders and the lowlands of Mymensingh, south of the Garo hills.[12]

Although the dominant Bangladeshi people call them 'Garo', they prefer to be called as '*Mandis*', which means person or people. About 80,000 to 100,000 Garos live in Bangladesh, a little over 14,000 live in Madhupur.[13]

The inhabitants of Madhupur region suggest that their ancestors were from the Garo Hills of Meghalaya. However, there is no record of the time when they had settled in this area. There is evidence of Garo settlements in the Madhupur area in the early 19th century British record.[14]

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[11] R. Burling, *The strong women of Modhupur*, (Dhaka 1997), pp. 10-20
[12] T. Bleie, *Tribal Peoples, Nationalism and the Human Rights Challenge: The Adivasis of Bangladesh*, (Dhaka 2005), p. 11
[13] E. W. Bal, *They ask if we eat frogs: Social boundaries, ethnic categorization, and the Garo people of Bangladesh*, (Eburon 2000), pp. 11-15
[14] R. Burling, *The strong women of Modhupur*, (Dhaka 1997), pp. 5-9

MAP OF BANGLADESH

SHERPUR
NETROKONA
SYLHET
JAMALPUR
MYMENSINGH
TANGAIL
GAZIPUR
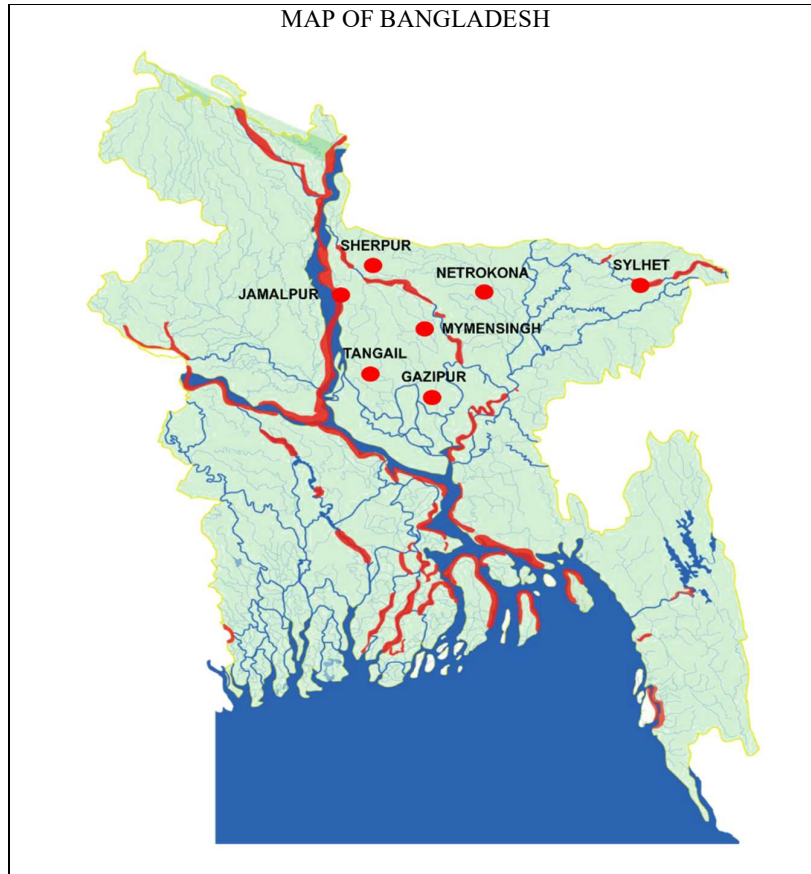
Figure 2: Location of Garo Inhabitants

With regard to practicing religion, the older Garo customary religion was '*Sangrarek'* which has traditions to sacrifice animals in different festivals and rituals. The majority of the Garos now profess Christianity, with most of them in Madhupur being either Catholics or Baptists. The Christian missionaries influenced the Garos with the new religion and different facilities like a good education and better medical aid were given. The lifestyle of the Garo indigenous community has changed a lot with the influence of Christianity and a higher rate of education. The majority of them are now leaving the rural areas to the capital city for better opportunities.[15]

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[15]   P. Gain, *Survival on the Fringe Adivasis of Bangladesh*, (Dhaka 2011), pp. 107-114

5. Findings

The findings of the study have presented several discussions. First, we discuss the birth practice of the Garo community. Second, we highlight different birth rituals of the Garo community and finally, we analyze their gender preferences in expecting a child.

4.1 Birth Practices among Garo Community

In many cultures, parents have a lot of preparation and concerns about expecting a child which is followed by delivering and nurturing the child. The preparation started when a mother gets pregnant. In the Garo community, the anticipation is that the wellbeing of the pregnant mother leads to healthy birth and childhood.

Different birth rituals that are practised among the Garo community are mostly home-centered. Household surveys, interviews and the discussion show that most of the Garo mothers of *Sainamari* give births at their home.
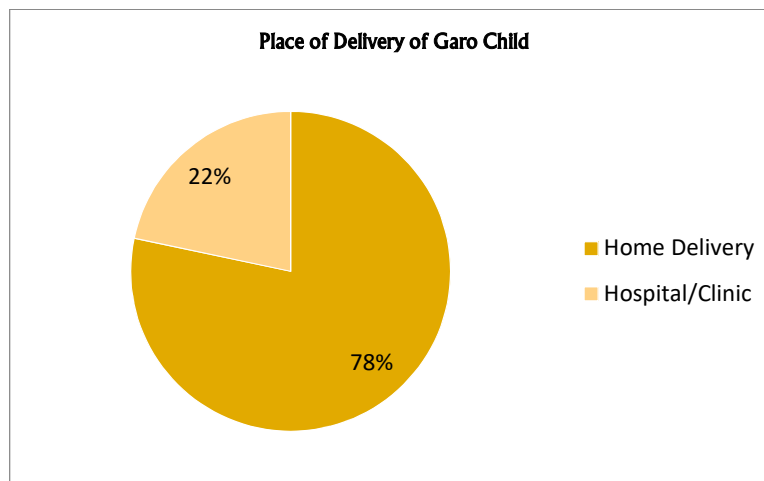
Figure 3: Place of Delivery of Garo Child
Source: Sample Household Survey (Fieldwork, 2015)

As the figure 3 suggests, 22% of births had taken place in a hospital, private clinics or in the Pirgacha Mission clinic (a clinic situates near the village). It is clearly seen that Garo children are mostly born at home with the help of midwives or relatives. To understand the dynamics and factors behind their preference to give birth at home, being asked the respondents refer to their tradition, which is deeply embedded with the homely atmosphere of child delivery. One of the respondents said,

> Childbirth is a natural process and mothers always give birth in their own house. This is a part of Garo tradition and symbol of our strength.

Another mother said,

> This tradition is not an exception from the birth practice of traditional Bengali community.

In the Bengali community, birth usually takes place at home and handled by the Dai (village nurse who might have some practical knowledge of child delivery).[16]
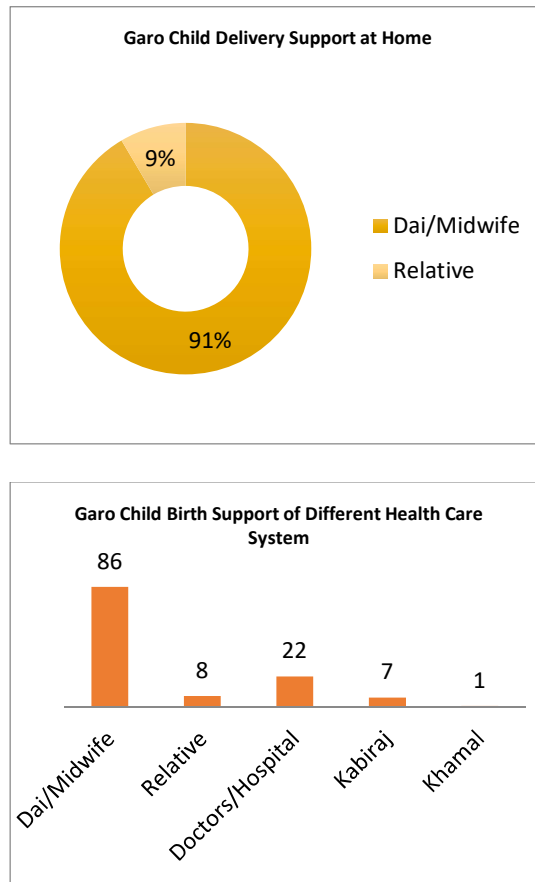
Figure 4: Garo Child Delivery Support of Different Health Care System
Source: Sample Household Survey (Fieldwork, 2015)

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16   S. Rozario, "Traditional birth attendants in Bangladeshi villages: cultural and sociologic factors", *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*, Vol. 50(S2), 1995, pp.145-152; S. A. Rahman *et al.,* "Healthcare-seeking behavior among the tribal people of Bangladesh: can the current health system really meet their needs?", *Journal of health, population, and nutrition*, Vol. 30(3), 2012, p.353

As the figure 4 shows, the traditional midwives, who also have formal training, helped in 86 home births which are approximately 91%. Only 8 children, almost 9% were born with the help of the mother's relatives at home without the support of a midwife. However, home delivery is not always easy for midwives or relatives. If it is the case, the patient chooses to go to a hospital or clinic, where they get biomedical practitioners to help mothers in child delivery. In most of the cases, when the mother faces complications at home birth or the condition of the child gets worse, it is a quite common practice of the family to take the pregnant mother either to a doctor, or *Kabiraj* or *Khamal*. Yet, in *Sainamari* village, the apparent lack of modern healthcare facilities in the areas causes frequent sufferings of the patients. Because of the long distances, in most of the cases, pregnant mothers have to travel before they can access a modern health facility and the cost is even beyond their budget.

