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# THE EAST ASIAN LINGUISTIC PHYLUM : A RECONSTRUCTION BASED ON LANGUAGE AND GENES

GEORGE VAN DRIEM

## 1. Trans-Himalayan

Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Xiàng, Hokkien, Teochew, Pínguhm, Grín, Jín, Wú and a number of other languages and dialects together comprise the Sinitic branch of the Trans-Himalayan language family. These languages all collectively descend from a prehistorical Sinitic language, the earliest reconstructible form of which was called Archaic Chinese by Bernard Karlgren and is currently referred to in the anglophone literature as Old Chinese. Today, Sinitic linguistic diversity is under threat by the advance of Mandarin as a standard language throughout China because Mandarin is gradually taking over domains of language use that were originally conducted primarily in the local Sinitic languages. China is a demographic giant, and, within China, the speakers of Mandarin and other Sinitic languages together comprise the overwhelming majority of the population. As a consequence, the Trans-Himalayan family, to which Chinese belongs, is the second most populous family of languages in the world in terms of numbers of speakers.

This language family was first identified by Julius von Klaproth in 1823, who defined the family as consisting of Tibetan, Chinese, Burmese and all demonstrably related languages. This language family was originally called Tibeto-Burman in the British Isles, e.g. Hodgson (1857), Cust (1878), Forbes (1878), Houghton (1896). Most speakers of Trans-Himalayan languages live to the north and east of the Himalayas (Figure 1), whereas most of the over three hundred different languages and three fourths of the major Trans-Himalayan linguistic subgroups are located to the south of the Himalayan divide (Figure 2). Since 2004, the name Trans-Himalayan has increasingly come into use

because over time the original term “Tibeto-Burman” had come to be used in two opposing senses: both in its original meaning, but also in an historically and linguistically incorrect sense. The reason behind the neutral geographical name Trans-Himalayan is that the language family is spread across the Himalayas, both to the south and to the north of this greatest land barrier on our planet.

The use of the term “Tibeto-Burman” in two contradictory senses originated when a rival phylogenetic model named “Indo-Chinese” gained in popularity. This other theory of linguistic relationship differed from von Klaproth’s well-informed Tibeto-Burman language family in that the Indo-Chinese construct contained all the languages of Asia and Oceania as far as Japan, Polynesia and Papua New Guinea. The theory was dreamt up by a Scotsman named John Caspar Leyden, who made a meteoric career as a British civil servant in Asia during the Napoleonic wars but then died at the age of 35 soon after he reached Java. The idea that all Asian and Oceanic languages shared some “common mixed origin” appealed to British colonial authorities, who were persuaded that they would be better able to rule over Asian peoples if a programme of linguistic research to understand Indo-Chinese language could be effectuated.

Over time, the hypothetical Indo-Chinese language family was whittled down in size, but the model also came to be tinged with racist overtones. Chinese has been a written language for millennia, during which the language served as the vehicle for an advanced civilisation. However, the eccentric and isolated position to which Chinese was relegated within the Indo-Chinese family tree was not based on any appreciation of the sophistication of Chinese culture, but on a racist appraisal of the Chinese language and people that arose amongst a particular breed of Western scholar at the time of the Opium Wars. The rebranding of the Indo-Chinese theory as “Sino-Tibetan” in 1924 helped to disguise these earlier racist underpinnings, but the model continued to treat Sinitic as a phylogenetic oddity.

Linguistically, the Sino-Tibetan model consisted of two branches, one of which was “Sino-Daic”, and so represented a false family tree. When the Kra-dai languages were removed from “Sino-Tibetan”, the reduced tree still represented a false phylogeny by sleight of relegating

all non-Sinitic languages to a single subgroup, which Sino-Tibetanists misleadingly labelled “Tibeto-Burman”. No linguist has yet adduced any historical linguistic evidence that could unite this supposedly subordinate taxon into a single branch within the family tree. The Indo-Chinese or Sino-Tibetan model was assailed by scholars who proposed other models, e.g. Sino-Burman (Ramstedt 1957), Sino-Himalayan (Bodman 1973, 1980) and Sino-Kiranti (Starostin 1994).

Matisoff, who inherited the epistemologically flawed tree model from his mentor Benedict in the 1960s and championed this unsupported phylogeny for half a century, has at times retreated from face-saving denial and publicly recanted Sino-Tibetan on three occasions. This episode in linguistic history has already been recounted in greater detail elsewhere (van Driem 2014a, 2018). Yet today the model continues to mislead students and some scholars. Dispelling myths is an arduous task because of the tenacity with which such narratives take hold of the human mind. The default model was already presented by von Klaproth in 1823 in the form of his original Tibeto-Burman linguistic family, augmented by all the constituent linguistic subgroups which have since been recognised, some of which still remain to be properly validated (Figure 3).

Most of the speakers of Trans-Himalayan languages live within China, but most of the individual Trans-Himalayan languages are spoken exclusively outside of China. On the basis of evidence adduced by Schorer (2016), the Dura language of central Nepal has now been subsumed into the Magaric group, reducing the number of subgroups in the family from an erstwhile 42 to 41 branches. A total of 28 out of the 41 Trans-Himalayan subgroups are found either exclusively or predominantly south of the Himalayan divide within the Indian subcontinent, viz. Tamangic, Newaric, Kiranti, Lepcha, Digarish, Lhokpu, Midžuish, Chepangic, Magaric, Tani, Siangic, Raji-Raute, Kho-Bwa, Ao, Zeme, Angami-Pochuri, Karbi, Mru, Brahmaputran, Gongduk, Hrusish, Black Mountain, Dhimalish, Tangkhul, Meithei, Pyu, Karenic and Kukish.

Sinitic languages are not the only Trans-Himalayan languages spoken inside China. In addition to Sinitic, six other Trans-Himalayan linguistic subgroups are found to the north and east of the Himalayas,

viz. Bái, Tǔjiā, rGyalrongic, Qiāngic, Ėkrsūish and Nàic. Six branches of the Trans-Himalayan family are represented by language communities distributed both on the north side and on the south flank of the Himalayas, viz. Tshangla, Bodish, Nungish, Lolo-Burmese, West Himalayish and Kachinic. Linguistic diversity south of the Himalayas may be even greater than shown in Figure 2. Ghale and Kaike together probably constitute a distinct linguistic subgroup, separate from Tamangic. Similarly, the diagram shown in Figure 3 subsumes the Northern Naga languages within Kachinic, a conjecture which still remains to be validated.

## 2. Austroasiatic

In 1823, von Klaproth recognised that Mon did not belong in the same phylum as Thai, Malay, Burmese, Chinese and Japanese, but that the Mon language, with respect to the other languages then documented, was in a phylum by itself. Francis Mason, born in York in 1799, immigrated across the Atlantic to Massachusetts in 1818, became a preacher in 1827 and was then sent to Burma by the American Baptist Missionary Union, where he worked on Pwo Karen and Sgaw Karen. In his 1854 article on the Mon language and then more explicitly in 1860, Mason identified a language family comprising both the Munda languages of India, such as Kol and Ho, and the “Talaing” language of Burma, i.e. Mon. Sir Arthur Purves Phayre (1873), the first Commissioner of British Burma from 1862 to 1867, popularised Mason’s theory. This language family first went by the names of Mon-Annam or Mon-Khmer-Kolarian. In 1904, the Austrian priest Wilhelm Schmidt renamed the family Austroasiatic (Figure 4).

For much of the 20th century, scholars held that Austroasiatic consisted of a Munda and a Mon-Khmer branch (e.g. Coedès 1948, Pinnow 1959, 1963). Austroasiatic languages of the Pakanic branch are spoken in Yúnnán province and northern Vietnam, and the attempt to determine the precise phylogenetic position of these languages within the family soon called into the question the structure of the Austroasiatic family tree as a whole (Benedict 1990). On the basis of chronologically ordered sound laws in his Austroasiatic database, Diffloth (2005) presented a revised phylogeny with the family’s deepest

division lying between Munda in the west and Khasi-Aslian in the east. The Khasi-Aslian branch in turn split into Khasi-Pakanic and Mon-Khmer. The updated Austroasiatic family tree, showing the correct phylogenetic position of the Pearic branch for the first time, was presented by Diffloth at Agay in 2012 (Figure 5). The internal phylogeny of the Munda branch is the subject of ongoing research, but Heinz-Jürgen Pinnow (1959, 1963) already divided Munda into South and North Munda, and his phylogeny was adopted by Zide and Zide (1976), who contributed a slight elaboration of the internal classification of South Munda.

### 3. Austro-Tai

Austronesian languages are spoken on Táiwā n and throughout insular Southeast Asia and beyond. The contours of the Austronesian language family first came into view when Frederick de Houtman, who spoke Malay after 26 months in captivity on Sumatra, reported that Malagasy was related to Malay. He had gleaned this insight from his cabin boy from Madagascar *die alreede goedt Duyts sprac: alsoo hy vvel vier Iaeren met onse Duytsche Natie ghevaren hadde* “who already spoke good Dutch, as he had sailed the seas with our Dutch nation for four years” (de Houtman 1603: v).

Malagasy is now known to be a member of the Maanyan subgroup of the Barito river area in southern Borneo (Dahl 1951), and both linguistic and archaeological evidence suggested that the colonisation of Madagascar by the Malagasy took place between 400 and 700 AD (Dahl 1951, Dewar 1996, Adelaar 1996), but the earliest radiocarbon dates for human settlements in Madagascar only date from the beginning of the 8th century, after Indian influence had begun to make itself felt in insular Southeast Asia. A population genetic study has now lent support to this late historical date for the first human settlement of Madagascar or even for a later initial settlement than previously thought (Pierron et al. 2017).

Jacob le Maire travelled throughout the Indo-Pacific for the Dutch East India Company during his circumnavigation of the earth in the years 1615 and 1616. He observed that the languages of Polynesia were related to Malay and the languages of the Indonesian archipelago. On

the basis of the observations and materials provided by de Houtman and le Maire, Adriaan van Reeland (1708: 55-139) established the genetic affinity between Malagasy, Malay and the Polynesian languages and identified Malayo-Polynesian as a language family.

In 1624, on the southwestern coast of Formosa, the Dutch established Fort Zelandia on a sandy islet that bore the name *Taioan* in the now extinct local Formosan language Siraya. This Siraya toponym was recorded in Dutch sources variously as *Taioan*, *Teyouvan*, *Teyoan*, *Tayouan*, *Taiyouhan* and *Taiyouan*. Shifting sands soon joined the islet of *Taioan* to the Formosan coast, forming an isthmus. On the basis of the catechisms and linguistic materials produced by the missionary Daniel Gravius on Táiwān between 1647 to 1651, von Klaproth (1822) included the Formosan languages in the Malayo-Polynesian family, a year before he published his influential *Asia Polyglotta*. In 1904, the Austrian priest Wilhelm Schmidt renamed the language family Austronesian, and Blust (2009) furnished what is currently the authoritative phylogenetic model of the Austronesian family tree (Figure 6).

Languages of the Kra-dai family are also spoken in China, where the distinctness of these languages from Chinese has always been appreciated and where the family is today called *Zhuàng-Dòng* in Mandarin. On the basis of root etyma, von Klaproth recognised that Thai was not related to Sinitic, once the obvious Chinese loan words had been sifted out of the lexicon. Kra-dai previously went by Shafer's name Daic or Benedict's coinage Tai-Kadai, but in Thai and in English the term กระได Kra-dai has established itself as the name for the language family (Figure 7).

Schlegel (1901, 1902) first proposed a genetic relationship between Siamese and Austronesian without, however, presenting any evidence. Benedict (1975) coined the term "Austro-Thai" for this relationship, but for Benedict (1942, 1975, 1990) this putative genetic link constituted just one ingredient in his grander and poorly supported proposals. Weera Ostapirat (2005, 2013) became the first to present sound comparative linguistic evidence that Kra-dai and Austronesian represent coordinate branches of a language family which he named Austro-Tai.

#### 4. Hmong-Mien

Hmong-Mien is traditionally called *Miáo-Yáo* in Mandarin and has long been recognised as a distinct family of languages in China. André Georges Haudricourt (1954) wrote the first historical phonology of Hmong-Mien. Kun Chang (1972, 1976) wrote a reconstruction of the Hmong-Mien tonal system and of the Proto-Hmong inventory of initials, representing the culmination of many years of work reflected in his earlier publications. A reconstruction of Hmong-Mien was written by Purnell (1970), followed by the reconstructions of Wáng Fǔshì (1994) and Wáng Fǔshì and Máo Zōngwǔ (1995), which have all been superseded by Ratliff's (2010) Hmong-Mien reconstruction. In terms of its restricted internal diversity, the Hmong-Mien language family looked to Stanley Starosta like a vestigial branch of what once may have been a greater linguistic phylum, which Starosta (2005) called "Yangtzean" in recognition of the historical distribution of Hmong-Mien peoples along and the Yangtze and south of the Yangtze (Figure 8).

#### 5. Northeastern Asia

Not all languages of East Asia belong to the phylum denominated as "East Asian" by Starosta. Altaic languages are spoken in the northern parts of East Asia, and their distinctness from Chinese has always been understood. Nicolaes Witsen (1692) and Phillip von Strahlenberg (1730) first mooted the contours of the Altaic language family. Engelbert Kämpfer stressed that Japanese was unrelated to either Chinese or Ainu and proposed that Japanese was genetically related to Turkic (1729: 63-65). Julius von Klaproth (1823) identified Mongolic, Tungusic and Turkic as branches of a coherent linguistic phylum. However, he assigned Japanese and Korean each to their own linguistic phylum. Philipp von Siebold (1832a: 238-244) became the first to add Japanese to this Altaic language family, and he soon asserted that the Korean and Japanese languages within this family stemmed from the same shoot (1832b, 1, vii: 10). More recently, Robbeets (2010, 2014) coined the term "Trans-Eurasian" for the language family traditionally known as Altaic and reserves the term "Altaic" for the higher-order subgroup comprising just Turkic, Mongolic and Tungusic.

Languages of the Chukotko-Kamchakthan and Uralic families and a number of Palaeosiberian languages spoken in northeastern Asia likewise do not constitute part of Starosta's East Asian.

### 6. East Asian

Just as Ostapirat united the Kradai and Austronesian families into an Austro-Tai linguistic phylum, others have sought to unite recognised language families into larger linguistic phyla. Wilhelm Schmidt (1906) and Lawrence Reid (1994, 2005) sought to unite Austroasiatic and Austronesian into an Austric macrofamily, but the historical evidence does not yet hold up to scrutiny (cf. Diffloth 1994). Similarly, August Conrady (1916, 1922) and later Kurt Wulff (1934, 1942) proposed uniting Austroasiatic, Austronesian, Kradai and Tibeto-Burman, whereas Paul Benedict (1942), Robert Blust (1996) and Ilia Peiros (1998) proposed a linguistic phylum comprising Austroasiatic, Austronesian, Kradai and possibly Hmong-Mien.

Quite unlike Ostapirat's Austro-Tai, no methodologically rigorous study has been conducted adducing solid evidence for any of these proposals. Finally, Stanley Starosta (2005) proposed uniting the Austroasiatic, Austronesian, Kradai, Tibeto-Burman and Hmong-Mien language families into an East Asian linguistic phylum. The shared morphological vestiges adduced by Starosta in support of his East Asian linguistic phylum comprised the agentive prefix \*<m->, the patient suffix \*<-n>, what he called the instrumental prefix <s-> and what he termed the perfective prefix \*<n->.

Other than Ostapirat, all these scholars have ventured beyond the epistemological constraints of what I call the "linguistic event horizon", representing the maximal time depth accessible through methodologically sound linguistic reconstruction and the boundary beyond which any reconstructions are at one point reduced to sheer speculation. Therefore, a discussion of the merits of the evidence advanced by Starosta for the East Asian linguistic phylum strikes me as being of little utility, since I consider the phylum to lie at the linguistic event horizon and therefore doubt whether this issue can ever be conclusively resolved on the basis of firmly reconstructible linguistic evidence. Rather, Starosta proposed that the "potential

utility” of his hypothesis lay “in helping to focus scholars’ efforts on particular specific questions, resulting in the replacement of parts of this hypothesis with better supported arguments” (2005: 194). A tweaked version of Starosta’s East Asian family tree is the 2012 in Benares recension (van Driem 2014b), shown in Figure 9.

### **7. The Father Tongue correlation**

We ought not to lose sight of the fact that a proto-language can be reconstructed solely on the basis of linguistic evidence and that the linguistic ancestors of any modern language community were not necessarily the same people as the community’s biological forebears. Although these points have long been reiterated from the time of Julius von Klaproth (1823) and Max Müller (1872), these lessons are often lost on some audiences. By the same token, each of us has countless ancestors via numerous lineages. There is no such thing as a pure race. In fact, in molecular genetic terms there is no such thing as race (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi and Piazza 1994, van Driem 2017b).

We are all members of one large human family. Moreover, even when languages and genes happen to exhibit a correlation, such a marker relationship should not be confused with identity. The correlation of a particular chromosomal marker with the distribution of a certain language family must not be simplistically equated with populations speaking languages of a particular linguistic phylum. Rather, molecular markers on the Y chromosome serve as proxies or tracers for the movements of paternal ancestors.