However, our observation during the fieldwork denotes that the Garo culture recommends home delivery of babies due to their attachment with tradition which is similar to the notion "A woman at home is not delivered, she gives birth".[17]

In our discussion, many pregnant women identified two most important factors behind the successful birth of a child- the courage and the physical strength of the mother. They believe in "uniting mind and body for the birth event" and follow the rules accordingly. During focus group discussion a mother said, 'Giving birth at home is courageous and a symbol of our strength.'

For the Garo community, the main reason for home delivery is a more customary ceremony which is embedded in indigenous culture. According to the interviews of the parents, it was found that home is the place where this community feels more comfortable and it gives more courage when they are surrounded by their family members. Besides, the family members, especially the female kin relatives, provide emotional support to the mother during a home delivery. Women can share their bodily experiences, the pain, and sufferings with close relatives which is missing in the formal setting of hospital delivery. Therefore, the Garo community living in the *Sainamari* village, do not prefer the formal setting of the hospital instead they prefer home births.

4.2 A Conversation with a Midwife

To get a deeper understanding of childbirth practice and rituals, we planned to meet a midwife. The study observed that three midwives played an important role in childbirth

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[17]   K. Afsana and S.F. Rashid 'Constructions of Birth in Bangladesh.' Selin H. (ed.), *Childbirth Across Cultures*, Vol. 5, (Springe 2009), pp. 123-135.

in *Sainamari* village. We got in touch with a 58-years old midwife in one late afternoon during our fieldwork. She used to work as a traditional midwife without any formal training in the beginning. Then she took some formal training in 2007 at the 'Mother Theresa Asram', which is a well-known missionary hospital at *Jalchatra*. Providing training to the traditional midwives in the Garo community in the *Sainamari* is a recent phenomenon. Over time the Garo community managed to provide training for all midwives from missionary hospitals. The midwives assist pregnant mothers during the last few months of their pregnancy. The midwife we interviewed acknowledges that the formal training increased the efficiency of the traditional midwives to help mothers during childbirth. Because they can use both their traditional knowledge and experience and the modern training to help during home births. As she stated-

> After receiving formal training I can tell better about the position of the baby in the womb and suggest the family to take the mother to the hospital if there are any complications during delivery.

The contribution of the Church to train the midwives has a great influence on using modern equipment, which comes with their practical experience and traditional knowledge in handling childbirth.

4.3 Celebrating Birth Ritual

During the interview, the midwife also told about the celebration of birth ritual. According to her, the birth ritual in the Garo community starts by making *Chu* (Homemade rice beer) with the family members before the delivery time. Usually, the female family members and midwife stay with the pregnant mother during her labour pain on the day of home birth. When the child is born at home, they celebrate the joy by opening the jar of *Chu* and share it between new mother and midwife while other family members also join. Just after the birth of a newborn, they give a drop of *Chu* in the mouth of the newborn.

Also during the focus group discussion most of the mothers agreed that *Chu* gives strength to the mother after delivery. It is also a ritual to welcome an infant in the Garo community with a drop of *Chu*.

However, during the focus group discussion, few mothers also stated that the ritual of giving the *Chu* to a newborn has been changed in recent times while many Garo families do not prefer giving the *Chu* to newborn babies.

During an interview A 32 years old mother stated-

> Nowadays, we do not give *Chu* drop to newborn babies. This old ritual has been changed with our conversion to Christianity.

The key informant also shared her knowledge regarding the ritual of giving gifts to midwives after she helps in home delivery. According to her experience, when the child is born healthy, the family gives a cock and *Chu* to the midwife as a gift, instead of money. In case they are unable to give a cock, they will give food and *Chu* to her. However, the birth of a dead child brings much depression among the family members. In such a situation, they will give a bath to the dead infant with the *Chu* and then bury the dead body. The death of the child also caused disgrace for the reputation of the midwife. If it happens, she gets nothing from the family and the other Garo families usually discourage others to call her for helping during a home birth.

In summary, the birth ritual of the Garo community is very home-based. As explained earlier, the reason behind preferring home birth comes with the desire to be with the company of family members, homely celebration, family gathering and finally waiting for the new member. Midwife plays a very important role in all the celebrations, rituals and practices.

4.4 Gender Preference for Expecting Child

The study finds that the Garo community has changed their expectations of the sex of the child. As the Garo community is a matrilineal society, the birth of a daughter brings more happiness to a family. Women used to make a decision and lead the family among Garo community. Traditionally, the daughter inherits the property and runs the family.[18] This earlier had an impact on expecting girl child in the family. According to Khaleque the Garo woman occupies an important position in their society who plays a significant role in the labor force.[19] Nonetheless, with the findings from a few interviews with Garo parents as well as key informants, the study uncovered a different scenario. According to the key informant, conversion to another religion, from *Sangrarek* to Christianity influences gender preference for expecting a child. Their conversion to Christianity makes male the head of the household. This indeed has changed this idea and previous practice in many families.

During the in-depth interview, a 42-years old mother narrated-

> A few decades ago, a girl child was expected in Garo family as the inheritance of property goes to the youngest daughter of a household. And she used to look after the household. But now there is no significant difference between girl or boy. Many Garo households have male household heads. In *Sainamari* village you will find both male dominant and female dominant households side by side.

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[18]   S. F. Harbison *et al.,* "Female autonomy and fertility among the Garo of North Central Bangladesh", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 91(4), 1989, pp.1000-1007.

[19]   K. Khaleque, *Social change among the Garo: A study of a plains village in Bangladesh*, (Canberra 2014), pp. 91-129

Because of changing preference, the welcoming ritual of a daughter or a son has become very usual in recent times. The birth of a baby, whether a boy or a girl brings equal happiness to most of the home.

Conversely, the custom is still different from the Bengali community because son preference is still visibly practised among Bengali Muslims and Hindus.[20] This remark is extremely interesting which underlines how their preferences and decisions are made as a result of many factors, deriving not only from past traditions but also from novelties, such as conversion to a new religion and socio-economic transformation. All these backgrounds sequentially lead to form a new family structure, power positions and hierarchy.

6. Analysis and Conclusion

The study discloses the dynamics with practicing medical pluralism through the insight of birth rituals and practices among the Garo community. It also highlights the changing factors behind the gender preferences of the child. It is visible that, home delivery is practised highly in Garo community of *Sainamari* village where midwife plays a vital role in home delivery by combining their indigenous knowledge and modern training. Thus, both traditional means of treatment and modern health care system blend together and intend to give a solution in the birth practices. As the theoretical framework indicates, Kleinman's Medical Pluralism theory explained that health care is divided into three different sectors: the popular sector, the folk sector and the professional sector. These categories show some similarities with the Garo people health care systems during childbirth in the *Sainamari* village. Home delivery is similar to the popular sector, the treatments provided by the *Kabiraj* and *Khamal* belong to the folk sector and the scientific medical system like hospitals or clinics belong to the professional sector. These health care systems during childbirth in the Garo community of the *Sainamari* village is shown in the figure 5 below.
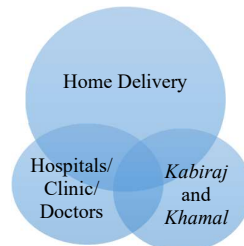
Figure 5: Health Care Systems During Child Birth among Garo Community
Source: Obtained during fieldwork, 2015

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20   F. D. Chowdhury, "Theorizing patriarchy: The Bangladesh context", *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Vol. *37*(4), 2009, pp. 599-622; A. J. M Sufian and N. E. Johnson, "Son preference and child replacement in Bangladesh: A new look at the child survival hypothesis", *Journal of biosocial science*, Vol. 21(2), 1989, pp. 207-216

In addition, over the time the conversion to Christianity had an influence on their gender preference of expecting a child, but still, they perform all rituals for a newborn like past tradition. While the previous expectation of the family was to get a girl, the recent preference is more liberal to both genders. It happens because their religious conversation brought a change in their family structure and power hierarchical system. This change certainly impacts on their changing preference, from girl child to any child. This is even different from the traditional Bengali community's gender preference of the child, wherein most of the cases, the son preference is noticeably visible. However, the birth ritual does not really change, especially celebrating with *Chu* shows their collective bonding with the community and their indigenous beliefs, goes for the child of any gender.

Based on the conceptual argument of 'ritual', the study shows, birth practices among the Garo community follow certain rituals, which are socially recognized and come as a symbol of collectiveness,[21] belief, communication[22] and existence.[23] Even after experiencing different transitions, the birth ritual which is related to their inner beliefs and deeply rooted in their inherited culture, the Garo community, in many forms and with few changes, follows their embedded birth culture. In other words, this inherited belief contains the symbol of collectiveness and togetherness with their preference of home delivery. In other words, the ritual of drinking the *Chu* to celebrate the birth of a child sequentially communicates their embedded beliefs and culture.[24]

Contrarily, conversion to Christianity changes their gender preference in expecting the child. That means, the power and control prescribed by religion certainly can cause a change in community preference, practices and beliefs. As the earlier practice denotes, women had the prime power of controlling family among the Garo community. But the recent socio-economic transformation and their conversion to Christianity changed these practices and preferences. Instead of expecting a female child, Garo seems to be more skeptical in gender preference, while they welcome both son and daughter with similar rituals and happiness. It would be an interesting study in the future to see if their religious conversion turns their practices and rituals towards more traditional patriarchal cultural practices and beliefs or not.

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[21] E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, (New York 1975)
[22] D.R. Bell and M. Douglas, "Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology", *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 22 (88),1972, pp.280.
[23] M. Gluckman, *Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society*, (New York 2017); V. W. Turner, *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual*, (New York 1967).
[24] C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York 1987)

Review Article

MUSLIMS OF BENGAL: AN ANALYSIS OF SOME PERSPECTIVES (1870S-1990S)

Heena Ansari[*] and SZH Jafri[*]

Abstract

Bengal Muslims have attracted the attention of British officials since the time of Permanent Settlement. The issues like peasant revolts, Faraizi movement and marginalization of Muslim elite during Inam Commission AD 1828-46 have enticed their interest. In the modern writings Bengal Muslim are treated as the 'zoology of the lower chordates' and have not come up to the grip of the problem in a manner which is required from the available data. In the 'bhadralok dominated' discourse, Muslim themselves are held responsible for their economic plight and educational backwardness. Such studies seldom take up the questions historically. Neither the files of Inam Commission could be accessed anywhere in India, nor the family papers of marginalized elite have survived. We only have colonial records providing a peep into the process/es of their marginalization. Any discussion on the plight of Bengal Muslim ought to begin with Permanent Settlement, the auction and monetization of zamindari rights. This review article seeks to analyse the data from much maligned and ignored work of W.W. Hunter,*Our Indian Musalmans-Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queen*; Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Azizur Rahman Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856,* and Rafiuddin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1900: A Quest for Identity*.These works specifically have taken up the Muslim questions, therefore, it becomes important to understand the diversity in their approach. The paper will see how far these works have addressed the question seriously and how far their approach helps us to understand the marginalization of pre-colonial Muslim elite in the eastern region of the Empire. It will also be our endeavor to point out what has been missed in the above-mentioned studies. The data ignored by the above scholars contains much empirical data to pin point certain aspects which are missing in the above works.

I

Historical Context

Muslim rule in Bengal began with the conquest of Muhammad Bakhtiyar in 1204 and lasted over five centuries. From 1204-1342, the region remained a province of Delhi Sultanate. The Sultans of Bengal, however, continued trying for their independence from Delhi. Thus, first-hand accounts provided by the scholars of Delhi Sultanate

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like Minhaj-al Siraj Juzjani, Amir Khusrau and Ibn-e Batuta mentioned Bengal as a negative region and the Bengal rulers as rebels. Ibn-e Batuta, in fact, mentioned the region as *Dozakh-e pur Ni'mat* i.e. [the hell full of bounties]. Amir Khusrau too condemned Bengal for being a land of 'seductive beauties'. For Khusrau it was this land of Bengal which kept Bughra Khan indulged into the beauties of Bengal also much so that he forgot all the advises of Balban and refused to come back to Delhi.

The desire for independence from Delhi's rule forced Bengal Sultans to situate themselves within the larger political cosmology of the Islamic east. The period of 14th-15th century therefore witnessed Bengal as highly influenced by the Indo-Islamic culture and as one which showed association with the larger 'Islamic world'. The establishment of Ilyas Shahi dyansty (1342-1487) as the first independent Turkic Muslim dynasty showed a number of huge religious buildings and the use of coins with Arabic verses, titles and legends. Mahur Ali in his work, *History of Muslims in Bengal*, showed that there was a tendency among the Bengali Sultans to use Arabic titles for themselves like *Yemin-ud daulah* (strength of the domain), *Yemin-ul khilafa* (strength of the Caliph), *Khalifat ul-llah bil-Hujjat wal-Burhan* (Caliph of God in possession and Proof)*, Zi Allah fil-Alamin* (Shadow of God on the earth) etc. They used Arabic verses on their coins to invoke the authority of Caliphs of Baghdad. Mohur Ali records that out of the pre-Mughal inscriptions found in Bengal, 144 inscriptions are in Arabic, 21 in Arabic mixed with Persian, 1 in Sanskrit, 1 in Bengali and the rest in Persian.[1]

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1   Mohur Ali, *History of Muslims in Bengal,* vol.1A, Riyadh, 1985, p.13; People gradually turned intolerant to the use of Arabic for writing Bengali. The narrowness was such that in 1951 in the Convocation address at Dhaka University, Syed Suleman Nadvi (the best contemporary Islamic scholar in India and Pakistan and the author of Prophet's most authentic Urdu biography) was attacked on his idea of going back to Arabic script for Bengali. His idea of using Arabic to save a large number of heritage in the form of Arabic manuscript was not accepted by the Bengali public mainly because they considered Arabic script as the domination of Urdu speaking elite; I am thankful to Professor S.Z.H. Jafri for providing me this information;
The Bengali Muslims were already facing the 'Bengali or Urdu' controversy which remained unsolved for a long time. The prominent leaders of the time like Abdul Latif and Ameer Ali demanded before the Education Commission that, 'Urdu should be to the Mahomedans what Bengali is to the Hindus of Bengal'. The educated class rejected Bengali as they saw it as an imprint of Hindu religion. Thus they began to speak colloquial Bengali called Patois. This was a 'mixture of Arabic and Persian words which the common people pronounced in a corrupted form.', Mohammad Abdur Rahim, *Muslim Society and Politics in Bengal 1557-1947,* Dacca University, 1978, p.143, cf. Asim Pada Chakrabarti, *Muslim Identity and Community Consciousness: Bengal Legislative Politics 1912-36,* Calcutta, 1993, p.9

The efforts of independent rule ended in failure with the coming of the colonial rule. The region was captured by the British East India Company after the defeat of Sirajuddaulah (the last independent Nawab of Murshidabad) in the battle of Plassey in 1757 and the complete hold came with the Battle of Buxar in 1764. By 1766, Bengal Presidency was established, eventually including all British territories north of Central Province. After assuming the *diwani* of Bengal, the EIC found itself short of trained administrators, especially those familiar with local customs and law. This resulted in the series of experiments of revenue extraction and maximization by the EIC.[2]

The next task for the EIC government was to deal with the pre-existing elites which, in this region, happened to be pre-dominantly Muslims and since the British were displacing Muslims, the Hindu majority was favourably inclined towards the British.[3] Therefore, while in South and Western India, the Company had to deal with the actual tillers, 'in Bengal the old landed aristocracy was extinguished and the British had the convenience of dealing with a new Hindu social class which they themselves had created and which owed its wealth, social status and even its community leadership position to its association with the Europeans.'[4]

In 1772 under Warren Hastings, the EIC took over the revenue collection directly in its hand, establishing a Board of Revenue with offices in Calcutta and Patna, eventually moving the existing Mughal revenue records from Murshidabad to Calcutta. This shift of capital and switch over of the revenue administration had disastrous impacts on the earlier elite. Especially for Muslims, it was practically an end of their presence in almost every important sphere of public life- judiciary, police or army. Last but not the least, the *ma'afi* holders became a target of the new administration in their quest for maximizing the revenue on one hand and making redundant the intellectual elite on the other. The crackdown over Muslims increased tremendously and openly after the revolt of 1857, where many of the *ma'afi* holders had participated and issued various proclamations in support of the rebel leaders. Thus, a number of policies were introduced to stop the grants and incomes of this class. They were reduced to the position of 'poor cousins of the landed elite who

2   See, Baden Powell, *Land System in British India*, Calcutta, 1882
3   Rajesh Kochhar, 'Seductive Orientalism: English education and modern science in colonial India', in *History, Ideas and Society: S C Mishra Memorial Lectures in History,* Ed. S.Z.H. Jafri, Primus, 2014, pp.3-20:4
4   *Ibid*

were now supporting the policies of the British Raj.'[5] Their situation further declined in 1843 when *Faraizis* were found actively participating against the British rule.[6]

In the light of these events, the present paper questions the dominant idea that the Muslim nobility chose to perish rather than support the new rulers and tries to argue, specifically in the context of Bengal, that 'choosing' something was actually not left as an option to Muslims. Rather, Muslim nobility was systematically uprooted from the ground much before and more so after the Revolt of 1857 as a punishment and/or as a threat of *wahabi/faraizi* movement.

The present essay attempts to analyse and uncover some of those writings which deal with the issue of condition of Muslims in Bengal under the British rule. This includes *Our Indian Musalmans-Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queen* by W. W. Hunter, *The Muslims of British India* by Peter Hardy, Azizur Rahman Mallick's *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal 1757-1856,* and Rafiuddin Ahmed's *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1900: A Quest for Identity*. All these works deal specifically with the Muslim questions, for a continuing period starting from 1757 to 1900 mainly in relation to the British policies in India. The paper attempts to understand the changes and continuity in society, polity and culture over the period of time. There will also be an attempt to seek the silences of the writers over certain policies of the British, especially regarding the change in the position of citizenry and the system of education.