When studying the distribution of maternally inherited markers in the mitochondrial DNA and paternally inherited markers on the Y chromosome, a Swiss-Italian team of population geneticists soon found that it was easier to find statistically relevant correlations between the language of a particular community and the paternally inherited markers prevalent in that community than between the language and the most salient maternally inherited markers found in that speech community. This Father Tongue correlation was first described by Poloni et al. (1997, 2000).

On the basis of this finding, it was inferred that paternally inherited polymorphisms may serve as markers for linguistic dispersals in the past, and that a correlation of Y chromosomal markers with language

may point towards male-biased linguistic intrusions. The Father Tongue correlation is ubiquitous but not universal. Its preponderance allows us to deduce that a mother teaching her children their father's tongue must have been a prevalent and recurrent pattern in linguistic prehistory.

There are a number of reasons why we might expect this outcome. Palaeolithic populations were small, and the effective founder population sizes of the major modern paternal subclades must have been quite small, whilst new populations arise from the small surviving subsets that have passed through bottlenecks. In fact, molecular evidence indicates that the Y chromosome underwent a global bottleneck towards the end of the last ice age, when certain paternal clades started eradicating or out-competing other clades (Karmin et al. 2015). The founding dispersals of many major language families appear to be related to the robust spread and reproductive success of the bearers of a subset of Y chromosomal haplogroups that survived such bottlenecks.

As a consequence, the global phylogeography of Y chromosomal haplogroups is shallower in terms of time depth than the worldwide mitochondrial landscape. The initial human colonisation of any virgin part of the planet must have involved both sexes in order for a population of progeny to establish itself. Once a population is in place, however, subsequent migrations could have been heavily gender-biased. Subsequently, male intruders could impose their language whilst availing themselves of the womenfolk already in place. In this regard, population geneticist Toomas Kivisild (2014) has wryly characterised warfare as a sex-specific pathology linked to the Y chromosome.

Whereas the landscape of paternal lineages often appears to correlate with language at the comparatively shallower time depth of the linguistically reconstructible past, correlations between maternal lineages and linguistic phylogeography discerned to date have been underwhelming. The Father Tongue hypothesis suggests that linguistic dispersals were, at least in most parts of the world, posterior to initial human colonisation and that many linguistic dispersals were predominantly later male-biased intrusions. Such patterns are observed worldwide.

The resolution of the Y chromosomal tree is constantly being enhanced. Haplogroup labels are updated to reflect our improved understanding of phylogeny. Mutations numbers tend to remain unchanged, provided that the markers in question prove to be reliable in defining haplogroups. Conventional haplogroup labels of the Y Chromosome Consortium are still widely in use, but have been replaced here with the newer labels of the International Society of Genetic Genealogy, reflecting refinements incorporated up to the 12th of May 2017.

Long before the linguistically reconstructible past, at a time that lay well beyond the linguistic event horizon, the paternal haplogroup K (M9) was centred in the area between South Asia and Southeast Asia, where the ancestral \*K appears to have been situated. This clade spawned many successful paternal lineages, some of which moved into insular Southeast Asia, i.e. the haplogroups S(M69) and M(M304), whereas other clades moved back westward into South Asia and beyond, viz. the haplogroups Q(M242), R (M201), T(M89) and L(M429) (Karafet et al. 2015). The geographical locus of yet another descendant subclade lay in the Eastern Himalaya, i.e. the ancestral haplogroup NO (M214).

Millennia after the two paternal lineages N and O had split up, the bearers of haplogroup N set out for East Asia just after the last glacial maximum, braving ice and tundra, and — in a grand counterclockwise sweep — migrated across northern Eurasia as far as west as Lappland, whilst the ancestral form \*N appears to have been situated in northern Burma, Yúnnán and Sīchuān (Rootsi et al. 2007, Derenko et al. 2007, Mirabal et al. 2009, Ilumäe *et al.* 2016).

In previous publications (van Driem 2014b, 2016, 2017b), I identified the clade N (M231) with the paternal spread of Fortescue's Uralo-Siberian linguistic phylum. Fortescue (1998, 2011, 2017) adduced evidence for an ancient circumpolar Uralo-Siberian linguistic phylum comprising Uralic, Yukagir, Eskimo-Aleut, Nivkh and Chukotko-Kamchatkan, an ancient linguistic relationship at the very horizon of the linguistically reconstructible past that is rendered more discernible when the known cases of language shift in the circumpolar region are carefully taken into account.

### 8. The East Asian dispersal

The molecular marker M175 defining the paternal clade O is overwhelmingly shared by the linguistic ancestors of what Starosta called the East Asian linguistic phylum, as observed in the cited studies, where it was proposed that the four major East Asian language families, i.e. Austroasiatic, Trans-Himalayan, Hmong-Mien and Austro-Tai, had resulted from prehistoric bottlenecks correlated with specific paternal lineages. The non-random correlation of the subclades of this particular Y chromosomal haplogroup with the four recognised language families enables us to infer the following sequence of events.

Millennia before the end of the last glacial maximum, the paternal lineage O (M175) split into the subclades O2 (M122) and O1 (F265, M1354), as shown in Figure 10. The two subclades can be putatively assigned to two geographical loci, with the haplogroup O1 (F265, M1354) moving eastward into East Asia south of the Yangtze, whilst bearers of the O2 (M122) haplogroup settled in the general region of the Eastern Himalaya. Subsequently, over the course of time, as temperature and humidity increased after the last glacial maximum, haplogroup O split further into the paternal lineages that serve as tracers for the spread of Trans-Himalayan, Hmong-Mien, Austroasiatic and Austro-Tai.

The O1 (F265, M1354) lineage south of the Yangtze split into the subclades O1b(M268) and O1a (M119), with the latter moving eastward to the Fújiàn hill tracts and across the strait to settle on Formosa, which so became the *Urheimat* of the Austronesians (cf. Abdulla et al. 2009). The founding dispersal of the Austro-Tai language family can be traced through a correlation of the current geographical range of Austro-Tai languages with the chronology and spread of the molecular proxies defining the paternal haplogroups O1b (M268) and O1a (M119).

Subsequently, the paternal subclade O1b(M268) gave rise to the filial subclades O1b2(M176) and O1b1a1a(M95). The bearers of haplogroup O1b1a1a (M95) became the progenitors of the Austroasiatics (van Driem 2007). The Austroasiatics spread throughout the Salween drainage and thence to southern Yúnnán, northern Thailand and western Laos. In time, the Austroasiatics would spread as far as the Mekong delta, the Malay peninsula and the Nicobars,



Figure 1 : Geographical distribution of Trans-Himalayan languages (This map and Figures 3 through 7 are reproduced from van Driem 2015, with the gracious permission of Colin Pendry and Georg Miehe).



Figure 2 : Geographical distribution of Trans-Himalayan subgroups. Each dot represents not just one language, but the historical geographical centres of 41 major linguistic subgroups, each comprising anywhere between one language to several dozen closely related languages. Out of 41 linguistic subgroups, 28 lie to the south of the Himalayan divide, seven to the north and east, and six subgroups straddle both flanks of the Himalayas.

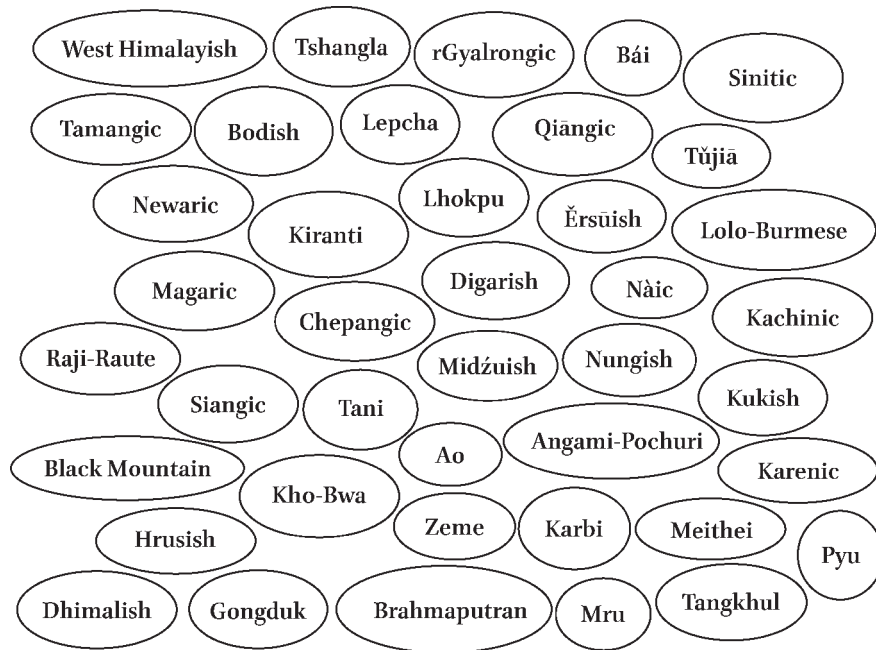


Figure 3 : The 41 major Trans-Himalayan linguistic subgroups or “fallen leaves” of the Trans-Himalayan language family. At variance with previous depictions, the diagram shows just 41 subgroups instead of 42. Schorer (2016) has shown Dura to be Magaric, thereby reducing the number of subgroups by one. Linguistic diversity south of the Himalayas is likely to be greater than shown here. Ghale and Kaike probably make up a linguistic subgroup distinct from Tamangic. Here the Northern Naga languages have been expediently subsumed within Kachinic, but this conjecture still remains to be validated. The number and arrangement of subgroups in this heuristic diagram will necessarily change over time as advances in historical linguistics are made and the structure of the family tree is discovered.

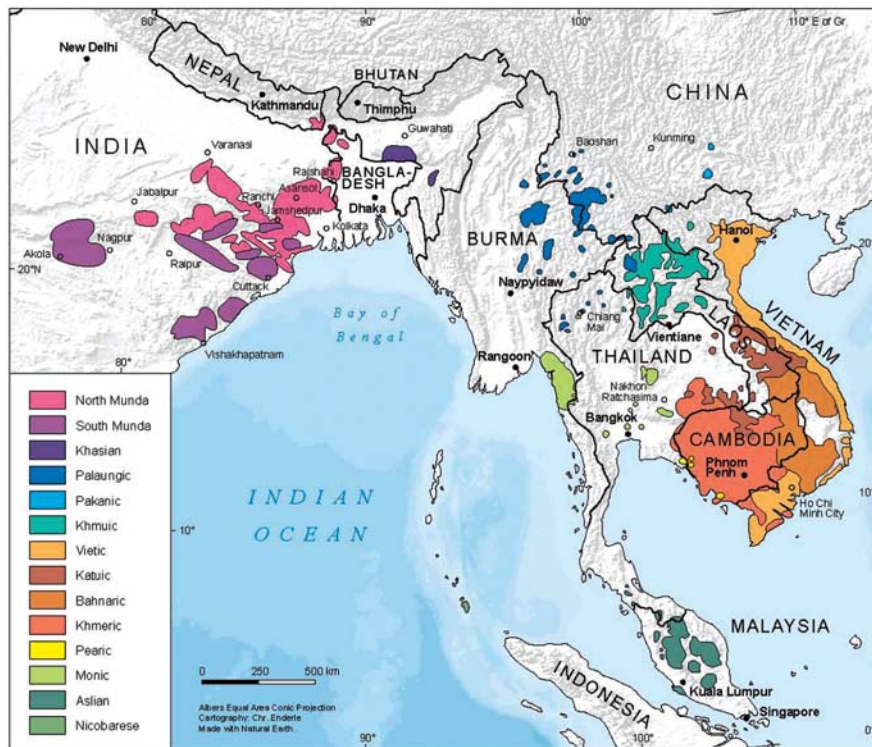


Figure 4 : Geographical distribution of Austroasiatic languages

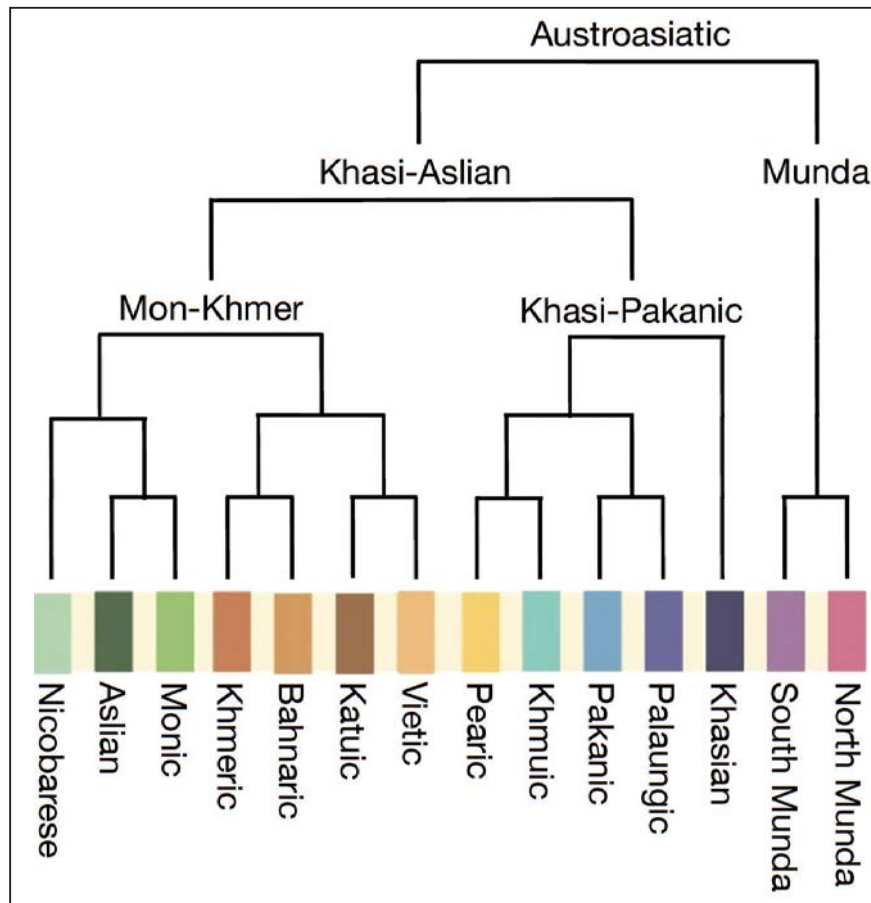


Figure 5 : The family tree of Austroasiatic(Diffloth 2012). Unlike the Khasi-Aslian branch, the internal phylogeny of the Munda branch has not been established.

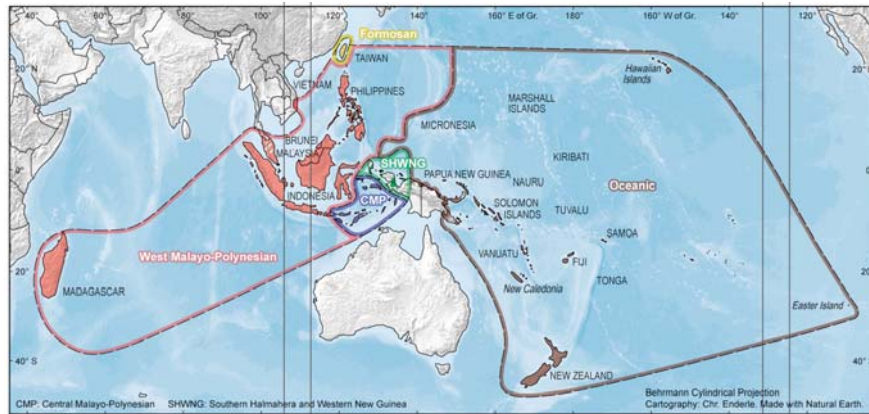


Figure 6 : Geographical distribution of Austronesian. The abbreviations CMP and SHWNG stand for the linguistic subgroups Central Malayo-Polynesian and South Halmahera West New Guinea respectively. Formosan on Tái-wān comprises at least nine primary branches of the language family, whilst all other groups shown represent the later geographical dispersal of the single-branch Malayo-Polynesian, which branched into West Malayo-Polynesian and Central East Malayo-Polynesian. Subsequently, Central East split into Central and East. Finally, East Malayo-Polynesian branched into the subgroups South Halmahera West New Guinea and Oceanic.

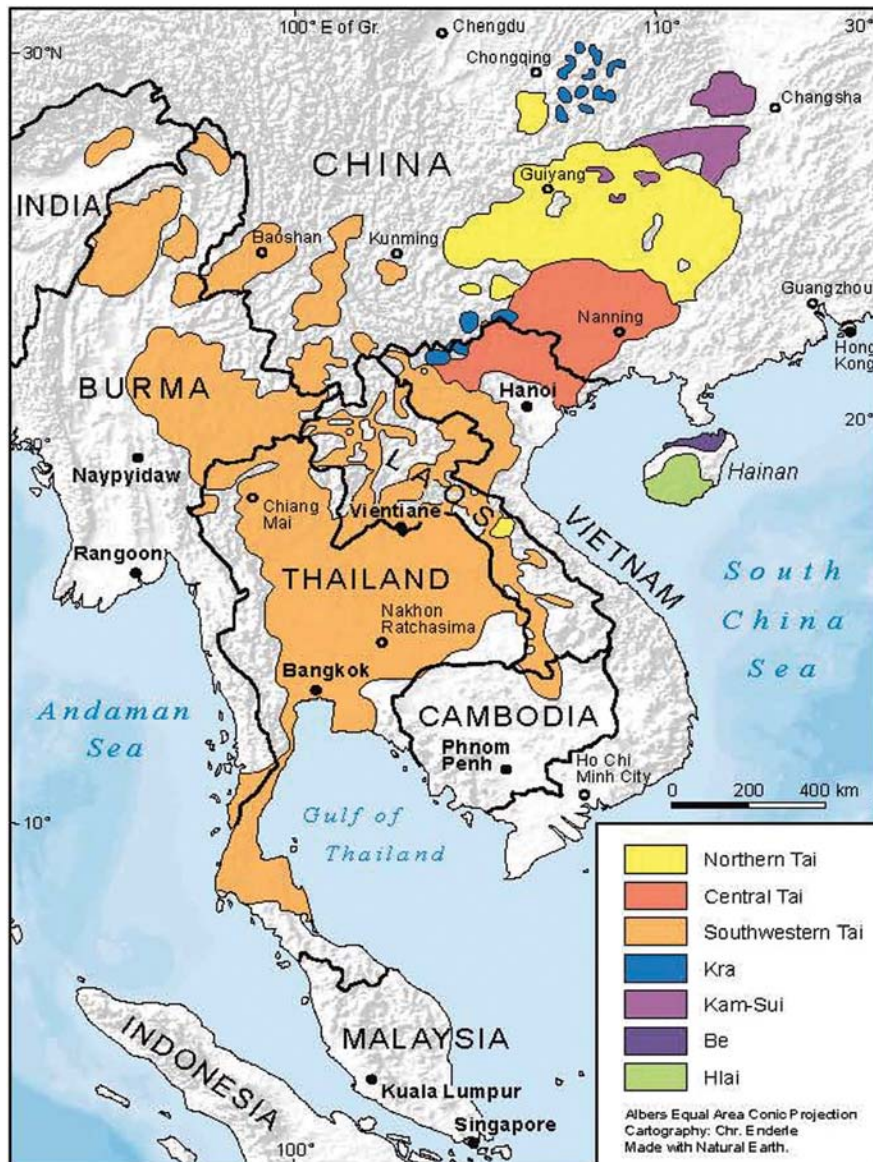


Figure 7: Geographical distribution of Kradai languages. The spread of Southwestern Tai languages into mainland Southeast Asia first took place in historical times. Austronesian languages of the Monic group were still spoken in the Dvāravatī kingdom that flourished in what today is central Thailand until the 13th century.

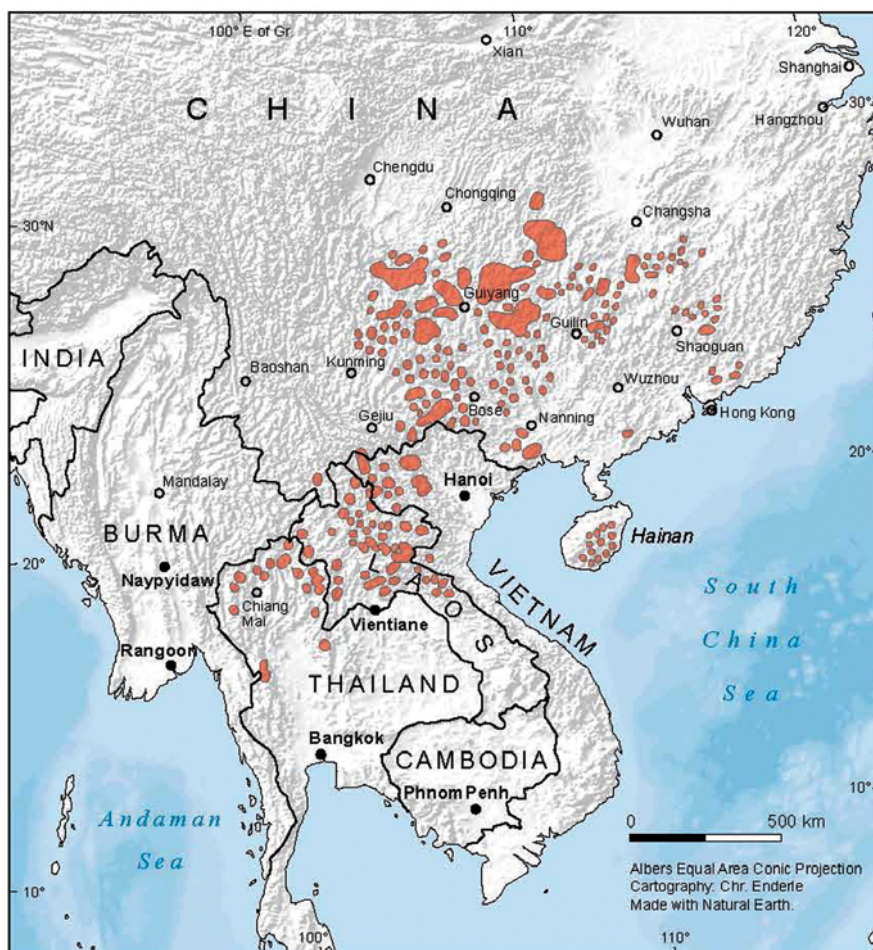


Figure 8 : Geographical distribution of Hmong-Mien languages. The Hmong-Mien migrated into mainland Southeast Asia relatively recently. Historically, Hmong-Mien peoples live along and south of the Yangtze.

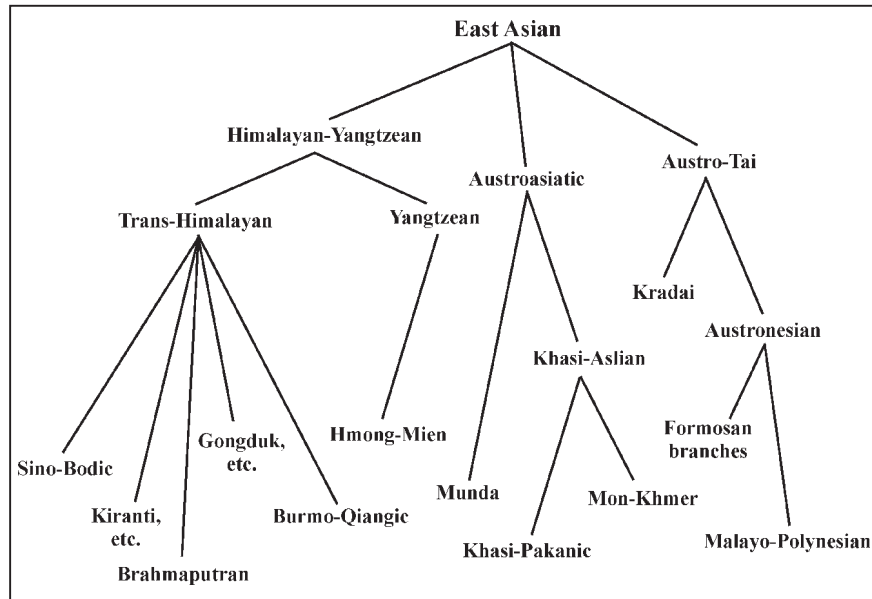


Figure 9 : The 2012 Benares recension of Stanley Starosta's East Asian linguistic phylum presented at Périgueux in 2001 (Starosta 2005, van Driem 2014b).

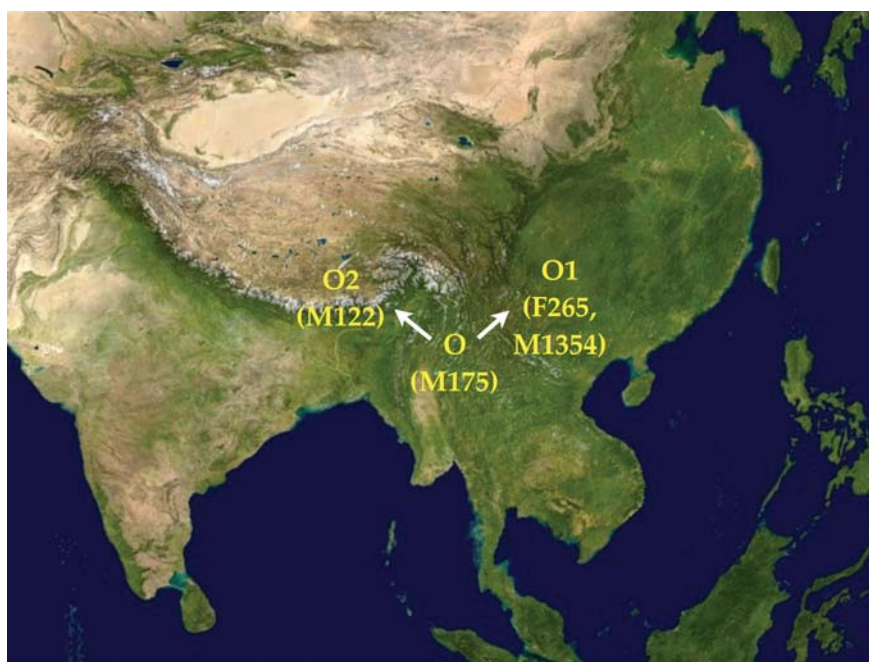


Figure 10 : After the last glacial maximum, the Y chromosomal haplogroup O (M175) split into the subclades O1 (F265, M1354) and O2 (M122).

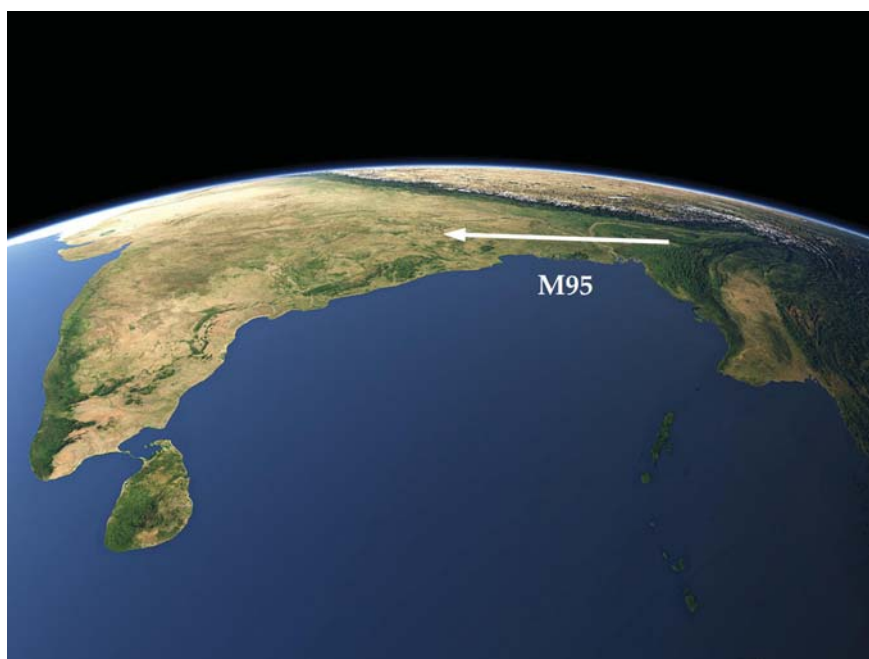


Figure 11 : A male-biased linguistic intrusion introduced both Austroasiatic language and a paternal lineage, haplogroup O1b1a1a (M95), into the indigenous population of the Choṭā Nāgpur.

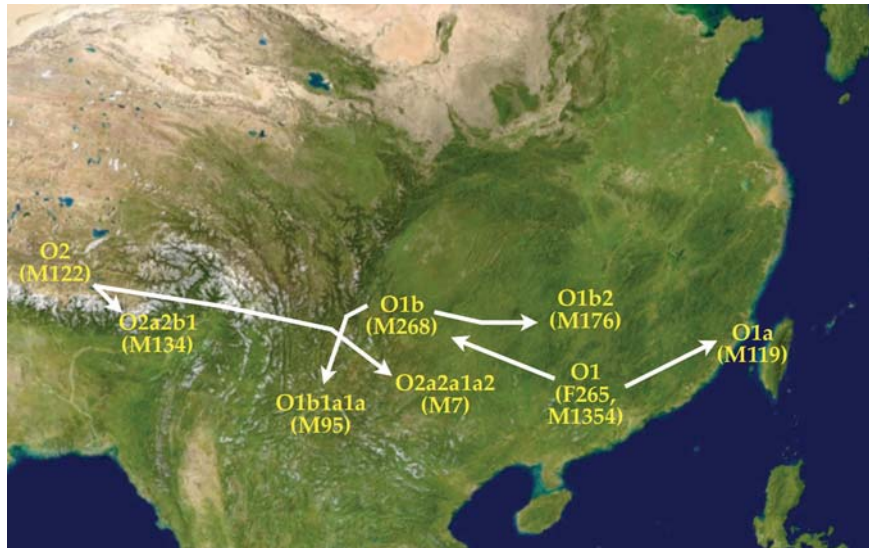


Figure 12 : At a more recent time depth, paternal lineages branched into new subclades, and each event involved a linguistic bottleneck leading to language families that today are reconstructible as distinct linguistic phyla. The O1 (F265, M1354) lineage gave rise to the O1a (M119) and O1b (M268) subclades. The former moved eastward to the Fújiàn hill tracts and across the strait to Formosa, which so became the *Urheimat* of the Austronesians. Bearers of the paternal lineage O1b (M268) domesticated Asian rice and spawned the paternal subclades O1b1a1a (M95) and O1b2 (M176). Haplogroup O1b1a1a (M95) is the Proto-Austroasiatic paternal lineage, whereas the para-Austroasiatic fraternal clade O1b2 (M176) spread eastward, sowing seed along the way. The haplogroup O2 (M122) gave rise to the paternal subclades O2a2b1 (M134) and O2a2a1a2 (M7). The spread of the molecular marker O2a2b1 (M134) from the Eastern Himalaya serves as a tracer for the dissemination of people speaking languages of the Trans-Himalayan family, whereas the paternal lineage O2a2a1a2 (M7) serves as a tracer for the spread of people speaking languages of the Hmong-Mien family.

and their paternal lineage would also spread deep into insular Southeast Asia. However, the prominent paternal lineage O1b2 (M176), which I have previously referred to as “para-Austroasiatic”, does not appear to be correlated with any extant linguistic group today.

Secondarily, bands of male Austroasiatics introduced their language and their paternal lineage, O1b1a1a (M95), to the indigenous peoples of the Choṭā Nāḡpur. Chaubey et al. (2010) showed that the Munda branch of Austroasiatic had arisen as the result of a sexually biased linguistic intrusion into the Indian subcontinent from the region to the north of the Bay of Bengal (Figure 11). As a consequence of the comparatively younger date and the nearly absolute gender asymmetry of this linguistic intrusion, it appears that the deepest division within the Khasi-Aslian trunk of Austroasiatic, i.e. the split between Khasi-Pakanic and Mon-Khmer, might be more indicative of the geographical location of the Austroasiatic homeland than the split between Munda and Khasi-Aslian. If we accept this line of reasoning, then the point of dispersal for Khasi-Aslian would appear to have lain in the area between South Asia proper and mainland Southeast Asia proper.

The spread of haplogroup O1 (F265, M1354) reflects the paternal founding dispersals of both Austro-Tai and Austroasiatic as well as the geographical spread of a para-Austroasiatic paternal subclade that evidently left no modern linguistic descendants. Our data from the Himalayan region and the data from populations elsewhere in Asia indicate that the geographical range and the chronology of spread of haplogroup O2a2b1 (M134) traces the founding dispersal of the Trans-Himalayan language family, whereas the paternal lineage O2a2a1a2 (M7) serves as a molecular proxy for the founding and spread of Hmong-Mien.

About twelve thousand years ago, at the dawn of the Holocene, in the southeastern Himalayas and eastern slopes of the Tibetan Plateau, haplogroup O2 (M122) gave rise to the ancestral Trans-Himalayan paternal lineage O2a2b1 (M134) and the “Yangtzean” or Hmong-Mien paternal lineage O2a2a1a2 (M7), as shown in Figure 12. It is a reasonable conjecture that the bearers of the polymorphism O2a2b1 (M134) at first remained in the Eastern Himalaya, which today also continues to represent the centre of phylogenetic diversity of the Trans-Himalayan

language family based on the geographical distribution of primary linguistic subgroups. After the bearers of the O2a2a1a2 (M7) lineage migrated eastward to settle in the areas south of the Yangtze, they were followed by early Trans-Himalayan language communities that spread from northeastern India into southeastern Tibet and northern Burma.

On their way, the early Hmong-Mien encountered the ancient Austroasiatics, from whom they adopted rice agriculture. Three principal populations of cultivated rice *Oryza sativa* are distinguished, comprising the families of cultivars known as *ahu*, *indica* and *japonica* rice. Earlier population genetic research on the genome of wild and cultivated varieties of rice supported the hypothesis that Asian rice was domesticated twice (Kovach *et al.* 2007, Sweeney and McCouch 2007, Kovach *et al.* 2009), but molecular evidence adduced in subsequent work demonstrated that the three principal cultivars represent three independent domestication processes, and that the introgression of domesticated traits occurred not just unidirectionally from *japonica* into *ahu* and *indica* rice, but multidirectionally from *ahu* and *indica* into *japonica* as well (Londo *et al.* 2006, McNally *et al.* 2009, Cívádet *et al.* 2015).

In previous studies (van Driem 2011, 2012, 2017c), evidence from linguistic palaeontology, rice genetics and human population genetics enabled the ethnolinguistic identification of the domesticators of Asian rice with the early Yangtzeans, the ancient Austroasiatics and the bearers of para-Austroasiatic haplogroup O1b2 (M176). The latter para-Austroasiatic paternal lineage advanced as far as the Korean peninsula and also represents a major wave of immigration recorded in the Japanese genome, representing the probable lineage of the Yayoi people, who introduced rice agriculture to Japan, as early as the second millennium BC, during the final phase of the Jōmon period.