II

Muslims in Bengal: Post Census Era

The wrong impression that Muslims formed only a small section of the population was prominent during the colonial period. Even by 1871-72, Grant Duff referred to people of Bengal as the 'Hindoo population.'[7] Perhaps, culturally as well as

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5 Saiyid Zaheer Husain Jafri, 'Indo-Islamic Learning and the Colonial State' in D.N. Jha (ed.), *The Evolution of a Nation: Pre-Colonial to Post Colonial* (Essays in Memory of R.S. Sharma), Manohar, 2014, pp.429-450

6 Taufiq Ahmad Nizami, *Muslim Political Thought and Activity in India during the First Half of the 19th Century,* Aligarh, 1969, p.86

7 Cf. Azizur Rahman Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856 (A Study of Development of the Muslims in Bengal with special reference to their Education)*, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1961, p.198; Dr. James Wise also mentioned that "when the English magistrates first came in contact with the people of Bengal, they arrived at the conclusion that the Muhammadans only comprised one percent of the population.", Wise, 'The Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal,* 1894 Part III, No.1, p.31, cf. Sufia Ahmed, *Muslim Community in Bengal 1884-1912,* OUP, Bangladesh, 1974, p.3

linguistically, the Muslims of Bengal were not much different from the Hindus of Bengal and this fusion must have led people to make wrong assumptions about the number of the Muslim population in Bengal. However, the 1872 Census by H. Beverley had revealed that Muslim population of Bengal was much larger than had been supposed. The Census mentioned 77.6% Muslims out of a total population of 1,310,729. Quoting Adam's survey of 1827, Beverley recorded the number of Muslims being 'seven to three, in the proportion of 1,000 Musalmans to 450 Hindus.'[8] The Census of 1881 showed that under the Lieutenant-Governor nearly 30% of a total population of 69,536,861 were Muslims and the great majority i.e.25.6% was within Bengal proper.[9] In the three divisions of Rajshahi, Dacca and Chittagong, Muslims formed nearly two-thirds of the population. As per 1941 Census of India, the province of Bengal had 33 million Muslims, constituting 55% of the population: it was the largest concentration of Muslims in the entire subcontinent.[10] Thus, Muslims had been a significant group in Bengal and the erasure or degradation of this group during colonial rule is an important area to study.

Providing an argument for the presence of this large population of Muslims Beverley wrote that it was not the introduction of foreigners but the real reason was the conversion to Islam of the numerous low castes. This can be further substantiated by the close resemblance between Muslims of Bengal and their fellow-countrymen who were still from the low castes of Hindus. Both were 'originally of the same race seems sufficiently clear, not merely from their possessing identically the same physique, but from the similarity of the manners and customs which characterize them.'[11] This conversion, in turn, was not due to coercion and conflicts but voluntary.[12] In its struggle with Hinduism, Buddhists collaborated Arabs much earlier and more completely than Hindus.[13] However, scholars have rejected this idea of

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8   H. Beverley, *Report of the Census of Bengal, 1872,* Calcutta, 1872, p.131

9   Sufia Ahmed, *Muslim Community in Bengal 1884-1912,* OUP, Bangladesh, 1974, p.2

10   Census of India, 1941, *Command Paper* No 6479, Table VI, II, cf. Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1985, p.2

11   H. Beverley, *op cit.*, pp.132-33

12   I H. Qureshi, pp. 39-42; Qureshi argued that at this time Mahayanist Buddhism was prevalent in Sind and resembled Hinduism in its essential tenets. It had become "corroded from within by the infiltration of Hindu beliefs and practices; cf. Derryl, *Religion and Society in Arab Sind,* Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1984, pp. 93-94

13   Derryl, pp.122-24; however, in the anthropological studies especially H.H. Risely in his *People of India Series* 1901-11 has argued that the Muslim population of eastern India and Bihar is in the blocks, this included around 92,50,000 people inhabiting in the densely populated contiguous areas. He has suggested that these areas represented a heavy concentration of Buddhist. Risley has suggested that perhaps prior to the Trukish invasion

conversion. Thus, Khondkar Fazli Rabi wrote *The Origins of the Musalmans of Bengal* (1895) and asserted that "the ancestors of the present Musalmans of this country were certainly those Musalmans who came here from foreign parts during the rule of the former sovereigns, and that the present generation of Musalmans are the offspring of that dominant race who remained masters of the land for 562 years."[14] The later scholars continued to link Bengali Muslims to the Muslims of foreign races like Turks, Afghans, and Persian etc.

Understanding and simplifying this problem of origin, many of the scholars have referred to the distinction between *ashraf* and *ajlaf*.[15]The Bengal Census of 1901 recorded two major social divisions among the Bengal Muslims: i) *Ashraf* or *sharif* or upper class Muslims, who were undoubtedly the descendants of foreigners and upper caste Hindu converts; ii) *Ajlaf* or *atrap* or *atraf*, which meant the low born and included all other Muslims. Besides this, a third group also existed i.e. *arzal*, which included people of degraded class.[16]

The process of marginalization of Muslims is reflected in the contemporary English public records and a passing mention is made here and there in the official publications too. W. W. Hunter's work *Our Indian Musalman-Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queens* (London, 1872; Karachi Reprint, 1964) for example, is the earliest work to describe the pathetic conditions to which Muslim elite as the middle class has been reduced to. He is the only one to have referred to the infamous Inam Commission, 1828-1846[17] and the disastrous impacts on the *ma'afi* holders and the institutions and education system of Muslims.

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    of this region the Buddhist were highly uncomfortable with the Hindu dynasties and therefore they have converted in mass to Islam soon after the Turkish invasion. So, perhaps it was a mass revolt of Buddhist against the Hindu domination. However, one requires more imperical evidence to sustain this argument.

14 Khondkar Fazli Rabi, *The Origins of the Musalmans of Bengal* (1895; Dacca: Soc. for Pakistan Studies, 1970) p. 43

15 *Atrap* is a Bengali equivalent and corrupted form of *atraf* or *aljaf*.

16 E.A. Gait, *Census of India 1901,* Vo.VI, Part 1, pp. 439-451, cf. Asim Pada Chakrabarti, *op cit.*, p.5; H.H. Risley, *The People of India,* Calcutta, 1915, pp. 122-23;
    It is noteworthy that the elite household used to have *maktabs* or institutions where along with their own children, their servants, their poor staff and the neighbors were also provided free education. Thus, we see that the conflict between *ashraf* and *ajlaf* was not there and the division itself was only recently constructed in the colonial era. Further, this social divide among Muslims was there everywhere in India including UP, Punjab, Bihar and other regions. But for strange reasons this question is highlighted only in the context of Bengal. Nowhere else this debate has survived.

17 According to Hunter, Inam Commission was set up in 1828 for the resumption of land grants that were earlier given to the scholastic classes to maintain and nurture their

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The Systematic Purge: Introduction of Resumption Proceedings

In order to consolidate its position in Bengal, East India Company sought a support base in indigenous population which was made possible by establishing financial and administrative control over the colony. Such control was affected through a number of measures such as the appropriation of all sources of revenue including large revenue-free land grants and rent-free endowments.[18] The process of this appropriation was started with the policy of resumption proceedings from the time of Lord Cornwallis in AD 1793 onwards which greatly affected the old religious, intellectual and other kinds of revenue free grant holders.

In the pre-colonial India, many of the revenue-free land grants (variously known as *ai'mma, suyurghal, madad-e ma'ash,* and *ma'afi*) were given to individuals and often to institutions by the rulers and in return the grantees were supposed to maintain and promote learning &education, health services and other charity works by using surplus from it.[19] Generally, these grants were made for life time of the grantee but in 1690s Aurangzeb made these grants perpetual.[20] Thus, any change in the subsequent State policy vis-à-vis revenue grantees adversely affected not only the fortunes of the individual grantees but also the fate of the institutions they were managing.[21]

The Bengal Presidency had huge *ma'afi* grants and holders during the time of colonial takeover. But the system came to a halt from 1793 onwards, when there began investigations and resumption of those holdings which did not possess correct title deeds properly registered with the collector. These resumption proceedings were

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educational institutions; see, W.W. Hunter, *Our Indian Musalman-Are they Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queen,* reprint Calcutta, 1945

18   The original term for the revenue free land was *la-kharaj,* which means 'tax-free' land. According to Mohur Ali, land-tax (*kharaj*) came to be termed as 'rent' after the Permanent settlement. Thus, 'rent-free' came to be used for and as equal to 'tax-free', see, Mohur Ali, *History of Muslims in Bengal*, vol. II, p. 135

19   Analyzing the records of a *Sufi* hospice, *Khanqah-e Karimia* at Salon, Rai Bareilly, Prof. Jafri argues that the *Sufi Khanqah* had become a center for dissemination of knowledge in pre-colonial times and the same has been destroyed by the colonial policies in the aftermath of the revolt; see Jafri, 'Indo-Islamic Learning and the Colonial State', *op cit.*, pp. 429-450

20   B.H. Baden Powell however, does not accept the idea of land grants as perpetual. In the context of Northwest province, he says that the old meaning of *jagir* or revenue free land changed over time. He says that the Mughal idea 'that *jagir* only granted the revenue, not the land and that it was only for the life of grantee' evaporated and all *jagirs* became hereditary; see Baden Powell, pp.154-55

21   Jafri, 'Indo-Islamic Learning and the Colonial State', *op cit.*, pp.429-450

supposedly 'financially oriented' and were said to have been 'meant to compensate for the loss sustained' on account of Permanent settlement of the land revenue in 1793. The government was not interested in examining whether the land was misused or if the original purpose was fulfilled. Rather, it was to augment the income of the government as reflected in Sir John Shore's minute of 18th June 1789 saying that even 'at the rate of half a rupee per *bigha*, the assessment of rent-free lands in Bengal would fetch an annual revenue of some 35 lakhs of rupees.'[22] Thus, the resumption proceedings were increased whenever the government felt the need of increased finances such as after the Mysore wars or after Maratha wars or after the Afghan wars.