The intimate interaction between ancient Austroasiatics and the ancestral Hmong-Mien not only involved the sharing of knowledge about rice agriculture, but also left a genetic trace in the high frequencies of haplogroup O1b1a1a (M95) in today's Hmong-Mien language communities and of haplogroup O2a2a1a2 (M7) in today's Austroasiatic populations. In an earlier study on Y chromosomal

haplogroups, Cai et al. (2011: 8) once ventured to speculate about “a Mon-Khmer origin of Hmong-Mien populations”. Instead, the incidence of haplogroup O2a2a1a2 (M7) in Austroasiatic language communities of Southeast Asia evinces a significant Hmong-Mien paternal contribution to early Austroasiatic populations, whereas the incidence of haplogroup O1b1a1a (M95) amongst the Hmong-Mien indicates a comparatively lower Austroasiatic paternal contribution to Hmong-Mien populations. As the Hmong-Mien moved eastward, the bearers of para-Austroasiatic paternal lineage O1b2 (M176) likewise continued to move east.

Meanwhile, the bearers of Y chromosomal haplogroup O2a2b1 (M134) in the eastern Himalayan region expanded eastward throughout Sichuān and Yúnnán, north and northwest across the Tibetan plateau as well as further westward across the Himalayas and southward into the Indo-Burmese borderlands. On the Brahmaputra plain, the early Trans-Himalayans encountered the Austroasiatics, who had preceded them. The relative frequencies of the Y chromosomal haplogroup O1b1a1a (M95) in Trans-Himalayan speaking populations of the Indian subcontinent (Sahoo et al. 2006, Reddy et al. 2007) suggest that a subset of the paternal ancestors of some Trans-Himalayan populations in northeastern India, e.g. certain Bodo-Koch communities, may originally have been Austroasiatic speakers who were linguistically assimilated by Trans-Himalayans.

Finally, the ancestral Trans-Himalayan paternal lineage O2a2b1 (M134) spread further northeast to the North China plain. The complex history of Sinitic populations featured successive constellations of dynastic empires governed from geographically ever shifting capitals, whereby subjugated and neighbouring populations as well as immigrants were absorbed. Not surprisingly therefore, Hà Chinese populations tend to represent an amalgam of East Asian paternal lineages. Yet even in modern Hà Chinese populations, the molecular marker associated with the spread of a Trans-Himalayan father tongue from the eastern Himalayan region, i.e. haplogroup O2a2b1 (M134), taken together with its subclade O2a2b1a1 (M117), occurs in a much higher frequency than any other O haplogroup subclade, and approximately twice as frequently as the next most

frequent fraternal subclade O2a1c (002611) (Yan et al. 2011, Wang et al. 2013, Yao et al. 2017).

On the grand time scale of the present narrative, China as a cultural and linguistic entity represents only a rather recent phenomenon, and Kwang-chih Chang (1986: 242) cautioned us against anachronisms that arise from applying the label “Chinese” to archaeological cultural assemblages or to peoples of the distant past. Likewise, in his valuable pioneering interdisciplinary studies, Bill Wang (1998) stressed the distinctness of the “three windows on the past” afforded by archaeology, linguistics and genetics.

Only at a much shallower time depth did the Trans-Himalayan paternal lineage O2a2b1 (M134) spread in tandem with early Sinitic speaking populations southward from the Yellow River basin into southern China during the Qín dynasty in the third century BC (Mountain et al. 1992, Wen et al. 2004). The martial and male-biased historical spread of Hm̐n Chinese during the gradual cultural sinification of the region south of the Yangtze involved both the spread of language and the introduction of paternal lineages and is historically documented in the Chinese chronicles. The paternal lineage O2a2b1 (M134) is also intrusively present in the Korean peninsula and beyond.

Not only do the geographical distribution of Trans-Himalayan linguistic subgroups and the chronology and spread of Y chromosomal haplogroups take us back to an eastern Himalayan homeland and the northeastern part of the Indian subcontinent, basic facts of geography in light of our ultimate African origins prompt us to direct our gaze back to the East Himalaya. The sub-Himalayan hill tracts offered a rich corridor replete with lush habitats for early human populations at a time that our ancestors still practised hunting and foraging as their principal subsistence strategies. The presence of Y chromosomal haplogroup D and other molecular markers in the Himalayas likewise attest to numerous older waves of peopling that passed through this region.

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## SITUATING BUDDHISM IN MITHILA REGION : PRESENCE OR ABSENCE ?

NISHA THAKUR

*Bauddha pakṣa aisan āpātabhīṣaṇa  
Udayanaka Siddhānta aisan Prasanna ...*

### Introduction

This line in the *Varṇaratnākara*<sup>1</sup> leaves one with a lot of questions and assumptions. Here Buddhist philosophy has been called *āpātabhīṣaṇa* (*āpāta* means rule of practice in misfortune, time of distress, difficult and *bhīṣaṇa* means terrifying, frightening formidable horrible) and Udayana's philosophy (*Siddhānta*) has been appraised to be correct, right etc. (*Prasanna*) with happiness. Why would Jyotirīśvarācārya, writing in the fourteenth century Mithila, supported *Udayanācārya* a well known philosopher who vehemently opposed the Buddhists and their philosophies? It is said that Udayana was the real founder of *Nyāyadarśana* or applied Logic and has made the greatest contribution to the Brahmanical philosophical literature of India, and brought great fame to the region of Mithila that became an important centre of Brahmanical learnings and a hub for challenging the Buddhist philosophers of the medieval times.<sup>2</sup> He has been called a 'militant champion of the Brahmanic faith'<sup>3</sup>. He is still famous in Mithila for his remarks on Lord Jagannātha, i.e.

*Aiśvaryamadamatto'si māmavajñāya vartase /  
samāyāte punar bauddhe ī madadhīnā tava sthitiḥ //*  
(*Studies in Jainism ...*, p. 73)

The meanings of these lines are "you are proud of the vanity of your supremacy and neglect me. When the Buddhists will again come up and raise objections against your very existence, only I will come to your rescue". He is given credit for having demolished in a final fashion the claims of the Buddhist logicians. It is also said that his vigorous thinking was set forth in the *Nyāya-Kusumāñjali* and the *Bauddhādhikāra*, the latter was an attack on the atheistic thesis of

Buddhism. Living in a period of lively controversy with the Buddhists, Udayana defended his belief. *Ātmatattvaviveka* is mainly devoted to the refutation of the Buddhist doctrines of Soul.<sup>4</sup> After him no Buddhist philosopher undertook again a debate with Nyāya. Thus the nine century long debate ended.<sup>5</sup>

If this theory is to be believed then what is the reason of calling Buddhists a threat in the fourteenth century (almost three decades). There is no doubt that the Brahmins of Mithila have been one of the most powerful communities in North India<sup>6</sup>, but it does not mean that there were no Buddhists in the region. Darbhanga, the heartland of the region of Mithila (presently situated at North Bihar), where the maximum number of *mula-s* (Brahmin settlements) were found, was divided into the Mahals (administrative unit or Pargana), and the Sirkar (District) of Tirhut (North Bihar) during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar, became one of the prosperous areas of Mughal India. The family of Mahesh Thakur (a pious Maithili Brahmin) received extensive favours and superior rights from successive Mughal Emperors and by the eighteenth century, they almost gained the position of autonomous rulers. The title of 'Raja' was bestowed on them in 1720. The chieftaincy covered an area of more than 2000 sq. miles.<sup>7</sup>

It is during the seventh century onwards that the social structure of Mithila had begun to go through a flux. The growing presence of Brahmins and the rapid spread of Brahmanical ideas had begun to challenge the influence of Buddhism in this region. Both the Buddhist and the Brahmanical systems witnessed many internal transformations. The Zamindari records and the records related to land grant policy of the rulers are available in Darbhanga Raj Archives, which conclusively prove that Maithili Brahmins were the largest recipients of land grants<sup>8</sup> and also show that the Buddhists began to lose their power but they continued to pose biggest threat to the Brahmins. But we know little about the Buddhists in this region. Thus, this paper tries to situate the Buddhists and Buddhism in the region of Mithila, their culture and social status, as well as how Buddhism declined in the Mithila region. The major historical studies on Mithila region have made us more familiar with the Brahmins in Mithila and their culture than that of the Buddhist Maithils.<sup>9</sup> So this paper also tries to highlight this

historiographical problem in the study of Mithila. This paper is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the problems with the present historiography on the region Mithila and the second part talks about 'threats' posed by the Buddhists to the Brahmins (Buddhists vs. Brahmins), and the third portion deals with the presence/absence of Buddhism in Mithila with special focus on the *Varṇaratnākara* and the biography of Dharmasvamin, a Tibetan monk who visited Tirhut/Mithila on his way to Bodh-Gaya in the thirteenth century, followed by the conclusion.

### **A. Problems with historiography of Mithila**

The process of neglect to the Buddhists as an important religious order and not as an mainstream religious sect started from the British colonial writings in the early nineteenth century which constructed a chronology in which a 'Hindu epoch' was followed by a 'Muslim epoch' and so on. When some texts in the same century, were found to describe Buddhist life, their thoughts and practices, colonial scholars retrofitted Buddhism into this chronology. Consequently, Buddhism was believed to have 'died' in India and escaped outside the territorial boundaries after the thirteenth century. This trend became unquestionable and became dramatically prominent in shaping the postcolonial Indian historical mind-set, especially relating to the history of the eastern India, where the Palas were considered to be the last Buddhists rulers.<sup>10</sup> The colonial Indology or imperialist historiography defined what they believed to be characteristic features of Indian culture and civilization. It is clear that no history is written in a vacuum, it is a response to an existing tradition. The colonialist and the nationalist historiographies amply demonstrate it. The colonial interest in the Indian past was a result of administrative necessity on the part of British. The Nationalist historiography, on the other hand, emerged in the wake of the nationalist movement as a protest against the colonial rule. The colonial historiography gave legitimacy to the British rule in India by propagating colonial ideology through a colonial inter-relation of the history of India. Moreover the glorification of the more remote ancient period meant essentially the glorification of the Hindu period, which came to be considered as the essential culture of India. The nationalist historians regarded forces other than

Hinduism in that sense as an intrusion. This is a feature still discernible in the writings of the historians of our time on this region. For example, the nationalist historians like K. P. Jayaswal glorified the Chedi King Yasah Kama, as a 'championed for the cause of Hinduism' and also called him 'Hindu Napoleon'.<sup>11</sup> The same kind of view has represented by Upendra Thakur,<sup>12</sup> another nationalist historian of our times.

From the last three decades of the nineteenth century, the Indian scholars emerged with nationalist ideology, took up the 'Challenge' and constructed an ideological forum opposed to the colonial school. However, attention has not been given to the many tantric and Mahāyana Buddhist lineages that occupied important political-social spaces, and shared with the Brahmins the same territory. But, at the same time much importance has been given to the Sufi, Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva lineages. Moreover, the particular relationships that existed between the Buddhist and non-Buddhist others, such as the Sufis or the Vaiṣṇavas, have all been ignored.<sup>13</sup>

It was thereby essential that changes in the nature of the national movement have their bearings upon the trends of history writings too. The period following the partition of Bengal in 1905, ushered in an era of extremist politics and a strong spirit of Hindu revivalism. This was also the period that saw a growing interest in the regional history. It began to be deemed as the real responsibility of the scholars to make the people of 'their region' aware of their past. Consequently, the scholars sought evidence on the part of their region with great enthusiasm and a sense of commitment. We are told that no other period of the present century has produced so many research works on the ancient Indian history as the period of nine years, i.e., 1916-1925.<sup>14</sup> The introduction of the concept of 'Golden Ages' interspersed with 'Dark Ages' marked by political disunity or the absence of large political formations questioning, even if indirectly, the idea of Oriental Despotism or an unchanging society.

To begin with the scholarly works on Mithila can initially be divided into two broad phases i.e., the pre-independence period and the post-independence. Although there is no much significant basis for such a division, nevertheless it appears that the earliest phase represents a purely nationalistic tradition whereas attempts to incorporate the elements of historiographical change started afterwards. The history

of Mithila in the pre-independence phase is largely indebted to the persistent attempts of the scholars such as Bhagwanlal Indraji and S. A. Grierson<sup>15</sup> who contributed some articles which referred to Mithila. The pioneering historians like M. Chakravarty,<sup>16</sup> K.P. Jayaswal,<sup>17</sup> Radha Krishna Choudhary,<sup>18</sup> contributed several articles, books and monographs on Mithila region. The first monograph on Mithila i.e. *History of Tirhut* by S. N. Sinha was published in the year 1922.<sup>19</sup>

In an attempt to highlight the 'Imperial glory' of the Indian past the nationalist historians, concern themselves mainly with genealogy, chronology, wars and conquests. Small battles were transformed into major works and local heroes were unduly glorified. The recent work of C. P. N. Sinha on the Karnatas of Mithila clearly proves this tendency.<sup>20</sup> He arranged the chapters of the book in the following manner, i.e. Origin of the Karnatas, Career and Achievements of Nānyadeva, Successors of Nānyadeva and so on. Similarly, K. P. Jayaswal hails the Karnata dynasty for being the 'Last Hindu Kingdom' forming a 'Bright chapter' as it resisted the 'Muslim onslaught', and a recent work puts the same thing in a slightly different way when it observes that the advents of the Muslims 'brought in its wake another crisis in a more menacing nature', as 'the strain on the cohesion of the Hindu society was fast reaching the breaking point', and the 'Hindu had lost their political independence'.<sup>21</sup>

The acceptance of a conventional periodisation meant a search for a 'golden period' represented by a period in which the intelligentsia, who had easy access to the classical literature and language, traces their roots and describes in the 'glowing tints of cultural resurgence'. Therefore, describing the ministers of our period, who obviously belonged to the Brāhmaṇa and the Kāyastha castes chiefs, it has been asserted that 'the most striking point to take note of is that all those ministers were great scholars and law-givers of the time, which would justify their claim to the high exalted positions'.<sup>23</sup>

The nationalist enthusiasm resulted in an emergence of regional chauvinism. Confusing region with nation was one of the manifestations of this tendency and, thus, while dealing with Nānyadeva's (local ruler of Mithila in the eleventh century) relation with the adjoining kingdoms K. P. Jayaswal entitled it as 'foreign policy of Nānya'.<sup>24</sup> Keeping this tradition, the modern scholars also

characterised the period after the fall of the Videhan monarchy as a period of 'slavery' for Mithila which was 'liberated' under her 'illustrious son' Nānyadeva'. Another writer names the chapter dealing with the period from the fall of Videhan monarchy to the rise of the Karnatas as 'foreign rule'.<sup>26</sup> It is interesting in this context to note that the Karnatas to establish their rule in Mithila cannot be termed 'foreigners' because they established their kingdom in Mithila itself unlike others who ruled from outside.

Similarly the nationalistic fervour to 'prove' the existence of democratic institutions and participatory politics and the benevolent nature of 'Hindu' kings is maintained in the modern writings also. That is why a reference to the formation of a 'council of elders' during the last phase of the Karnata rule in Mithila is taken to represent as 'unprecedented constitutional change', which took place as a reaction against the despotic rule of the king. Such statements are made without any proper justification to them. For example Makhan Jha writes :

The Karnata dynasty (1097 A.D. to 1324 A.D.) of Mithila was founded by Nānyadeva who was a Karnata Kṣatriya ... This dynasty ruled Mithila approximately for 227 years and during the period of reign of this dynasty, Mithila was culturally stagnant and pathetically unstable since the days of Videhan monarchy and the Vajjian confederacy activities. The King patronized the scholars, ancient arts and sculptures and once again the ancient glory of Mithila was revived ...<sup>29</sup>

At another place he says that, 'till the reign of King Harṣa (A.D. 647), both the regions of Mithila and Mahakoshal were under the rule of Buddhist kings, although the people of the concerned regions had not accepted Buddhism as a major religion'.<sup>30</sup> Although he doesn't give any evidence to prove that the people of Mithila region didn't accept Buddhism as a major religion.

Even though the modern historians on this topic show their familiarity with certain concepts like feudalism which they use in their analysis a close look on these writings reveal a tendency of accepting this category uncritically and imposing it on the sources. Therefore, the 'Council of ministers' (in the court of Ramasimhadeva, a local Karnata ruler) is said to represent a 'council of feudatory rulers' or a 'feudal baronial council', the descriptions given on the

face value of information without analysing it in terms of the socio-economic structure of that period. Such an approach is bound to lead one to take up contradictory positions. So, in this background, negligence of the developments in historiographical trends is also conspicuous. Thus, the existing works on the region and its economic and social structure represent a state of historical investigation far from satisfactory. Therefore, in the next section, I would like to draw the attention towards the Buddhists and the Brahmins sharing history in the territory of Mithila.