Finally, a number of regulations were passed in AD. 1811, 1817, 1819, 1828 and 1833 in order to find the faults in titles of the holders. Accordingly, the holders had to prove that the land holdings were in possession for at least 12 years before the British rule. It was difficult to procure the copy of these rules for all the people, mainly for those living in rural areas. The registration of the titles was also a severe task. Further, the climate and the state of the country did not allow the old document to survive long; 'ravages of climate and pests, of Marathas and dacoits, of family disputes over succession or the indolence of a self-assured aristocracy.'[23] Many of the genuine holders were based on popular respected tradition rather than on written documents.[24] The problem increased due to the fact that a number of fraudulent *la-kharaj* (revenue free land) tenures were created by the zamindars during 1765-1790, which emerged as a disadvantage to the genuine *la-kharaj* holders. This came as a big blow to the grantees and most of them lost their landholdings and were forced to live a miserable life. This also led to a virtual collapse of the traditional education system in the province, which once possessed of several thousand *madarsas*, many of which provided free education to the poor. The Buchanan Hamilton Report (1807-14) and Adam's Report (1835-38) informed that huge *ma'afi* grants were attached with the task of education in the Rajshahi district of Bengal, providing education to both Hindus and Muslims. Adam's Report mentioned the presence of 14 Hindu teachers as against 215 Muslim teachers and 2096 Hindu students as against 1558 Muslim students in five districts of Bengal Presidency.[25]

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22 *Fifth Report*, Appendix I, 181, cf., Mohur Ali, vol. II, p.137
23 Azizur R Mallick, *op cit*., p. 45
24 Mohur Ali, vol. II, pp. 138-9
25 cf. Jafri, *op cit*., pp. 429-450

W.W. Hunter's *Our Indian Musalmans* is the only source giving a detailed account of resumption proceedings and its effects over the landholders. He asserted that these laws 'put a finishing stroke to their (Musalman) fortunes…..During the last 75 years the Musalman houses of Bengal have either disappeared from the earth, or are at this moment being submerged beneath the new strata of society which our Rule has developed….'[26] Giving examples of destruction of Muslim families and institutions, he wrote that:

> In the district of Hughli way back in 1806 a wealthy Shia gentleman left a huge estate for the pious uses. These uses were specified in the will he left which were maintenance of certain religious rites and ceremonies, repair and maintenance of the *imambara,* the burial ground pensions for the beneficiaries and some religious establishments. As a result of the litigation between the two branches of the family the government assumed the management of the estate appointing itself as a trust. Huge amount of money was wasted in the process and adding insult to injury, was the attempt by the government to divert these funds for the establishment of an English college (while the will was quite specific for the college for the poor Muslims).[27]

Not only resumption, there was also misappropriation of the remaining rent-free grants and endowments. The funds of Haji Mohsin Trust, for example, were used for purposes other than they meant for.[28] The Trust was meant for the maintenance of an Imambara at Hugli but after the death of Haji Mohsin in 1813, the government intervened in the affairs of the Trust. In 1817 the managers were dismissed and an officer under the Board of Revenue was appointed to look after the affairs and a *madarsa* was founded at Hugli out of the trust funds. On 1st August 1836, a college for higher education was opened at Hugli and the existing *madarsa* was attached with the college under the name of 'oriental department'. The problem here was that the college was established not in the capital city of Calcutta where an English college was much needed, nor even in an area like Jessor where the trust estates were situated and where the proportion of Muslim and Hindu populations was fairly balanced. But it was opened at Hugli which was predominantly a Hindu area with Muslims numbering not more than 2-3 percent of the total population. It was extremely

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26 Hunter, *op cit.*, p.122
27 Hunter, *op cit.*, p.140
28 Haji Mohammad Mohsin was a Shia of Persian origin who had settled at Hugli. He had huge wealth from trade and from his sister but had no heir to use this wealth. Thus, he created a trust on his property in 1806, for the support and maintenance of Imambara at Hugli, appointing two managers instructing them to divide the income of property into nine equal shares- two for their own use, two for the expenses of Imambara, four for the payment of salaries and pensions of the officers and workers of Imambara; see Mohur Ali, vol. II, pp.168-69

difficult for the (economically ruined) Muslims of the other districts to send their children to Hugli or to provide for their maintenance at the college.'[29] This way, the funds were used for the promotion of English language, European literature & sciences and Christian rather than Muslim education. Though not all colleges of Oriental learning were abolished but their funds were altered with and often appropriated.

Hunter accused the colonial administration for the misappropriation of these scholastic funds. The huge *waqf* estates which the Muslims had created for the advancement of education of the Muslims were treated by the British officials in the most dishonest manner.[30] Hunter cited the examples from various districts of Bengal showing the casual manner in which the English colonial officers treated such noble acts of the Bengal Muhammadans.

> At the moment (i.e. 1871) the head of the college is an English gentleman ignorant of a single word of Persian and Arabic who draws £1500 a year from Muhammadan religious endowment for teaching things hateful to every Musalman. It is not, of course, his fault, but the fault of government which placed him there, and which for thirty-five years has been deliberately misappropriating this great educational fund. In vain it attempted to cloak so gross a breach of trust by attaching a small Muhammadan school to the English college. Besides the misappropriation of the accumulated fund in building the College, it annually diverted £5000 to its maintenance. That is to say, out of an income of £5260, it devoted only £350 to the little Muhammadan school which alone remained to bear witness to the original character of the Trust . . . . .[31]

This acted as an add-on to the decreasing status of Muslim education and left Muslims with almost nothing to run these religious institutions.

The responsibility of this destruction has been shifted from British policies to the attitude of the elite class itself by some scholars. Peter Hardy in his work *The Muslims of British India* tried to purge the image of British authorities in relation to Muslims of Bengal. He managed to show that it was the failure of Muslims *themselves* to avail the benefits provided by the English authorities that resulted in their destruction in Bengal.[32] Rejecting Hunter's view, he wrote that actually there is no record of 'number and income of grantees, Hindu or Muslim, in Bengal during the period of resumption', neither we a have any account of value of resumption.[33] He ignored Hunter's remark that,

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29   Mohur Ali, vol. II, *op cit.,* p.171
30   Hunter, *op cit*., p. 141
31   *Ibid*, p.141
32   Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India,* Cambridge, 1972, p. 47
33   *Ibid*

"from the highest official to the lowest, there is now a firm conviction that we have failed in our duty to the Muhammadan subjects of the Queen. A great section of the Indian population, some thirty million in number, finds itself decaying under British Rule. They complain that they, who but yesterday were the conquerors and governors of the land, can find no subsistence in it today."[34]

Quoting the Education Commission Report of 1882 Hardy suggested that 'the result of even the harshest resumption case, was, not the dispossession of the holder but the assessment of revenue on his holding, and even that in no case at more than half the prevailing rate'.[35]It is important to understand here that though the harshest measure of resumption was not dispossession, but the day by day increasing amount of revenues were forcing people to sell their land which ultimately meant dispossession. P. Hardy ignored the detailed statistics provided by Hunter where he captured all the details of confiscation of the three great sources- Military command, the collection of Revenue and judicial or political employment- of Muslim dominance.[36]According to Hardy, the impacts of colonial rule varied from region to region. It certainly ruined the office-holding Muslim aristocrat of lower Bengal and Muslim weaver of Dacca, but not all at once. For Muslims in Punjab, he argued, it brought security; for Bombay it brought wealth to those engaged in shipping; and for some in the North-Western Provinces it brought more land.[37]Giving these comparative statistics, Hardy subdues the fact that the destruction of intellectual elite and the institutions of (free) education in Bengal cannot be compensated with providing security to Punjab or support to shipping. The desolation of a whole system of indigenous education cannot be justified.

Rafiuddin Ahmed too shifted the responsibility of the marginalization of Muslims over the Muslim *ashraf*. He acknowledged the fact that 'many of them (*ashraf*) were seriously impoverished by such measures as the Permanent Settlement of land revenue (1793), the resumptions (after 1828) and replacement of Persian by English as the language of Court (1837)'.[38]But since the Muslims were divided into *ashraf* and *atrap,* the former became very conscious of their social superiority and did not allow *atrap* to move upward in the social ladder and no significant change was noted in their social basic attitudes.