### **B. Buddhists vs. Brahmins: Contested Ideology and Shared Territory**

To begin with, the Videhans (another name of the people living in Mithila) were not considered to be the champions of Brahmanism. In fact, the Brahmins looked them down. While, on the other hand, the Pali literature (particularly the Jātakas) gives us vivid picture of the beautiful town of Mithilala / Videha with the kings adopting and propagating Buddhism. There are ample evidences to prove that Buddhists occupied important place in Mithila before the Brahmins had settled and gained ultimate power. From the beginning of the period of state formation the land grant to both the Brahmin and Buddhist monks was planned to strengthen and consolidate king's position. The birth of these religious institutions can be seen as pacemakers in the process. For example, the Brahmin priests, despite being criticised by the mainstream Brahmins, took the lead in settling amidst the aboriginals of Behar and Bengal (the *Prācyadeśa*).<sup>32</sup>

D.D. Kosambi wrote that the Brahmins became acceptable to autochthons due to their agricultural knowledge, they instructed to a society, which was yet to be 'peasantised'.<sup>33</sup> The Buddhist monks, as the pacemakers, arrived earlier in the east but later, the Brahmins, due to their better knowledge of agriculture and creativity in constructing origin myths as well as enormous capacity for legitimation, obtained an advantage over their Buddhist counterparts. The Aryan reached the east rather little late and when they did arrive, the local people resisted them.<sup>34</sup> This process was revealed in the shift of royal patronage from Buddhist to Brahmanical sects, which became more visible by the end of the eleventh century. These shifts are especially manifest in the artistic record of the period. Ronald Inden attributes this to the better

adaptability and resilience of the Brahmins to the situations, their transformation from a sacrificial cult to a gift-receiving sect, i.e., stressing on the concept of *Mahādāna* (gift giving ceremony).<sup>36</sup>

This section is divided between two sub-sections. The first section tries to situate the Brahmins in Mithila while the second deals with the Buddhists' discovery of the region.

#### *B. I. The Brahmins of Mithila*

The migration and the settlement process of the Brahmins in Mithila region can easily be traced. Geographically, the eastward migration of the Brahmins and the extension of Mithila region, in terms of its boundaries, can be pointed out clearly in three stages. The first stage is traced from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. Agni Vaiśvānara (Vedic God) went burning along the earth towards the east of river Saraswati followed by king Videga Mathava and his priest, Gotama Rahuguna and stopped after reaching the river of Sadānīra. It is for this Videga Mathava that the 'Brahmanisation' of this region (eastern India in general) is attributed. It may be noted that Sadānīra is identified as Gandaki, which formed the boundary between the ancient city of Kośala and Videha (Mithila).<sup>37</sup> The second stage is traced from the inscription found from the Vaiśālī region, which indicates that by the fifth century Videha and Vaiśālī seems to have united under a larger Republican unit, and formed into the province called Tirabhukti. The boundaries by this time seem to have been extended to form the southern boundary, the river Ganga. Therefore, the province of Tirabhukti was bounded by the three *Tiras* (river banks, of the Ganga, the Gandak and Kosi).<sup>38</sup> Finally, the republic of Mithila was shaped out and the modern revenue division of Tirhut (consisting of the district of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Champaran and Saran) was known as Mithila which was given to Mahesh Thākkura, a pious Brahmin.

From *Prācyadeśa* to the seat of yogis (great Brahmin saints), the story that occurred in two important Brahmanical texts, i.e., the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The first book *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, is a text composed around the first part of the first millennium BCE which says that the river Sadānīra (i.e. the Gandaka, the eastern part of which lies the region of Mithila) is always cold even in the summer and rushes down from the north quickly. As the name suggests

the river is abundantly and always filled with water. It was difficult to cross. The land east of the Sadānīra was also much uncultivated, very marshy because God Agni Vaiśvānara had yet not tasted it.<sup>39</sup> For this reason, the Brahmins of earlier ages did not cross over it. But after Agni tasted it, it became very cultivable and nowadays there are many Brahmins to the east of the river. Even now, this river forms the boundary between the Kośalas and the Videhas.<sup>40</sup> Hence, the story suggests that in those days Brahmins did not cross the river in the east, for it was said that Agni Vaiśvānara did not taste the land. However, it is also mentioned in the same text that, 'eastward of that river many Brāhmaṇas now dwell ... now it is indeed, a desirable place, for the Brāhmaṇas have made it enjoyable through offerings to the gods'.<sup>41</sup>

The difference between the ancient Vedic land of culture in the west and the east, where there was Aryan land but not yet a long established home of Vaiśvānara, can hardly be more expressed. The Vaideha can also be compared with the Magadhan (South Bihar) as though being non-Aryans and at the same time applied as the description of mixed cases.<sup>42</sup> The Brahmin immigrants themselves were not wholly Brahmanised, i.e., not wholly infused by the culture of the Kuru-Pāñcālas (known to have been the heartland of the Vedic-Brahmanical cultures in those days).<sup>43</sup> The *Kauṣītaki Āraṇyaka* suggests that the residence of the Brahmins in the Magadhan region were considered somewhat unusual, even impure, and that such Brahmins were not respectable Brahmins.<sup>44</sup>

These points bring to mind that it was not only at the time of the Buddha and his doctrine that the 'easterners' came to be regarded as different from the western countries. In fact, even prior to Buddhism, during the Brahmin period (1000-600 BCE), the Videhas and others had shown a new tendency that was different from the Vedic Brahmanism. The Videha/Mithila, however, attained great reputation and fame because of their celebrated king, Janaka, whose name occurred in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.<sup>45</sup> Here he is presented as one of the leading patrons of the new doctrine of Brahman with the culture of speculations and the questioning of the Vedas. Janaka was mentioned as the great patron of the Brahmins.<sup>46</sup> Another story about the migration occurred

in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the fourteenth and the final book of *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. Here the story says that a king of Mithila named Janaka once set out to perform a sacrifice and consequently the Brahmins from the regions of Kuru and Pañcāla (western countries) had flocked to Mithila for the occasion. Janaka had decided to hold a contest during the occasion to know which of these Brahmins was the most learned in the Vedas. To this Brahmin he would offer a thousand cows with each of their horns tied with pieces of gold.<sup>47</sup> While the assembly of Brahmins anxiously waited for the debate to commence, a Brahmin named Yājñavalkya<sup>48</sup>, who was an eminent scholar and was confident of his knowledge commanded his disciples to carry off the cows that king Janaka had offered as the prize, thereby proving his eminence.<sup>49</sup>

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* thereby shows that the region had by now emerged as an important centre of learning. The region is portrayed as 'the home of a flourishing civilization'. Within the mythic chronology of these texts, a city named Mithila emerged as the capital of Videha and a righteous king named Janaka ruled the kingdom.<sup>50</sup> The text also emphasized that the region (Mithila) had its own Brahmins (or the Brahmins who claimed the region as their own) and were depicted to be the most learned. The *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* clearly points out that the sage of Mithila revealed the path of Dharma, called Yājñavalkya, in that country where the black antelope roamed.<sup>51</sup> This has been explained by the fact that though the region of Mithila (Videha) was not among the four ancient holy lands of *Bhārata-Varṣa*, it nevertheless attained sacredness because it was approved of as a pure land by the earlier Dharmaśāstra literature.<sup>52</sup> Interestingly, in the *Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, it is documented that the Kasi, the Kosala and the Videha kingdoms had the same *Purohita* (Court-Priest), Jala Jātūkarṇya.<sup>53</sup>

Thus, it can be clearly said that the passages from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* were attempts by the Brahmin migrants to eastern India to validate Videha as a legitimate center of Vedic orthodoxy.<sup>54</sup> This migration has been interpreted as describing the spread of the Vedic culture from its foundation around the epic river Saraswati in western India to the territories of the east, which were long considered by Brahmins as being impure.

### B. II. Maithili Buddhists

The Buddhist texts too reveal something about their presence in the early history of Mithila. The attitude of the Buddhists is different from the Brahmanical literature. There are one or two stray references in the Buddhist works, which seem to show that the province of Videhans was situated in the tract of land called the Madhyadeśa.<sup>55</sup> It is likely that the Buddhists extended the connotation of Madhyadeśa simply because they had to include in it the lands par excellence of Buddhism viz. Bodh Gaya and Banaras.<sup>56</sup> There is no question of threat to the Brahmins by the Buddhists because of their numerical strength, but if we look at it materially, the Buddhists did have much land, property and power to impose big challenge to the Brahmins.

It has been often said that most people who accepted Buddhism and the *triratna* (*Buddha*, *Saṅgha* and *Dhamma*) were not only monks or intellectuals but they were the ordinary people like the farmers, artisans, and merchants. Throughout its expansive missionary history, Buddhist traditions engaged the enthusiastic devotion of the householder classes through its inclusive hierarchy of teachings interlinked with a large repertoire of ritual practices. Buddhism attracted ascetics and intellectuals with myriad meditative regimens and vast doctrinal discourse; yet it also cultivated the great lay majority with simple teachings and devotional practices while meeting their specific pragmatic needs through rituals.

Mithila has been a prominent centre of Buddhism since early times. Ample evidences have shown so many important Buddhist remains, and the reference of Mithila and Videha in the Buddhist literature shows that Mithila was an important urban centre where the Buddhists were active. According to the *Mahagovinda Sutta*, it was king Renu who, with the help of Mahagovinda Jotipala, founded the kingdom of Videha.<sup>57</sup> The commentator Buddhaghosa also tells us that migrants, who were brought from Pubba-Videha by king Mandhata, occupied Videha.<sup>58</sup>

In this case, J. P. Sharma remarked that *pubba* is not 'eastern' but implies 'former'. Thus the Buddhist tradition without contradicting much the Brahmanical traditions also suggests that the Brahmins of Mithila were not the indigenous people of that land, that they came from the west like the Kosalas, the Kasis, Magadhans, Angas and

Licchavis, etc., that they moved eastward elsewhere what was then considered the 'home of genuine Brahmanism'.<sup>59</sup>

It may also be important to underline the fact that Mithila's geographical location played a vital role in the spread of Buddhism there. The region lied between the Nepala and Vajrasana (Bodh-Gaya), and emerged as the gateway to Bengal (Dar-Bhanga).<sup>60</sup>

We have a plenty of references of Mithila in various Buddhist sources. Most of the times, Mithila's area, geographical locations and its market places are mentioned that shows that the region became an important economic center and a hub of Buddhist activities. According to Rhys Davids, Mithila was situated about 35 miles northwest from Vaiśali.<sup>61</sup> It was seven leagues and the kingdom of Videha 300 leagues in extent.<sup>62</sup> It was situated at a distance of 60 Yojanas from Campa, the capital of Anga.<sup>63</sup>

Mithila had at each of its four gates a market town of Yavamajjhaka shape, which occurs as a general name for four market towns forming the four suburbs distinguished as eastern, southern, western and northern.<sup>64</sup> It is also mentioned that Mithila contained 16000 villages, 16000 storehouses and 16000 dancing girls.<sup>65</sup> One king named Makhadeva of Mithila seeing a grey hair plucked from his head realized the impermanence of worldly things and thought that his days were numbered. He afterwards became a recluse and developed very high spiritual insight.<sup>66</sup>

According to the Maithili tradition<sup>67</sup> sites like Saptari, Bhala Pargana, Buddhama (Buddhagrama), Ratnapura, Brahmapura, Visla (Visara), Vetthadiya or Bettia, Radhia and Mathia (in Champaran) and other places were strongholds of Buddhism in Mithila. Buddhist pillars situated in Radhia and Mathia while in Bakhara (in Visara or Visala pargana) there were big monasteries and stupas.<sup>68</sup> The Naulaghar inscription number two, belonging to the 11-12th century CE gives us an idea about the existence of a Buddhist Vihara for the first time in Tirabhukti or Mithila. The purpose of this inscription appears to record the erection of a monastery.<sup>69</sup> This inscription is very important in the sense that it tells for the first time the existence of Viharas in Mithila during this time, while Hiuen-Tsang account<sup>70</sup> shows that ten Buddhist monasteries in Monghyr, lying on the southern side of Ganga, (e.g. Rajaona, Urena etc.).<sup>71</sup> The Bharatapura Candisthana inscription is yet

another important discovery throwing light on the state on Buddhism in Mithila.<sup>72</sup> The Bangaon copper plate inscription (in Saharsa district) of Vigrahapala III, we find that the village Vasukavartika in Hordeya Visaya of Tirabhukti was granted in the name of Lord Buddha with specified privileges, in accordance with the Bumichidranaya, in favour of a Brahmana.<sup>73</sup> On the basis of the Caryapadas (songs of the Buddhists), regarded as the earliest form of Maithili/ Bengali/ Assamese literature, it can safely be presumed that the Sahajiyas had successfully communicated their thoughts to the intelligentsia of the time. The introduction of Sahajiya Buddhism and the recognition of the Buddha by the Brahmana legalists clearly suggest the revival of Buddhism in Bihar and Bengal and other regions of north India.

### C. Absence and Presence of Buddhism in Mithila

This section deals with the contradictory nature of the evidences about the relation between Buddhism and Brahmins. It is said that during the heyday of Buddhism, a sizeable section of Brahmins converted to Buddhism, and these converted Buddhists came to occupy a dominant position in the rank and file of the Buddhist monasteries. However, towards the close of the twelfth century when Buddhism was on decline, they opted to rejoin their original religion. Their return to Hinduism was accepted only on condition that they occupy lower rank than that of Brahmins in the caste hierarchy. Anticipating the decline of the Buddhist order, the former accepted the lower positions, offered to them and came to be known as Bhumihars. However, many of them continued to remain the chief of the Buddhist Monasteries that later got transformed into Hindu centre of worship called the *Thakurwardins*.<sup>74</sup>

The writings of Candessvara Thakkura<sup>75</sup>, the celebrated Prime Minister of Harasimhadeva,<sup>76</sup> prescribed that the Buddha was to be worshipped on the first day of the bright fortnight of Caitya (*tamase buddhaye caiva namaḥ prakṛtaye tathai*).<sup>77</sup>

The Buddha was also supposed to be worshipped along the river Ganga on the seventh day of the bright fortnight of the month of Vaiśākha.<sup>78</sup> Candessvara also prescribes the exclusion worship of the Buddha on the twelfth day of the month Śrāvaṇa.<sup>79</sup> A golden image was to be given away to a Brahman after due worship and ritual. On the other hand, Mithila tradition records that in the beginning

Udayanācārya (mentioned in the introduction) was so scared of the Buddhist influences that he left Mithila, went over to Bengal and became Dharmādhikaraṇika in the court of the legendary Bengali king Adisura.<sup>80</sup> This folktale also suggests the presence of the Buddhists in the region of Mithila posing threat to the Brahmins. Let us see what the sources have to say.

*C. I. Study of the Varṇaratnākara (VR)*

The text Varṇaratnākara of Kaviśekharaṇācārya Jyotirīśvara Thākkura (1290-1350) is considered to be the oldest work in the Maithili language of North Bihar so far known and it goes back to the first half of the fourteenth century CE.<sup>81</sup> The Sanskrit author Jyotirīśvara composed the *Varṇaratnākara* ("Ocean of Descriptions") at the court of the Raja of Tirhut in northern Bihar. The text, a poet's manual in which Jyotirīśvara translated into Maithili the Sanskrit conventions for writing poetry, is organized in eight chapters called the *Kallolas* or waves, each dealing with the figures of speech and words appropriate to particular poetic topics: describing cities (*nagara varṇana*), heroes and heroines (*nāyaka-varṇana*); palaces and royal courts (*asthana*), the seasons (*ṛtu*), military campaigns (*prayanaka*), poets (*bhaṭṭa*), and cremation ground (*śmaśāna*), and so on. Some of the Buddhist teachers were actively accommodating the lower classes of the community in order to survive as the rulers and upper classes of the community were patronising the Brahmins. This probably was the reason of not including the Yogis, Tapasis, etc. in the Buddhist list of the Jyotirīśvaraṇācārya's *Varṇaratnākara*.<sup>82</sup> The *Varṇaratnākara* is a revealing analogue to this classicizing process, reproducing a 'high' literary tradition in a local language through the use of classical forms of conventions. It is in the *Samsana Varṇana* (the description of the cemetery and burning ground) that Jyotirīśvara mentions the lurid and gruesome description of eight Bhairavas, eight Śaktis, 64 Yoginis, twelve Vetālas, Kāpālikas, Rākṣasis, and the 84 Siddhās or yogi saints, (who belonged to the late Mahāyāna Buddhism of eastern India, Nepala and Tibet).<sup>83</sup>

Jyotirīśvara in his VR treated the Buddhists as a threat separately. He denounces Buddhism as 'degraded and dangerous' (*baudha pakṣa aisan apdiabhiṣana ...*).<sup>84</sup> Therefore one can presume that by the

fourteenth century the Brahmins of Mithila became so popular as to create a geographical imagination and social hierarchy where the Buddhists along with other non-brahmins were ousted from sacred domain of the state. Even when the Brahmins disliked their presence they could not ignore the presence of the Buddhists. Therefore, it can be inferred that in Mithila, Buddhism was aspiring to come to power.

The VR clearly shows that the various sects and sub-sects of non-Brahmanical sects and even non-Buddhists were expanding in this region. The VR mentions various geographical segregations and spaces that the author imagines, and strikes out those whom he treats as 'others' in different separate locations but within the uniform region. While there are as many as seven locations discussed, his ideal space remained highly brahmanised with Vedas, and the Brahmins, Brahmin priests, the ideal Brahmin king and queens being the superior classes. The *deorhali varṇana*<sup>85</sup> (temple of the rulers) clearly depicts him the ruler of the social order (*varṇāśramadharma*).

### C. II. Contribution of Dharmasvāmin

As noted earlier, a new mind set regarding Buddhism's survival was generated by the biography of Dharmasvāmin or Chag Lo tsa ba, whose English translation<sup>86</sup> was a milestone. Since the publication of the English translation in 1959, the academic community has accepted the thirteenth century as the end of Buddhism in India based on the dates of Dharmasvāmin's visit to India.

However this work of biography does depict Buddhism in decline, it has by no means extinguished.

Dharmasvāmin while witnessing the Buddhists flee from the Maha-Bodhi complex in the face of Muslim raiders, he also watched them return. From the Bodhgaya inscription dated to the late thirteenth century, we know that the Buddhists occupied this place until at least 1283 A.D., the date of the inscription.<sup>87</sup> In addition, Dharmasvāmin also reports studying at Nalanda, though the institution was in a damaged state.<sup>88</sup> The account of Dharmasvāmin does not shows the presence of any monastery or any political Buddhist centre like monastery, he even points out clearly that Tirhut was a non-Buddhist

country<sup>89</sup>, but still he finds one tantric and many travellers who joined him to Vajrāsana. Dharmasvāmin worshipped the image of Tārā in Vaiśālī<sup>90</sup> while the women in Tirhut behaved very rudely shows that there was a difference among the sub-regions of Mithila.

The most interesting things found in the account regarding the presence of Buddhism in Mithila is the difference between the people and the rulers in the region. In spite of the under-currents of feeling among a section of the populace, it seems that kings in Mithila in general were tolerant towards the Buddhists. We learn from the account that Raja Rāmasiṃhadeva of the Karnata dynasty presented the Buddhist traveller rice, gold, medicine etc., and requested him to stay for a few more days. Though he himself a devout follower of Brahmanical religion, Rāmasiṃhadeva offered him the chief priesthood which Dharmasvāmin politely refused.<sup>91</sup>

### Conclusion

A study of the present social structure in regions surrounding Mithila based on the sources shows that the Brahmanical social stratification had a greater appeal among the autochthons due to obvious reason that it was more suitable for an agrarian economy based on division of labour. As a matter of fact, Buddhism in its essence was hostile to Brahmanism and the householders' lifestyle. The Buddhists tried to cope with the changing situations and successfully brought in a reformation. Mahāyāna Buddhism, which was now replaced, by Tantric Buddhism and Sahajiya Buddhism saw the change in the outlook of rulers, and the Buddhists were affected materially. Notwithstanding the tolerant policy of rules (as with the Rāmasiṃhadeva of the Karnata dynasty towards Dharmasvāmin) evidences of Brahmin's hostility proves the position (threatening) of the Buddhists still in the region of Mithila. In the fourteenth century the Maithili Brahmins treated the Buddhists and not the Turks as their worst enemies, even two hundred years after the destruction of Nalanda and other Buddhist centres of learning.<sup>92</sup>

Ultimately, it may be said that no matter how much the Brahmins as many vaunt their purity and independence through the establishment of institutions such as the *Panjis*,<sup>93</sup> the historical reality is one of their constant compromise. Above all, through the acceptance

of royal gifts they had to come into contact with various peoples who had different views and religious practices. The vast number of land grants to the Brahmins throughout the north India right up to the beginning of the modern period attests to the strength of this pattern and to the royal need for Brahmanical legitimisation.

In a study based on the sources collected from the *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*,<sup>94</sup> it has been revealed that more than forty important Buddhist thinkers from the eighth to the first quarter of the thirteenth century subsisted/lived in India.<sup>95</sup> The century wise breakup of the list shows that from 700-800 A.D. eight scholars, from 800-900 A.D. five scholars, from 1000-1100 A.D. fifteen scholars, and from 1100-1200 A.D. eleven Buddhist thinkers existed in India.<sup>96</sup> However, the same period witnessed Brahmanical-Hinduism that had just about half a dozen thinkers of comparable repute. It seems that even though these five centuries were a sunset period for Buddhism, yet the few surviving Buddhist *Mahāvihāras* (monasteries), due to the particular devotion that they paid to the intellectual and academic works, flourished and succeeded in producing quite a few thinkers of subsistence. However, compared to this during the same period, Brahmanical ideology appears to have greatly 'agrarianised' by the Bhakti movement and was rather focusing on displacing the Buddhists from the economic and socio-political pedestal, leaving the path of wisdom (*jñānamārga*) almost entirely to Buddhism. 'To have had not more than half a dozen thinkers during a period of almost five hundred years does not speak very highly of Ācārya Śaṅkara's Digvijaya, so loudly proclaimed not only by his disciples but also others, in the Indian tradition'.<sup>97</sup>

Had the Buddha been despised by the Brahmanical society, the same society would not have accepted him as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. The *Garuḍa Purāṇa*, invokes the Buddha as an incarnation of Viṣṇu for the protection of the world from sinners and not for misleading *asuras* to their ruin as in the Viṣṇu, Agni or other early purāṇas. The *Varāha Purāṇa* also mentions the Buddha as an incarnation in no condemnatory sense, but he is adored simply as a god of beauty. In the *Varṇaratnākara* also we have the name of Buddha as an incarnation.<sup>99</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Suniti Kumar Chatterjee and Babua Misra, (Eds.), *Varṇaratnākara of Jyotirīśvara-kaviśekharācārya*, printed at the Baptist Mission Press, published

by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1940, p. 39. The text *Varṇaratnākāra* was written in the fourteenth century by pious Brahmin named Jyotirīśvarācārya in Maithili under the rule of local ruler in Mithila named Harasimhadeva.

<sup>2</sup> Dineshchandra Bhattacharya, *History of Navya-Nyāya in Mithilā*, Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1987. P. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Upendra Thakur, *Studies in Jainism and Buddhism in Mithila*, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, 1964, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 37.

<sup>5</sup> N. S. Dravid, *Āmatattvaviveka by Udayanācārya*, 1995, Introd.

<sup>6</sup> By the early medieval period the Brahmins came to be divided in five sections on territorial basis as gleaned from a Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscription of Govinda III (926 A.D.) viz., the Sarasvata, the Kanyakubja of Kanauj, the Utkala of Orissa, Maithili of north Bihar and Gauda (generally viewed as Bengal). *Epigraphia Indica* XXXII, no.4.11. 29f.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Henningham, 'Agrarian Relations in North Bihar: Peasant Protest and the Darbhanga Raj 1919-20', *Indian Economic and Social Historical Review*, XVI, No.1, 1979, p. 77.

<sup>8</sup> Jata Shankar Jha, 'A Peep into the Darbhanga Raj Records Office', *Indian Archives*, Vol. XII, 1958, pp. 45-50.

<sup>9</sup> For Example see, Trilokanatha Jha, *The Glory That Was Mithila*, Rastriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Delhi, 1998.

<sup>10</sup> This point has been recently raised by Indrani Chatterjee, *Forgotten Friends: Monks, Marriages, and Memories of Northern India*, Oxford, New Delhi, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> K. P. Jayaswal, 'Contributions to the History of Mithila' *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society (JBORS)*, VIX, 1923, p. 300.

<sup>12</sup> Upendra Thakur, Op.Cit, p. 240.

<sup>13</sup> For details see, Indrani Chatterjee, *Forgotten Friends: Monks, Marriages, and Memories of Northern India*, Oxford, New Delhi, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> R.S Sharma, *Aspects of Political ideas and institution in Ancient India*. Delhi. p. 6, 1968.

<sup>15</sup> G. A. Grierson, 'On Some Medieval Kings of Mithila' *Indian Antiquary*, pp. 57-58, 1899, also *Linguistic Survey of India* Vol. V. Pt. II. 1929.

<sup>16</sup> Manmohan Chakravarty Bahadur, 'History of Navya-Nyaya in Bengal and Mithila', *Journal of Asiatic Society Bengal*, 11.9., 1915, pp. 259-292.

<sup>17</sup> K P Jayaswal, 'Contributions to the History of Mithila', *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. IX. op. 300-310, 1923 and vol. X, pp. 37-48.

<sup>18</sup> Some of his contributions are:

- 'Early History of Mithila', *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, XXXVIII,

- 'Political History of Mithila (7th-11th Century A.D.)', *Journal of the Indian History*, 32 (2).

- 'Nanyadeva and his Contemporaries'. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1951.

- 'Some Important Literary Colophons and their bearing on the history and Chronology of Mithila', *Journal of Indian History*, 34 (3).

- 'Social History of Medieval Mithila', in R.S. Sharma and V. N. Jha (ed.) *Indian Society. : Historical Probings*, Delhi.

- <sup>19</sup> S. N. Sinha, *History of Tirhut*, Calcutta, 1922.
- <sup>20</sup> C. P. N. Sinha. *Mithila under the Karnatas*, Janaki Publications, Patna, 1979.
- <sup>21</sup> K. P. Jayaswal
- <sup>22</sup> Romila Thapar (ed.) *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations*, Orient Blackswan, Delhi, pp. 263-64, 1978.
- <sup>23</sup> Upendra Thakur, *History of Mithila*, Darbhanga, p. 348, 1956.
- <sup>24</sup> K.P. Jayaswal, Op. Cit, p. 44.
- <sup>25</sup> R.P. Sharma, *Mithila-Ka Itihasa* (in Hindi), Darbhanga, p. 3, 1979.
- <sup>26</sup> Upendra Thakur, Op. Cit, p. 163.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 347.
- <sup>28</sup> C.P.N Sinha, Op. Cit, p. 77.
- <sup>29</sup> Makhan Jha, *Anthropology of Ancient Hindu Kingdoms: A Study in Civilizational Perspective*. M. D Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, pp. 52-53, 1997.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51-52.
- <sup>31</sup> Upendra Thakur, Op.Cit, p. 347.
- <sup>32</sup> *Prācyadeśa* means the eastern country that was not the part of core Brahmanical regions (*Madhyadesa*) in the first millennium BCE. Puspa Niyogi, *Brahmanical Settlements in Different Subdivision of Ancient Bengal*, Peoples Publishing House, Calcutta, 1967, pp. 19-20.
- <sup>33</sup> D. D. Kosambi, 'The Basis of Ancient Indian History', *Journal of American Oriental Studies*, Vol. 75, Pt. 1, 1955, p. 36.
- <sup>34</sup> Kunal Chakrabarti, *Religious Process: The Puranas and the Making of a Regional Tradition*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 110, 2001.
- <sup>35</sup> Susan L. Huntington, *The Pala-Sena School of Sculpture: Studies in south Asian Cultures*, Leiden, p. 201, 1984.
- <sup>36</sup> Ronald Inden, 'The Ceremony of the Great Gift (Majhadana): Structure and Historical Contexts in Indian Ritual and Society', in Marc Goborieau and Alice Thorner, *Asie Du Sud : Traditions et changements*, Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, pp. 131-136, 1979.
- <sup>37</sup> *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol., pp. 12-13.
- <sup>38</sup> Bhagwant Sahai, *The Inscriptions of Bihar*, Ramanand Vidya Bhawan. p. 57, 1983.
- <sup>39</sup> *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. Op. Cit.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>41</sup> *Śat Brāh*, P.Xli, fn.4; J P Sharma, *Republics in Ancient India*, p. 137.
- <sup>42</sup> Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order*, London, p. 398 fn, 1882.
- <sup>43</sup> A Weber, *The History of Indian Literature*, trans. from the second edition by J Mann and R. Zacharial. London. p. 305, 1878. Also J P Sharma, *Republics in Ancient India*. C 1500-500 B. C with a foreword by Professor A.L.Basham. Leiden, E.J. Brill, p. 137, 1968.
- <sup>44</sup> J P Sharma, Op.Cit. p. 138.
- <sup>45</sup> Swami Madhavananda (Ed. and Trans.), *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*. Iii, 8, 2; iv, 2, 6; 9, 30, Almora, 1950. Also *Śat. brāh.*, xi, 3, 1 ,2,6
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>47</sup> *Br. Upa.* 240
- <sup>48</sup> Sage also known to have belonged to Mithila and is referred to as the 'best of the Yogis seated in Mithila whom the great sages approached reverently

to inquire about the dharma. See Vasu, *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*, book 1, 5.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid* 41-42.

<sup>50</sup> Yogendra Mishra, "Aryanization of Bihar: Northern and Southern".

<sup>51</sup> Vasu. *Yājñavalkya Smṛiti*, 1, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Jayakant Mishra, *History of Maithili Literature*, I, p.3; P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, ii.pt.i, p. 14.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in J. P. Sharma. p. 139.

<sup>54</sup> Brian Black, *The Character of the Self in Ancient India*, Chapter two entitled, "Debates between Brahmins: The competitive dynamics of the *brahmodya*", Pp. 59-100.

<sup>55</sup> Madhyadeśa literally meaning "Middle Country" was a historic region of Indian sub-continent comprising the upper and middle Gangetic basin and the Yamuna-Chambal catchment area.

<sup>56</sup> B. C. Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p. 12.

<sup>57</sup> T. W. and C. A. F. Rhys Davids, *Digha Nikayās. Dialogues of the Buddha*, ii. pp. 230 ff (3 Volumes), Pali Text Society, London, 1899-1921.

<sup>58</sup> J P Sharma, Op. Cit., 140.

<sup>59</sup> Olden berg, *Buddha ... op cit.*, p. 411.

<sup>60</sup> The account of Dharmasvamin clearly points out the strategic location of Mithila.

<sup>61</sup> Davids Rhys, *Buddhist India*, p. 26.

<sup>62</sup> *Jātakas* III, p. 365, (all references of tales are from Fausboll V. (Ed.), *The Jātakas* (6 volumes, PTS. 1962).

<sup>63</sup> *Jātakas*, VI, p.32.

<sup>64</sup> *Jātakas*, VI, p.330.

<sup>65</sup> *Jātakas*, III, p. 365.

<sup>66</sup> *Jātakas* I, pp.137-38.

<sup>67</sup> Jha Parameshvara, *Mithilā-tattva-vimarśa*, p. 92.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>69</sup> Chaudhary R.K., *Select Inscriptions of Bihar*, Patna, 1958, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Waters Thomas, *On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India*, Vol. II, p. 178; Waddel L.A., 'Discovery of Buddhist Remains at Mount Uren in Mungir (Monghyr) District and Identification of the Site with a Celebrated Hermitage of Buddha', *Journal of Asiatic Society Bengal*, Vol. 61, part 1, 1892, pp. 1-24.

<sup>71</sup> Thakur Upendra, *Studies in Jainism and Buddhism in Mithila*. p.132.

<sup>72</sup> Choudhary R. K., op.cit., pp. 13-14.

<sup>73</sup> Choudhury R. K., op.cit. p.134.

<sup>74</sup> Frankel Francine R., Caste, Land and Dominance in Bihar : Breakdown of Brahmanical Order' in Frankel F. R. and Rao M. S. A., (Eds.) *Dominance and State Power in Modern India: Decline of a Social Order*, Vol. I, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1989, p. 57.

<sup>75</sup> *Kṛtyaratnākara* of Candēśvara, Ed. Bibliotheca Indica Series, Calcutta, 1925; Thakur Upendra, *Studies in Jainism and Buddhism*, p. 154.

<sup>76</sup> The king of Mithila in whose court scholars like Jyotirisvara flourished.

<sup>77</sup> *Kṛtyaratnākara*. p. 105.

<sup>78</sup> *Kṛtyaratnākara*. p. 160.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid* p. 247.

- <sup>80</sup> Jha Paramesvara, *MTV*, p. 106.
- <sup>81</sup> Chatterjee Suniti kumar, Introduction, *VR*, p. ix.
- <sup>82</sup> *VR* I.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, p. 39.
- <sup>85</sup> *VR*. 11.
- <sup>86</sup> Roerich, *The Biography of Dharmasvāmin*. op. cit.
- <sup>87</sup> Sanyal Niradsandhu, "A Buddhist Inscription from Bodh-Gaya of the Reign of Jayaccandradeva - V.S. 1420", *Indian Historical Quarterly* 5 (1929): pp. 14-30. Sanyal dates this inscription to AD 1183.
- <sup>88</sup> While Dharmasvāmin was studying there, Bodh-Gaya came under Turuska (Turkish) attack once again. Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, pp. 90-97.
- <sup>89</sup> *Dharmasvāmin*, p. 60.
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p. 42.
- <sup>91</sup> *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. 62.
- <sup>92</sup> *VR* clearly shows that Muslims (many turkish words are used in the text) have by then well infiltrated in the land of Mithila yet Jyotirīśvara denounced the Buddhists and not the Muslims. *Yr*, p. 39.
- <sup>93</sup> The official promulgation of genealogical tables of the Maithili Brahmins to ensure their purity and social/political status introduced by the ruler named Harasimhadeva of the Karnata dynasty in the fourteenth century.
- <sup>94</sup> Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Bibliography, (Ed.) Potter Karl H., 3rd rev. ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998. Cited in K.T.S. Sarao, *Decline of Buddhism in India*. Munshiram Manoharlal Pub. Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 2012.
- <sup>95</sup> Daya Krishna, 'Was Acārya Saṃkara Responsible for the Disappearance of Buddhist Philosophy from India?' in Daya Krishna Ed. *New perspectives in indian Philosophy*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur and New Delhi, p. 166, 2001.
- <sup>96</sup> *ibid*; Irfan Habib, 'Medieval Popular Monotheism and its Humanism: The Historical Setting,' *Social Scientists*, Vol. 21, Nos. 3-4, March-April pp. 78-88, 1996.
- <sup>97</sup> Irfan Habib, 'Medieval Popular Monotheism and its Humanism', Op. Cit., p.167.
- <sup>98</sup> B. P. Bhattacharyya, 'A peep into the later Buddhism', *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona, Vol. X, April 1930, pp. 1-24. p.15.
- <sup>99</sup> *VR*. p. 58.