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34   Hunter, *op cit.,* p.114
35   (Hunter) *Education Commission Report, 1882* (Calcutta, 1883), pp. 498-99; cf. Hardy, *op cit.,* p.42
36   Ibid, *op cit.,* pp.117-126
37   Ibid, *op cit.,* p.31
38   Rafiuddin Ahmad, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: A Quest for Identity*, OUP, Delhi, 1982, pp.10-11

The classification within a community in India was nothing unique to Muslims, it was there in Hindu community as well and so were the attempts by lower class for upward mobility and efforts by the upper class to hinder their efforts. The distinction of *ashraf* and *ajlaf* was there in Indian society since the time of Iltutmish. Imtiaz Ahmad mentioned in his work that the *ashraf* class was given prominence in the administration not only during Iltutmish but also under the later rulers like Balban and Mohammad Tughlaq.[39] However, during this period we did not see any conflict between the two groups, where *ashraf* was trying to oppress *ajlaf*. Rafiuddin also discussed about a society of 1870s-80s, where the division between *ashraf* and *ajlaf* was constructed not only as two different categories but also as the two having hatred for each other, more specifically after the revolt of 1857. The division came with the coming of British rule and with the rapid increase in the population during 1871-91. The two factors not only changed the demographic character of Bengal but also left a lasting impression on the psychological make-up of the Bengali Muslims by making them more self-conscious and assertive about their rights and privileges.[40] Thus, intra-community differences, which emerged from second half of the nineteenth century, could not be used as a reason for the decline of Muslims which has started from late eighteenth century itself.

The theory of class distinction was used by scholars primarily to cover up the extreme backwardness to which the Muslim class was reduced to due to the colonial policies. Thus, we see the whole responsibility of the revolt of 1857 was transferred to the *ajlaf* class by Syed Ahmad Khan, saying that *ashrafia* had nothing to do with the revolt. For him *bāghis* were the disgruntled elements of the society and used very derogatory words for them, calling them 'vagabond and ill-conditioned men', 'wine drinkers and men who spent their time in debauchery and dissipation', 'men floating without profession or occupation on the surface of the society', with the sole aim 'to plunder government treasury and to steal government property'.[41] This goes in direct contradiction to the fact the educated class were very much at the forefront of the revolt. Many of the leaders of the revolt like Fazl-e Haq Khairbadi, Dr. Wazir Khan, numerous pirzadas and Ulema were erstwhile elite of the society. We have also seen the engagements and involvement of the people associated with *tariqa e Mohammadia,* who were undoubtedly the most educated class of the people.

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39   Imtiaz Ahmad, '*Ashraf* and *Ajlaf* Categories in Indo-Muslim Society', *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol 2, No.19, (May 13, 1967), Delhi, pp.887+889-891
40   Jayanti Maitra, *Muslim Politics in Bengal 1855-1906,* Calcutta, 1984, p.58
41   Syed Ahmad Khan, *Asbab-e Baghawat-e Hind, 1859,* Delhi reprint*;* see also S.Z.H. Jafri, 'The issue of religion in 1857: Three documents', in *SAGE,* Vol. 4, Issue 1, pp. 77-90

IV

Diminishing share in Bureaucracy

Azizur Rahman Mallick has shown that not only the Muslim *zamindars* in particular, but the Muslims in general were destroyed at all the levels in Bengal. The three major classes of Muslims i.e. the royal household, the nobility and peasants/weavers were greatly hit by the British policies even before the Revolt. The battle of Buxer, Plassey and the diarchy ended the fate of the Nawab who now 'was allowed to govern, never to rule.'[42] His income like his powers was greatly reduced and he was left in a position unable to provide employment or issue *jagirs* to his nobles. Similarly, the upper class, which had a firm hold over military services, revenue collection and Judicial and political employment, was reduced to a level of unemployment and poverty. The end of the powers of Nawab forced all the Muslims to rely mainly on the land. Here too, the permanent settlement ruined them effecting the position of Zamindars. The same was the fate of lower Muslim class i.e. peasantry and weavers. They were suffered with the increased power of *zamindar* due to Permanent settlement and the forceful indigo plantation; while Muslim weavers were greatly hit by the introduction of cheap machine made goods from Britain. Thus, it is significant to note here that no Muslim name other than that of the King of Delhi was mentioned in the list of prominent natives of respectability created by a native newspaper.[43]

Peter Hardy argued that Muslims and Hindus equally suffered the impacts of colonial rule; Muslims could have prospered just as non-Muslims did. For him, there was no disproportionate decline in Bengal. 'Muslims did suffer, but whether they suffered disproportionately to Hindus remain a matter of opinion, not knowledge' and for the period of Revolt, 'Hindus and Muslims shared the common fate under British revenue and agrarian policies.'[44] Quoting from Agra 1880 Report, he wrote that 'Muslims had lost 7,904 acres from all causes since the previous settlement in 1841. In the same period, excluding confiscation from Rebellion, *thakurs* (Hindu landholders) had lost 45,000 acres.'[45] Further, quoting from the *Education Commission Report of 1882* Hardy said that 'even the harshest resumption case was not the dispossession of the holder but the assessment of revenue on his holding, and even that in no case at more than half the prevailing rate.' Many others have also argued that the loss of landholdings was faced by both Hindu and Muslim zamindars

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42   Azizur Rahman Mallick, *op cit*., p.35
43   *Ibid*, p. 68
44   P. Hardy, *op cit.,* p.40
45   *Ibid*, p.49

and what kept the Hindus alive was that they 'showed greater resilience and power of self-preservation than the Muslims through *benami* purchases of holdings. The Muslim landed nobility in contrast was least able to protect itself from 'Sunset Law' imposed to secure timely collection of revenue.[46]

Peter Hardy, however, did not record the deliberate rules and policies of government which the Muslims were not suitable to fit in.[47] They were attacked systematically by abolishing the language Muslims were familiar with or by providing favours to their counterparts. They had no share in the cash accumulation which led to the rise of commercial elite among the Hindus in Bengal in 18th and 19th centuries. Binoy Ghosh writes that there were practically no *diwans, Banians* or *mutasaddis* among Muslim at this time.[48] Therefore, when trade policies under the Company's rule favoured Indian agents, only Hindus went forward often acting as broker, interpreter, cashier, middlemen and *paikers* (suppliers of finished goods) in the transaction of the Company as well as its European servants. The Census of 1901 also showed that Muslims formed a large part of the agricultural population of Bengal. Here also, most of them were tenants rather than landlords. In every 10,000 Muslims no less than 7,316 were cultivators, but only 5,555 amongst the same number of Hindus. The proportion of landowners was only 170 in 10,000 in the case of Muslims as against 217 in the same number of Hindus.[49]

The bias towards Muslim was very much bold and clear in terms of government jobs. Hunter presented a table of appointments of Englishmen, Muslims and Hindus in the government jobs which showed the irregular distribution or a complete absence of the Muslim candidates. Hunter mentioned a complete statistics of the major departments of the government in Bengal for 1871 showing the meagre number of Muslim employees as against the European and Hindu employees.[50]

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46 Tazeen M. Murshid, *The Sacred and The Secular Bengal Muslim Discourses, 1871-1977*, OUP, 1995 p.46

47 Muslims could not avail the benefits of situations as compared to their Hindus counterparts because of the socio-economic position Muslims used to have in Bengal during the earlier regimes. The wealthy and secured life of the preceding era did not make them feel the dangers of the upcoming rule. While the Hindus were careful to safeguard their rights under a foreign government, whether Muslims or British, they took greater care of their deeds and so fared better as compared to Muslim; Hunter, p. 183.; According to some scholars, the Muslims, with the usual indifference of a conquering race and in a sense of security had allowed their deeds to be destroyed or lost. Ameer Ali, *'A Cry from the Indian Mahomeddans, Nineteenth Century*, Vol. XII, 1882 p.183

48 BinoyGhosh, *Banglar Sidwat Samaj*, Calcutta, 1973, p.23 cf. T. M. Murshid, *op cit.,* p.46

49 Report on the Census of India 1901, Vol. VI, p.484, cf. Sufia Ahmed, *op cit.,* p.99

50 *Ibid*, p.126

Distribution of State Patronage in Bengal, April 1871[51]

Sl. No.	Area of appointments	Europeans	Hindus	Musalmans	Total
1	Covenanted Civil Services (appointed in England by the Crown)	260	0	**0**	260
2	Judicial officers in the Non Regulation District	47	0	**0**	47
3	Extra Assistant Commissioners	26	7	**0**	33
4	Deputy Magistrates and Deputy Collectors	53	113	**30**	196
5	Income tax Assessors	11	43	**6**	60
6	Registration Department	33	25	**2**	60
7	Judges of Small Cause Court and Subordinate Judges	14	25	**8**	47
8	Munsif	1	178	**37**	216
9	Police Department, Gazetted Officers of all grades	106	3	**0**	109
10	Public Works Department, Engineer Establishment	154	19	**0**	173
11	Public Works Department, Subordinate Establishment	72	125	**4**	201
12	Public Works Department, Account Establishment	22	54	**0**	76
13	Medical Department	89	65	**4**	158
14	Department of Public Instruction	38	14	**1**	53
15	Other Departments like Custom, Marine, Survey, Opium etc.	412	10	**0**	422
	Total	1338	681	**92**	2111

Similar was the situation in other secular professions such as law where the number of pleaders of the High Court and attorneys declined over a period of time; medicine