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## ANOTHER INSCRIBED IMAGE DATED IN THE REIGN OF VIGRAHAPĀLA III

RAJAT SANYAL

### Introduction

Continuous discovery of copperplates, stone inscriptions and donative records has been strengthening the epigraphic corpus of Bengal ever since the chance discovery of the now famous 'Jagjivanpur'/'Malada Museum' copperplate of the Pāla king Mahendrapāla, discovered from the Tulabhita mound of Jagjivanpur village in 1987.<sup>1</sup> The range of epigraphic material from Bengal, discovered and published in the last three decades, is so enormous that even a brief review of the available literature would be beyond the purview of this note.<sup>2</sup> Of the wealth of new gamut of evidence discovered from sites and private collections, those datable to the time of Pāla rule between the eighth and the twelfth centuries, predominate.<sup>3</sup> This predominance is fairly explained in terms of continued presence of the members of this lineage in the larger canvas of regional politics of eastern and northern India in the early medieval period, beyond the boundaries of local polity.

The four centuries of rule of this lineage in Bengal-Bihar resulted in the issuance of a substantial corpus of inscriptional documents, either under direct royal patronage or by lay devotees, obviously the latter far outnumbering the former. Of the different types of inscriptional records, those engraved on images/pillars/*stūpas*, in stone and metal, in many instances recording the name of the ruling king and information of the social and geographical identities of the donors, are broadly termed 'donative' or 'dedicatory' inscriptions. Of the donative inscriptions, further, the majority are engraved on images and are thus labelled 'image inscriptions' broadly.

Apart from their potential in the study of social and religious history in general, these (particularly dated) image inscriptions are invaluable primary source not only for re-examining the continuously

changing chronological contours of the regional dynastic frame of the Pāla history, but also for more critical approaches on art historical analyses of 'dated' images.<sup>4</sup> Equally significant is their bearing on such issues as geographical affiliation and social status of donors, associated local or regional historical geographical issues and the identities of artisans responsible for these aesthetic creations.

### The Image

The present note may be considered as a continuum of the vast literature on epigraphic sources on Bengal generated since the discovery of the Tulabhita (Jagjivanpur) copperplate. The paper owes its origin to the recent notice of a photograph of an inscribed image, published with a brief note on the website of a private collection. Freddie Matthews, the author of the article, has rightly identified the image as that of the Buddhist deity Khasarpaṇa Lokeśvara and has further contributed a short iconographic note with some comparable evidence. The photograph available in the website, however, is blurred and inadequate for an attempt to a rereading.<sup>5</sup> Subsequent personal communication with the concerned private collection resulted in obtaining good quality details of the image.

In terms of iconography, Khasarpaṇa is identified with the help of his associated deities, viz. Tārā, Sudhanakumāra, Bhṛkuṭi and Hayagrīva. These attendant deities practically distinguish him from another prominent form of Avalokiteśvara, viz. Lokanātha, who has only Tārā and Hayagrīva as the accompanying deities.<sup>6</sup> Before presenting a brief description of the iconographic characteristics of the image, let us consider the textual narrative on the programme. The *Sādhanaṃālā* provides a 'somewhat lengthy' *dhyāna* for Khasarpaṇa. According to the translation given by Benoytosh Bhattacharyya:<sup>7</sup>

... He wears jaṭāmukuta (crown of matted hair), holds the image of Amitābha on his head, and sits on the moon over a double lotus in the Ardhaparyāṅka attitude ... exhibits the Varada pose in the right hand, and holds the lotus with a stem in the left. He is an expert in distributing the stream of nectar that flows from his hand, and Sūcīmukha who stands below ... receives the same. He resides in the womb of the mount Potalaka, looks beautiful with compassion ... and is adorned with various auspicious marks ...

Before him is Tārā and to the right is Sudhanakumāra. Here Tārā is green. She causes to blossom with her right hand the lotus flower with a stem held in her left ... Sudhanakumāra again, has his two hands joined in añjali ... and ... carries the book under his arm-pit...To the west of the god is Bhṛkuṭī and to the north Hayagrīva ... Here Bhṛkuṭī has four arms ... and three eyes ... Hayagrīva is short...with a protruding belly ... has a staff as a weapon, and his hand exhibits the act of bowing...Here ends the Sādhana for Khasarpaṇa.

A comparison of the above prescription with what we see in the present image (62x27x6.5 cm) would be interesting. Made of Chlorite Schist stone (scientifically tasted), the image represents the seated central figure of the compassionate Bodhisattva Khasarpaṇa Lokeśvara, one of the forms of Avalokiteśvara, as already noted (Plate 1). The exquisitely bejewelled deity sits in *rājālīlāsana* on the double-petalled *viśvapadma* over a *pañcaratha* pedestal divided in three horizontally moulded registers. He has two hands and one face. He holds with his left hand a lotus with stalk, while the raised right hand hangs over the right knee, holding the terminal knot of a piece of cloth that fastens the body and the raised right leg of the deity, somewhat in the fashion of a *yogapaṭṭa*. This is a rather unique feature among the known examples of Khasarpaṇa from Bengal-Bihar. The artist has chiselled the cloth with an element of dynamism that appears to provide ease to the figure in holding his pose of relaxation. A second lotus with stalks is carved just over his right hand on the back slab. The deity wears the usual ornaments like the *keyūra*, the *kaṭibandha*, the *kaṇṭhahāra*, *upavīta* and the characteristic *jaṭāmukuta*, holding the figure of transcendent Amitābha, the guardian of the *kula* from which the deity emanates. Apart from the lower garment showing striated folds, he also wears a loop of cloth over his left shoulder, clinging round his upper abdomen.

The upper part of the back slab depicts the figures of the five transcendent Buddha, seated on pedestals of double-petalled lotus, with Amitābha holding the central position, accompanied by Akṣobhya and Vairocana to the left and Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi to the right. Below these figures are the usual depictions of *stūpas* on



Plate 1. Inscribed Khasarpaṇa Lokeśvara (Photo courtesy of Personal Collection).

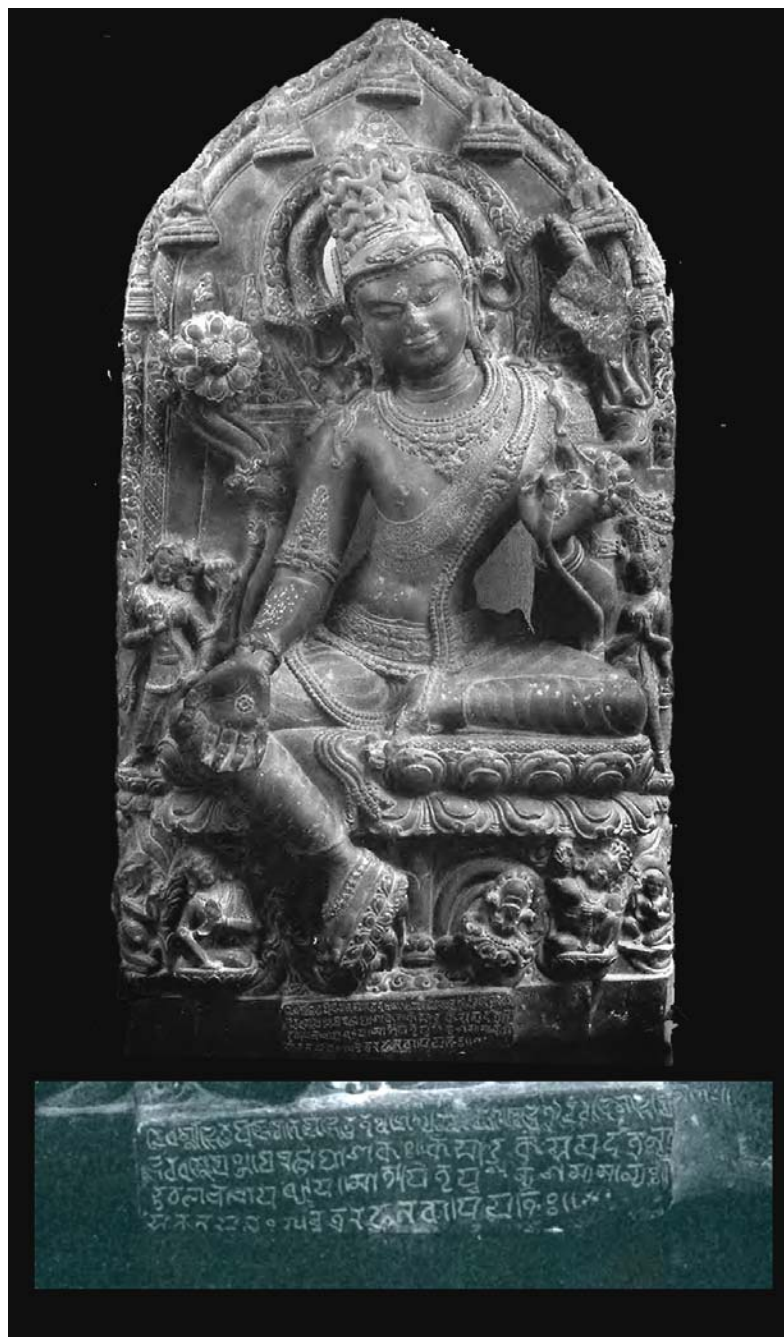


Plate 2. Khasarpaṇa Lokeśvara preserved in the Third Rockefeller collection. New York (Photo courtesy of John C. and Susan L. Huntington).



Plate 3. Miniature Avalokiteśvara from Kiul, Munger (Photo : Rajat Sanyal, courtesy of Asutosh Museum of Indian Art).



Plate 4. Details of inscription on the pedestal of Khasarpāṇa Lokēśvara (Photo courtesy of Personal Collection).

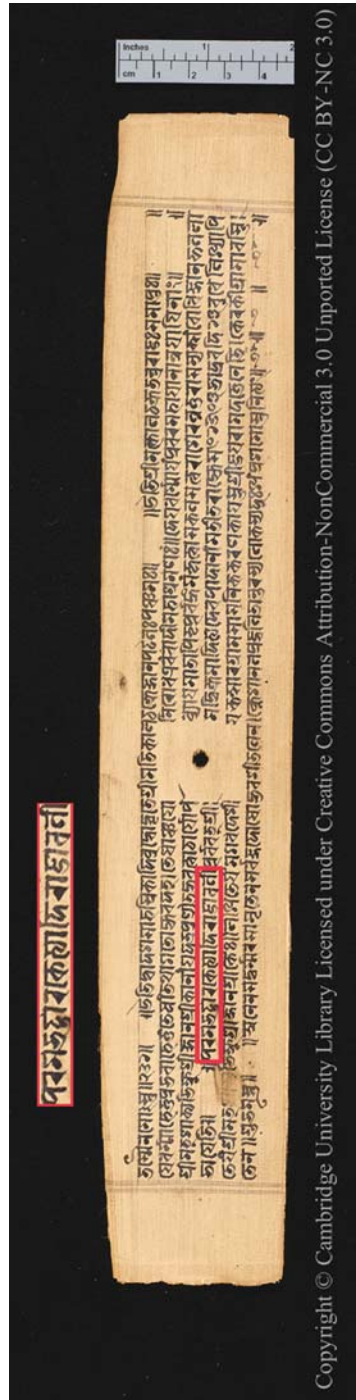


Plate 5. Colophon of Kālacakratāntra dates 1446 CE (reproduced by kind permission of Cambridge University Library).

either side, the whole inner area being covered with simple floral motifs round a conical halo along the outline of the crown of the central figure.

Among the attendants of Khasarpaṇa here, the pot-bellied skeletal animal-headed Sūcīmukha, looking up for the nectar from the hand of Khasarpaṇa, sits in folded legs on the *anurāhā* of the middle register. The corresponding *anurāhā* to the right is occupied by the figure of Tārā, seated on *viśvapadma* and causing to blossom a lotus with her two hands. The central projection or *rāhāpaga* of the image is divided into two vertical compartments, of which the left one occupied by the seated figure is that of pot-bellied Hayagrīva, with his coiled hair raised 'in the shape of a flame'. His right raised hand shows the *vandanamudrā*, while he holds a *daṇḍa* in the left. The compartment to the right is occupied by Sudhanakumāra in *añjalimudrā*, holding the book in his left arm-pit. Thus, some iconographic and stylistic features of the sculpture that deserve special mention are the absence of Bhrkuṭī, the location of Tārā on one of the registers of the pedestal and the unique depiction of the coiled cloth.

In terms of iconographic and stylistic attributes-, displayed by the *pañcaratha* pedestal, the conical top of the back slab, the elaborate design of the lotus flowers, the depiction of the distinct double-petalled lotus-seat and the overall ornamentation of the composition would assign the image a date not earlier than the first half of the eleventh century. Among comparable images of the eleventh century horizon, apart from the well known piece from Bikrampur reported by N.K. Bhattasali,<sup>8</sup> one may consider a similar sculpture (139x72.4x33 cm) made of (petrologically tested) dark grey phyllite stone, presently forming part of the Mr and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller Third collection, hailing probably from the Nalanda region and dated on stylistic and iconographic peculiarities to the late eleventh or early twelfth century CE (Plate 2).<sup>9</sup> In this image, however, the identities and positions of the attendant deities are more close to the iconographic programme of Khasarpaṇa described in the *Sādhanaṁālā*. The accompanying inscription on the pedestal in Gauḍī script and Sanskrit language records the quintessential *ye dharmā* stanza, followed by the name of the devout Mahāyāna worshipper, written in the formulaic expression

*paramahāyānāyāyinyaparamopāsaka*, named *Kasāḍaka*.<sup>10</sup>

An interesting iconographic parallel of the present sculpture is displayed by a miniature figure of Avalokiteśvara found from Kiul in the Munger district, now preserved in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Kolkata (Plate 3). The sitting posture, the attributes and the overall modelling of the figure shows marked resemblance with the image under discussion, though the conspicuous lack of ornamentation, plain back slab and the flat carving of the image indicate a date not earlier than the late eleventh century CE. This image is considered to be a member of the group of dated images of the Pāla period, owing to a wrong reading of the accompanying inscription by Jatindra Mohan Datta and R.K. Chaudhary, who suggested that the name *Gopāla* recorded in the inscription should be identified with *Gopāla IV* of the Pāla family.<sup>11</sup>

### The Inscription

The image under discussion contains an inscription of two lines engraved on the upper and lower registers of the pedestal. Matthews rightly identifies the name of the king written in the inscription as that of *Vigrahapāla* and tentatively identifies him with either *Vigrahapāla II* or *Vigrahapāla III* of the Pāla family, primarily judging from the stylistic dating of the sculpture. An incomplete reading of the inscription along with a translation suggested by Somadeva Vasudeva reads:

[1.1:] [ornament]

*paramabhaṭ (ṭ)ārakā+ + jāvaliśrī [man] Vigrahapāladevaḥvijayarāj*  
[ye]

1.2: .. *bhādradine 24 śrīmahindosutadānāpatiśrī[dhārmika?]*++ḥ

This has been translated as:

*"In the victorious reign of his majesty the illustrious Vigrahapāla, the supreme lord, on the 24th day of the month Bhādra ... (This is the gift of) the pious donor ... the son of the illustrious Mahindo."*

An attempt in the following has been made in rereading the inscription with the help of the photographs kindly sent by its owner (Plate 4). The language of the inscription is Sanskrit (with some common mistakes in spelling and grammar) and the script is *Gauḍī* of about the eleventh century CE. While no peculiarity of the individual

letters is called for, the general structure of the script suggests the use of the cursive hand, particularly indicated by the unexceptional and consistent use of the discontinuous but systematically horizontal head-mark or *mātrā*, without any trace of the triangular wedge at the points from where the vertical element(s) of the letters originate. It is quite likely that the artist who carved the image was employed by the donor to copy a composition supplied by the donor himself, as it might have been the case with many other dedicatory images of the early medieval period from Bengal-Bihar.

Text:

- (L1) 𑀧 paramabhaṭṭāarakatyādirājāvalīśrīmnavigrahapāladevaḥvija-  
yarājasa-  
(L2) mvaṭ 2bhādradine 24 śrīmahindosūtadānapatiśrīdhāmi-  
kasyaḥ ||

Corrected Text:

- (L1) 𑀧 paramabhaṭṭāaraketyādirājāvalīśrīmanvighrahapāladevavi-  
jayarājyasa-  
(L2) mvaṭ 2bhādradine 24 śrīmahindosūtadānapatiśrīdhā-  
mikasya ||

Translation:

Siddham [symbol] (This image is the donation) of the illustrious *dānapati* Dhāmika, son of illustrious Mahindo, on the twenty-fourth day of Bhādra, in the second victorious ruling year of *paramabhaṭṭāaraketyādirājāvalī*, the illustrious Vighrahapāla.

### Observation

Apparently, the stylistics of the image or the accompanying inscription does not supply any information that can be considered of any special merit, in terms of art historical or social-political historical analyses. But some aspects of the inscription obviously deserve a concluding note.