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51 Table reproduced from Hunter, p. 126; a similar table for the period of 1881 is given by J.A. Bourdillon, Report on the Census of Bengal, 1881, Appendix C, Vol, HI, Table XXVII, p.769

Class one professions	Hindus	Muslims
Officers of National government	675	4
Officers of Municipal, local and village government	7,860	296
Independent govt. and native states	00	00
Persons engaged in the defense of the country	35	03
Lawyers and law departments	251	09
All types of physicians	123	41
Artists	2,221	66
Musicians	44	52
Actors	10	02
Teachers	1.044	83
Scientific persons	65	01

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which was never considered a profession worthy of consideration by a high- born Muslim but even in that profession Muslims were to be found very rarely.[52] Thus, there was 'scarcely a government office in Calcutta in which a Muhammadan can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of the inkpots and mender of pens . .. .'.[53] He said it very clearly that

> 'a hundred and seventy years ago it was almost impossible for a well-born Musalman in Bengal to become poor; at present it [is] almost impossible for him to continue [to be] rich . . . . [for the] army is now completely closed. No Muhammadan gentleman of birth can enter our regiments . . . . our action has brought ruin upon Muhammadan houses of Bengal. We shut the Musalman aristocracy out of the army because we believe that their exclusion was necessary to our safety . . . .'[54]

To justify their softness towards Hindus, the English began to develop solid arguments. For example the commonality of Indo-European linguistic was interpreted in purely racial terms. In 1786, Sir William Jones (1746-1794), the founder of Asiatic Society, declared that Sanskrit, Greek and Latin "sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists". [55] The idea was that Europeans and the upper-caste Hindus belonged to the same 'Aryan race, while the Muslims were the other. The British rule set up by defeating the Muslims was therefore a restoration. The Hindus had had their period of glory in the ancient past when the Europeans were still barbarians; now it was the turn of their European brethren to rule.'[56] Thus, the British worked to appease Hindus to create a support base for themselves and also to eliminate Muslims.

The Government policies were designed in such a way that Hindus and others were preferred more. Hunter acknowledged that exclusion of Muslims partially resulted due to the policy of discrimination practiced by the government against the Muslims and he quoted from the Government Gazette from the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner which clearly stated that: '*the appointment would be given to none but the Hindus . . . .*'[57]

The re-organization of British government in Bengal displaced the norms of the previous rule. This initiative produced far-reaching and long-lasting consequences.

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52   *Ibid*, 127-130
53   Hunter, *op cit.*, p.127
54   *Ibid*, pp.117-8
55   Rajesh Kochhar, Rajesh Kochhar, 'Seductive orientalism: English education and modern science in colonial India', *op cit.,* pp. 45-63
56   *Ibid*
57   Hunter, *op cit.,* p.131

The Muslim predominance in the judicial service in Bengal was challenged. It was decided that in civil cases -regarding inheritance, marriage, caste and other religious usages or institutions, 'the laws of the Koran' will be followed for Muslims and 'those of the *Shaster'* for Hindus. The fact that 'the Hindus were no longer subject to the Muslim law and that the Hindu and Muslim laws were now declared to be "co-existing and co-equal" was a significant concession to the Hindus because legally the Company was acting on behalf of the theocratic Mughal Empire.'[58] Following this, all the public and private areas of dominance were re-drafted in order to balance the socio-political scene. The imperial taxes, the police and the Court of laws and the army were major sources of income and power of Muslims in Bengal. All these areas were now completely taken over from the Muhammadans. The proportion of Muhammadans to Hindus was now less than one-seventh and of Musalmans to Europeans was less than one-fourteenth.[59]

Hardy recorded that the Muslim grantees were certainly not destroyed as a class before 1857 in the upper provinces. Understanding the complex structure of agriculture and thinking of Muslims as the prime convenors of revolt of 1857, the resumption proceedings were targeted towards them. While some Hindus too were punished and their holdings were also extracted but the proportion was far less.

The aftermath of the revolt witnessed a series of punishments in the forms of massacre, killings, and confiscations and so on. The theory of 'Muslim conspiracy' gained much weight amongst the EIC official circle and thus, the British were extremely unhappy with the role of Muslim aristocracy in 1857 and therefore, the brunt of the British wrath was faced by the Muslims and not so much by the Hindus. According to Peter Hardy, in Delhi, Awadh and other surrounding areas, the whole character of the Mutiny i.e. organisation, members, rebel leaders, constitutions, vocabulary, everything was Muslim. However, Muslims were treated badly only in the Bengal region.[60] In Delhi alone some 200,000 Muslims were killed by the British troops while many were sent to Andaman Island for life imprisonments.[61] The economic, social and cultural symbols of their prestige or of the previous regime

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58 R. Kochhar, 'Muslims and English education in colonial Bengal: Calcutta Madrasa and Hooghly Mohsin College in a historical perspective', in: Hooghly College 175, 2011, pp. 17-39 (Ed: S. K. Mukhopadhyay, Hooghly: Hooghly Mohsin College)
59 Hunter, *op cit.,* pp.117-127
60 P. Hardy, *op cit,* pp.64-75
61 Syed Asad Madani, *Jang-e Azadi me Jamait-ul Ulama-e Hind ki Khidmat;* cf. Yoginder Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers Madarsas and Islamic Education in India,* Penguin, 2005, p. 68

were sought to be ended and thus, 'the Prime Minister, Palmerston, wrote to Canning, the Viceroy in India, 'that every civil building connected with Mahommedan tradition' (indirectly referring to the Jama Masjid) should be levelled to the ground 'without regard to antiquarian veneration or artistic predilection.'[62] However, the Prime Minister's suggestion was not followed but many other markers of Muslim civilization were ruined. The activities of Saiyid Ahmad Bareilly and Dudu Miyan's followers had a profound long-term effect on British political strategy in India. It reinforced the British belief that Muslims were 'fanatical and irreconcilable and could only be kept quiet by a judicious mixture of buffets and boons'.[63]

There are a large number of pre-revolt indigenous sources like local newspapers which reflects the British atrocities on Muslims even before the occurrence of 1857 revolt. The infamous *Inam* Commission, for example, which has come in 1828 i.e. much before the Revolt of 1857, is an important speaking source for the Muslim ruin. The policy had also caused a decline of the 'professional bureaucrats (mainly *kayasths*), who had developed their expertise in Persian, especially in the work of accountancy, letter writing (*insha*) and maintaining of the official records.' What remained was the 'legacy of this class' 'in the family surnames like Majumdar, Qanungo and Chaudhary etc., which points out to their being the holders of the bureaucratic positions in the pre-colonial regimes.'[64]

Therefore, Hunter was right in saying that 'the Muhammadans have suffered most severely under British Rule.'[65] He mentioned that from the time of Warren Hastings in 1772 till 1828, 'it was deliberated in the official circles to start the resumption proceedings and finally in 1828…..special courts were created, and during the next

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62 Azizur Rahman, *op cit.,* p.71

63 P. Hardy, *op cit*., p.60

64 S. Z. H, Jafri, '*Ma'afidars* and Institutions of Religious Learning in Colonial Bengal', *Vidyasagar University Journal*, 2016-17;
    We intent to involve here a weekly newspaper form Lucknow, *Tilism-e Lucknow,* which was started in May 1856 and continued till March 1857. It provided a lively picture of annexation of Awadh, showing the venom with which English destroyed Muslim elite prior to 1857; see Heena, 'Communitarian Relations, Colonial Remodeling and the British in Pre-Mutiny Awadh', in S. Z. H. Jafri (ed.), *Delhi and Awadh during 1857*, forthcoming 2019

65 Hunter, *op cit*., p.117; Prof. Jafri noted that 'the data provided by Hunter was a huge embarrassment to the colonial authorities' and therefore they continued to question Hunter suggesting that 'Hunter's writings should be examined in the light of 'adopting contemporary official caveats'. See, Peter Hardy*, op cit.,* p.268 [interestingly no such 'caveats' have been cited by him]

18 years the whole province was overrun with informers, false witnesses, and stern pale faced Resumption Officials . . . .' As a result of this gigantic exercise

> 'an outlay of £ 800,000 upon resumption proceedings, an additional revenue of £ 300,000 a year was permanently gained by the State, representing a capital at five percent of six million sterling. A large part of this sum was derived from lands held free by Musalmans or by Muhammadan foundations...The educational system of Musalmans, which was almost entirely maintained by rent-free grants, received its death-blow. The scholastic classes of the Muhammadans emerged from the eighteen years of harrying absolutely ruined.'[66]

This systematic and deliberate effort to eliminate Muslim class was given a justification after the revolt of 1857. Thus, we see that the question of the Muslims of Bengal in the contemporary scholarly writings has been treated in a highly tenacious manner. The real issues have been seldom taken up. This is partially due to the 'colonial mindset' and imperialist arrogance trying to justify all the acts of the colonial officials however irresponsible it might have been. The modern writings, barring of course Azizur Rahman Mallick, have closely followed the colonial discourse. It needs to point out that the records of the Inam commission between 1828-46 are not simply available in any Indian archive, museum or repository. Similarly, the family papers of the affected families seems to have vanished along with those families, leaving a huge desideratum for the scholars to work out the contours of development and important chapter of the social history of Bengal prior to 1857. A careful de-construction of the colonial records and perhaps the indigenous discourse will help us to reconstruct the process/es of marginalization of the Bengali Muslims under the colonial regime.

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66   W.W. Hunter, *op cit.,* p.139

Book review

Anjashi Sarkar, *The Sherpas across The Eastern Himalayas (Testing of Space and Time, c. 1870s-2000):* **Published by Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, 2017, Hardbound, 184 pages**

Sherpa's image—to an ordinary reader—is built on the impression of the success of Tenzing Sherpa, along with Edmund Hilary, who were the first group of people to climb to the summit of Mount Everest in 1953. It may therefore have only created a linear image of Sherpa—hardworking mount climbers from Nepal. Nevertheless, Sherpa takes on multiple shades of meaning. They are neither only the luggage carriers in the high altitudes nor only of the inhabitants of Nepal. Although the term Sherpa is intricately related with the experience of trekking—a specific profession of mountain guides and portage in the Solu-Khumbu (Mt. Everest) region, home of the Sherpa people; Sherpa people have become an integral part of tourism in its wider and broader senses in Nepal and India. The story of Sherpas, which is internationally not very widely acclaimed, is of those people, who had been living on the periphery of the Indus civilization and they slowly but gradually have contextualized their traditions with modernity. The history of conversation and communication between Sherpa, Westerners and local elites (such as, Indians and Nepalese) are evidence of the process. Anjashi Sarkar's *The Sherpas across The Eastern Himalayas (Testing of Space and Time, c. 1870s-2000)* traced the transformational history of Sherpa community through their identity, culture and professions. This is one of the sporadic scholarly studies on Sherpas, which is a product of an M.Phil. research in the Department of History from University of Delhi. The author suggested a major aim for this book— "to highlight some major issues surrounding the image of the Sherpa porter and the Sherpa community as a whole" (p.6).

This book offers an enthralling and meticulous account of Sherpa community through historical accounts—primary texts, interactions, and secondary literature. The author also demonstrates the changing nature of Sherpa community with the incorporation of foreign actors and culture in the urban space where they had been living for long time. In addition, the author also highlighted the development of cities, such as Darjeeling,

and Sherpas' migration and professional orientations to the development of a modern urban culture in Darjeeling. The case of Darjeeling is thoroughly discussed in this book. Author has organized this book in seven chapters.

The first chapter on *Sherpas: History and Representations* introduces discursive ideas of Sherpa identity from porters to climbers and the role of foreign actors, i.e., *sahibs* in this transformation. The author has acknowledged the power of interpretation in understanding the identity of a certain community or ethnic group and how its objectivity varies on the authority of the person who is authoring and interpreting the narrative. The essential categorization of Sherpas as porters and the issue of their nationality are questioned in this chapter. Nationality is a critical issue for Sherpas as they are traced in Tibet, India and Nepal in pre-modern state era. Modern post-colonial state formation in South Asia has also restricted their movements in the name of nationality, henceforth, has imposed a linear national identity on them. An emphasis is given on the wider context beyond a single identity of Sherpas, which is based on professional association. Migration, as author has highlighted, is an important issue to understand the patterns of their settlements in the eastern hills of the subcontinent. Discrepancies exist in official texts to understand Sherpas' identity on the basis of multiple patterns of their settlements. The author highlights such shortcomings to highlight major research problems regarding Sherpas—their settlement history, professional affiliations in Darjeeling, India.

Second chapter in this book—*Discovering the Sherpas in the Eastern Himalayas*—delves into a deeper analysis of the role of Darjeeling city in the construction of Sherpa identities. Analysis on Darjeeling and its inhabitants began in the first chapter, which established Darjeeling, a hill city of India, as a breeding ground for the migrants with diverse professions. It also highlighted how work opportunities also attracted people of different ethnic backgrounds in Darjeeling. The rise of tourism as an important economic venture beyond the tea estates of the hill city is often considered to be a contribution of Sherpas. Migration and tourism, therefore, are two intertwined factors in the context of Darjeeling. This is further expanded in second chapter, which highlighted that Sherpas have uniquely demonstrated their expertise in high altitude porterage—which not only attracted professional mountaineers in the city, but also excelled the rates of tourism. Mountaineers—their associations and network and tourism industry offered a new identity of Sherpas in Eastern India. Chapter two offers an intriguing set of census data of early twentieth century of Darjeeling to show the complex nature of counting population from myriad ethnic backgrounds. Sherpas were often counted in more than one categories due to confusions between Nepali and

Tibetan origins. It also raises the reference of profession-based census and highlights an entry of an artisan work of a Sherpa. It suggests that all Sherpas were not engaged to porterage.

Sherpas have been active mountaineers and expeditionary experts. They were not merely a porterage with foreign mountaineers. Chapter three on *Mountaineering Expeditions and Participation of Sherpas* highlights the role of Sherpa individuals in trekking expeditions in the early twentieth century. Sherpas not only eased the difficulties of mountaineering but also made the adventures popular among westerners and also locals who were enthused to take the expeditions seriously. Some primary texts used in this chapter are exemplary to reflect on Sherpas contribution in expeditions. However, author has mentioned that lack of official records at the earlier times caused insufficient information on the exact number of Sherpas who were engaged in mountaineering professions. The chapter at its end discusses the issue of religious sentiment of Sherpas and their expeditions. As believers to faith, they often find a connection between divinely issues and their success to climb a mountain. Several official texts support the position of the state along with the same line.

Chapter four highlights the growing significance of tourism in Eastern Himalayas and the inclusion of Sherpas as the signpost of tourism in Darjeeling. Sherpas earned both money and fame through mountaineering and expeditions. Sherpas achieved popularity and financial stability in their trekking profession. Author, in this chapter, mentions that some Sherpas have extended their professional affiliations in business sectors by investing money in other income-generating activities. This seed money has been usually generated through Sherpas' income from tourism activities. Tourism also offered an opportunity to Sherpas to increase their schools in mountaineering and expeditions. Sherpas are now trained in mountaineering institute to enhance their level of skills. Their biological capabilities to do trekking in thin air of higher altitudes has thus received trainings and capacity development in modern institutions.

Chapter five—*Making of a 'Porter' and a 'Sahib'* —demonstrates connectivity between two images sahib and a porter in the context of Sherpas. The author, in this chapter, discusses the discontents between these two images and argues—porter and sahib are two inter-constituted identities. It is important to understand the inter-relations between these two images which is built upon historical relations between Sherpas, western trekkers, and local elites in the colonial and post-colonial times. Furthermore, the chapter also demonstrates how foreign mountaineers possess paternalistic attitudes towards Sherpas as their protectors. How has the foreigners

protected the Sherpas? The answer may be manifold in nature. Financial support is indeed a primary source of protection. Has the relationship offered social protection through modernization? The chapter sheds light on the relationship to understand the process of modernization of Sherpas and mutual respect between Sherpas and foreign mountaineers.

In chapter six—*The Sherpa Community and the Sherpa Porter*, author of this book has traced differences in identities through social hierarchies—by creating rich and poor class. The community hierarchies are not only economic in nature, religious institutions play critical roles in reflecting social discontents within Sherpa communities. Tourism and mountaineering have offered new economic opportunities to Sherpa communities. It is not yet clear whether opportunities generated for Sherpas has been equally received by all members in the communities. These issues reflect internal discontents of Sherpa communities.

The concluding chapter sums up major discussions of the preceding chapters—process of identity construction for Sherpa community. It has highlighted connections between certain aspects of identity of Sherpa—professions, migration, settlement, nationality and religiosity of the Sherpa community. In addition, the conclusion describes an issue of social discontent—the sufferings of Sherpa female due to polygamy of Sherpa males and their relationship with foreigner females. It is indeed a matter of social discontent, nevertheless, absence of concrete data in this area does not establish this as a critical social crisis for Sherpas.

In this book, the author's observation is critical of existing texts when she mentions that popular media has constructed Sherpas' identity on the basis of "vernacular sources that speak of certain personalities who had been exemplary back in the day" (p.30). Author's analysis in this book is methodologically concise to answer major research queries. In more than one chapters, the author has asked a few more important questions, nevertheless, some of these have remained unanswered or partially answered in the book. Furthermore, it is utmost problematic to observe one or more of these questions as normative ones. In an academic study, it is more important to find the problems of the issue or subject-matter rather than attempt to recommend—what is the need or what ought to be done. On the conceptual formation of argument, the author of this book has not been able to show any connection between relevant conceptual ideas, such as—constructivism and identity formation, and empirical analysis on Sherpas. The in-depth empirical discussion in this book could have been further enriched with an appropriate conceptual coating of the analysis, whose absence

does not help the readers to understand theoretical contribution of this academic research.

Finally, this is a commendable scholarly attempt on an exceptional topic. It has contained significant primary information—texts and pictures—in order to understand the discursive patterns of identity formation of Sherpas by overcoming the stereotypes. This book will draw attention of both scholars and general readers who are interested on either politics of identity of ethnic groups or adventurous mountaineering in its respective contexts. Moreover, this book has enriched international scholarship on South Asian studies, with particular reference to eastern Himalayas and its ethnic formation. This book falls into a critical juncture of academic non-fiction, which will inspire more scholars to conduct future studies in examining critical issues of Sherpas that still remain unanswered in this book.

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