The inscription refers to the name of Vighrahapāla and the palaeography of the epigraph and the stylistic attributes of the sculpture fairly suggest, as we have argued, that he is Vighrahapāla III who ruled in the eleventh century in Bihar-Bengal from about 1043 to 1070 CE.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the historical information that we obtain from the

inscription are two: firstly, that the image was carved during the reign of Vighrahapāla III and secondly, that it was donated by a *dānapati* named Dhāmika. Names of numerous such *dānapatis* are known from such donative records of eastern India, engraved on Buddhist and Brahmanical images. But the epithet with which the inscription introduces Vighrahapāla makes this inscription rather rare. The term *paramabhaṭṭāraketyādirājāvalī* used to designate Vighrahapāla here, has been known so far-, in a slightly modified version, from a solitary donative inscription of the Pāla period, viz. the Rajauna image inscription of the time of Nayapāla, father of Vighrahapāla III,<sup>13</sup> though some of its variants appear in some other dedicatory images dated in the reign of other Pāla kings.<sup>14</sup> The only reported occurrence of this phrase is recorded, to my knowledge, in an illustrated manuscript preserved in the Cambridge University Library, catalogued by Cecil Bendall and subsequently studied quite extensively for its potential in the study of medieval art of eastern India.<sup>15</sup> Dated in the Vikrama year 1503 i.e. 1446 CE, the colophon of this manuscript of *Kālacakratāntra* records that it was copied by the *karaṇakāyastha* Śrī Jayarāmadatta, hailing from *Āragrama-śāsana* of Magadha, under the request of the Mahāyāna preceptor Jñānaśrikāna. The date of the manuscript is expressed as *paramabhaṭṭāraketyādirājāvalī pūrvavat śrīmadvikramādityadevapādānām atītarājyesaṁ 1503 bhādra va di 12* (Plate 5). This of course is used as an abridged version of the formulaic *parameśvaraparamabhaṭṭārakamahārājādhirāja*, but is a major deviation from the formula of dedicatory inscriptions where the king is simply introduced by his name followed by his regnal year expressed as *rājyēt/vijayarājyē/ pravardhamānavijayarājyē*.

This inscription marks an addition to the known corpus of dedicatory inscriptions of the time of Vighrahapāla III. As we have already had occasion to note, three kings of this name are known from the epigraphic documents of the Pāla lineage. (1) son of Jayapāla and nephew of Dharmapāla, named Vighrahapāla I, who should be dated somewhere in the mid ninth century, though no inscription of his time is so far known, (2) son of Gopāla III, recognized as Vighrahapāla II and is dated in the second half of the tenth century,<sup>16</sup> and (3) Vighrahapāla of the present inscription, son of Nayapāla and

known to have ruled for at least twenty-six years. While the whole corpus of donative records of his reign are distributed over southern Bihar (Table 1),<sup>17</sup> copperplate inscriptions of his time are known from both northern Bengal and southern Bihar. Of all the donative records of his time, the one discussed in the foregoing represents the earliest, dated in his second regnal year.

Table I : Classified details of dedicatory inscriptions dated in the reign of Vagrahapāla III

| Provenance<br>Location                          | Regnal<br>Year | Subject<br>(Material)                    | Details of Donor   |
|---|----------------|--|--|
| Not known<br><i>Private Collection</i>          | 2              | Khasarpaṇa<br>Lokēśvara<br>(Stone)       | Dhāmika, son of the <i>dānapati</i><br>Mahindo   |
| Kurkihar<br><i>Patna Museum</i>                 | 3              | Buddha<br>(Metal)                        | Tikuka, son of the devout<br>Mahayāna Dulapa   |
| Kurkihar<br><i>Patna Museum</i>                 | 4              | Viṣṇu<br>(Metal)                         | Goyīdanu   |
| Kurkihar<br><i>Patna Museum</i>                 | 19             | Buddha<br>(Metal)                        | Pekhokā, wife of the <i>mahattama</i><br>Dulapa  |
| Kurkihar<br><i>Patna Museum</i>                 | 19             | Buddha<br>(Metal)                        | “Utimarāka, probably relation<br>of <i>mahattama</i> Mṛdvala   |
| Gaya (?)<br><i>Personal<br/>collection</i>      | 22             | Aparājītā<br>(Stone)                     | Drāmiṇa (?), son of <i>vaṇika</i><br>(Pavitigroti?), resident of Gayā  |
| Naulagarh<br><i>G.D. College,<br/>Begusarai</i> | 24             | Mother goddess<br>(Vasudhārā)<br>(Stone) | Probably Aśokā, the wife of<br>the <i>śauṇḍika</i> named Dhāmmaji<br>residing at Kṛmilā, one of the<br>major administrative centres<br>under Pāla domain |

### Acknowledgements

Claudine Bautze-Picron first drew my attention to this important image and kindly provided many insightful suggestions. Susan L. and John C. Huntington kindly shared the image preserved in the Third Rockefeller Collection and provided important references. Subir Sarkar drew my attention to the Avalokiteśvara image of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art and generously provided several important references. Authorities of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art,

University of Calcutta, kindly allowed me to study and photograph the sculpture. Authorities of the Cambridge University Library kindly allowed me to use the photographs of the manuscript colophon preserved in their custody. A special word of thanks is due for this to the guidance and help I received from Domniki Papadimitriou, Picture Library Coordinator, Cambridge University Library. I am immensely grateful to all of them. Sincere thanks are also due to the anonymous referee for some guiding suggestions.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This Mahendrapāla was earlier identified with the Gurjara-Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla II, who supposedly defeated the contemporary Pāla king Nārāyaṇapāla in the middle of the ninth century and subsequently ruled Bengal-Bihar for a considerable span of time. But the discovery of this copperplate inscription, recording the name of Mahendrapāla, son of Devapāla and grandson of Dharmapāla, has permanently resolved the misconception regarding his identity and has established, as a corollary, that all the epigraphic records from different parts of Bihar-Bengal bearing his name should be attributed to the reign of the Pāla monarch of this name. For details, Gouriswar Bhattacharya, 'The New Pāla ruler Mahendrapāla: Discovery of a Valuable Charter', *South Asian Studies*, vol. 4, 1988, pp.71-3; see also, Rajat Sanyal, 'Dedicatory Inscriptions of the Time of Mahendrapāla: A Fresh Appraisal', *Prajñāhara: Essays on Asian Art, History, Epigraphy and Culture in Honour of Gouriswar Bhattacharya*, vol. II, (Eds. Gerd J.R. Mevissen and Arundhati Banerji), Kaveri Books, New Delhi, 2009, pp. 302-18.
- <sup>2</sup> The last comprehensive list of dedicatory inscriptions of Bihar-Bengal was published by Susan L. Huntington, *The "Pāla-Sena" Schools of Sculpture*, Brill, Lieden, 1984. For the most recent review of the database, see Rajat Sanyal, 'Pala-Sena and Others', *History of Ancient India: Political History of and Administration (C. AD 750-1300)*, vol. 5 (Eds. Dilip K. Chakrabarti and Makkhan Lal), Vivekananda International Foundation and Aryan Books International, New Delhi, 2014, pp.165-213.
- <sup>3</sup> For an account of the major Pāla inscriptions discovered till the end of the last century, Gouriswar Bhattacharya, *Essays on Buddhist Hindu Jain Iconography and Epigraphy* (Ed. Enarmul Haque), International Centre for Study of Bengal Art, Dhaka, 2000, pp. 363-503; also, Rajat Sanyal (forthcoming), 'Three Decades of Bengal Epigraphy: A Retrospect in Sources and Perspectives'.
- <sup>4</sup> For a brief but very significant recent work in the context of Pāla epigraphy vis-à-vis art, see Gautam Sengupta, 'Bodhgaya Lintel Bearing the Inscription of Dharmapala', *Studies in South Asian Heritage: Essays in Memory of M*

Harunur Rashid, (Ed. Mokammel H. Bhuiyan), Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 2015, pp.175-179. For an earlier version of the author, on the issues of confrontation between the epigraphic and art historical chronologies, Gautam Sengupta, 'Epigraphy and Art-History: On Some Inscribed Sculptures of Eastern India', *Journal of Epigraphical Society of India*, vol. 16, 1990, pp. 112-118. However, the first scholar to have hunched at this problem as early as the early twentieth century was J. C. French, *The Art of the Pal Empire of Bengal*, Oxford University Press, London (Humphrey Milford), 1928, pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ajspeelman.com/Catalogues/khasarpanastele/index.html#/6/zoomed> (last accessed 16.3.2016).

<sup>6</sup> Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography mainly based on the Sādhanaṁālā and Cognate Tāntrik Texts and Rituals*, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1958, p. 128.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 129.

<sup>8</sup> N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist Deities in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca Museum, Dacca, 1929 (reprint 2008, Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka), pp.27-28, identifies the image as that of Lokanātha, though his description of the iconography clearly shows that this inscribed piece is also that of Khasarpana Lokeśvara.

<sup>9</sup> Susan L. and John C. Huntington, *Leaves from the Bodhi Tree: The Art of Pāla India (8th-12th Centuries) and its International Legacy*, Dayton Art Institute, Seattle and London, 1990, pp. 159-161.

<sup>10</sup> B.N. Mukherjee and S.P. Tewari read the name of the donor as Kāmsāḍlaka and Kasyaṅgaka respectively (Susan and John Huntington, *ibid.* p. 161).

<sup>11</sup> Jatindra Mohan Datta, 'A Rare Image of Avalokiteśvara', *Modern Review*, vol. 89, 1951, p. 377; see also, R.K. Choudhary, *Lakhsarai Inscription*, *G.D. College Bulletin Series*, no. 2, 1952, pp. 23-25, R.K. Chaudhary, 'Lakhsarai Inscriptions', *Ganesh Datta College Bulletin Series (Archaeological Records of Begusarai)*, vol. 2, pp. 23-25. However, a re-examination of the inscription clearly shows that it was the donation of the wife of a *dānapati* named Gopāla. We read the inscription as: (L 1) *dānapatigopāla* (L2) *vadhūkāyā*. Thus, it may be translated as '[This image is donated] by the wife of the *dānapati* Gopāla'. Huntington, *ibid.* p. 69, fig. 76, cited the epigraphic content of the sculpture in assigning it to the reign of "Gopāla III" (who is now designated as Gopāla IV), but was rightly doubtful about the ascription of the piece to the Pāla king of that name.

<sup>12</sup> Three Pāla kings with the name Vighrahapāla are known from inscriptional records. Of them, only the third Vighrahapāla III is usually considered to have ascended the throne; see, D.C. Sircar, *Pāl-Sen Yuger Vamśānucarit* (in Bengali), Sahityalok, Kolkata, 1982, pp. 80-81. However, art historical researches on inscribed images of the Pāla period have proposed major alterations in the known scheme of Pāla genealogy and chronology. For an updated status of the issue concerning the reigns of the three Vighrahapālas,

see Sanyal, 'Pala-Sena and Others', pp. 165-213. The issue, however, deserves more critical and closer scrutiny.

<sup>13</sup> P. Banerjee, 'Some Inscriptions from Bihar', *Journal of Ancient Indian History and Culture*, vol. 7 (1-2), 1973-74, pp. 102-111.

<sup>14</sup> Some of the metal images from Kurkihar recording the name of Vighrahapāla III designate him with *rājādhirājaparamabhaṭṭāraka*; see, Parameswari Lal Gupta (ed.), *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities (Stone Sculptures, Metal Images, Terracottas and Minor Antiquities)*, Patna Museum, Patna, 1965, pp. 131-33. The Rajibpur Sadāśiva image inscription of the time of Gopāla IV uses the honorific *paramēśvaretyādi*; see, Nilmani Chakravartti, 'Pāla Inscriptions in the Indian Museum', *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, New Series* vol. 4, 1908, pp. 101-9.

<sup>15</sup> Cecil Bendall, *Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, with Introductory Notices and Illustrations of the Palaeography and Chronology of Nepal and Bengal*; Cambridge University press, Cambridge, 1883, pp. 69-70. For preservation details and further classified data. see <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01364/257>. For art historical analyses, S.K. Saraswati, *Paljurer Chitrakala* (i.e. *The Art of Painting in the Pāla Period*, in Bengali). Ananda Publishers Pvt. Ltd, Calcutta, 1978, p. 52-53, and Pratapaditya Pal, 'New Document of Indian Painting', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 3/4, 1965, pp. 103-111.

<sup>16</sup> For a recent estimate of the date of Vighrahapāla II, Sanyal 'Pala-Sena and Others', pp. 177-180.

<sup>17</sup> For the distribution of donative records of the reign of Vighrahapāla III, Huntington, *The "Pāla-Sena" School*, pp. 229-231. A further discovery of an images dated in the reign of this king, again originating probably in southern Bihar, Gouriswar Bhattacharya, 'The Dual Role of Ganesh in the Buddhist Art of South Asia', *Ganesh the Benevolent* (Ed. Pratapaditya Pal), Marg Publications, Bombay 1995, pp. 65-80; For illustration and location details with classified metadata, see, <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/aparajita-basalt-eastern-india-bihar-pala-perio-43-c-nfzg2k7fon>. 97-106, 535-539 (last accessed 14.4.2018).

## A SCOTTISH WATCHMAKER — EDUCATIONIST AND BENGAL RENAISSANCE

SAPTARSHI MALLICK

‘Your hand is on the helm - guide on young men’<sup>1</sup>

Through the ethos of self-criticism and progress the Renaissance in nineteenth century Bengal facilitated the advent of an intellectual awakening as well as a moral force which rejuvenated the perspectives of life and society. Such a quintessence interrogated the dismal state of the society and ushered a socio-cultural, psychological and intellectual realisation, contriving the advent of the spirit of rejuvenescence in the society and the hearts of the people of Bengal. This historic phase involved an active initiation and participation of social thinkers, philosophers, humanitarians, educationists and missionaries both from the home as well as from the world to eradicate the decadent habits which had engulfed the society.

The society of Bengal was engulfed with several social evils like infanticide, sati, polygamy, child marriage, oppression of widows (*Bengal's Renaissance* p. 2), originating primarily from the dogmatic, ritualistic, superstitious and misrepresentations of the principles of Hinduism (*Bengal's Renaissance* p. 2), ignoring at once the cultural dynamism inherent in the Hindu religion, the ‘sanatana dharma’ based on the dynamic philosophy of life - Vedanta, the timeless quest of the human soul for the Infinite (Secretary pp. 1, 2). Amidst such a social existence, the foundation of the city of Calcutta and its being the future capital of the British India (Ray p. 4) initiated the advent of a remarkable socio-cultural, psychological and intellectual efflorescence and facilitated an association and a cultural assimilation of the Hindu intelligentsia with the British officials, missionaries and citizens visiting Bengal on various political, humanitarian and trade pursuits (Kopf p. 280). Such an association and a cultural assimilation marked the quickening of the intellectual, creative and humanitarian activities in

Bengal both from the warm-hearted foreigners as well as from the educated natives, during the hundred and forty years between the establishment of the College of Fort William in 1800 (*Awakening* p. 69) and the death of Rabindranath Tagore in 1941 (Ray p. 3) - the Bengal Renaissance, which though 'lacked the tremendous sweep and vital energy of the many-sided upsurge' (Sarkar p. 69) of the Italian renaissance in the fifteenth-century Europe, yet it signified a specific kind of socio-cultural process associated with modernization, revitalization and an awakening (Kopf p. 280) in the cultural and socially stagnant society of Bengal (Mittra p. 3); as a result 'renaissance' became a hypothesis save from specific historical period or cultures, prompting the reinterpretation of the European ideology to suit the values and culture at any period of history (Kopf pp. 280, 281). Bengal Renaissance was 'a seed time rich in possibilities through the gradual imagining of a nation which would be based on the willing union of diverse cultures' (Raichaudhuri p. 360). Therefore as the word 'renaissance' is connected completely with 'the creative spirit in its most profuse richness and diversity' (*Awakening* p. 2), it should not be restricted to a specific socio-cultural movement in a specific part of the world at a particular period (Kopf pp. 280 - 289); it is a phenomenon of an awakening through an 'intense intellectual activity in literature and the arts, and this in turn influences religious, social and political thought' which even in spite of being 'incomplete and deficient' ("The Nineteenth Century Indian Renaissance") was socio-culturally an important phenomenon in the history of nineteenth-century Bengal. It not only exposed the obvious weaknesses inherent deep within the fathoms of the society but also appreciated the 'new life' (Sarkar p. 69), the advent of progressive thoughts and ideas in Bengal.

This revolutionary awakening initiated an acculturation of the cultures of India and the West (*Awakening* p. 3) through an active participation of some large-hearted foreigners and enlightened natives. One of the primary motifs of the Bengal Renaissance was the necessity to spread education among the general masses for their encyclopedic enhancement. The selfless role of David Hare (1775-1842), a large-hearted Scotsman, to address the destitution of education and

commence educational ventures for the welfare of the natives will be ever propitious in the history of Bengal. Though a foreigner, Hare settled and fell in absolute love with India. Through his selfless, dynamic contributions for the Indians' welfare, he had a renaissance heart and was cosmopolitan in his perspectives; being committed to the fullest development of his personality (Ray p. 6) he proved to be 'uomo universale'<sup>2</sup> being —

not locked into his environment - his imagination, his reason, his emotional subtlety and toughness, make it possible for him not to accept the environment but to change it... [through an] unfolding of his different talents ... [as] his ideas express what is essentially human in nature (Bronowski pp. 20, 22).

David Hare dedicated the best part of his life in Calcutta, over four decades (1800 - 1842) for the welfare of the people of Bengal. He was one of the main architects of the new education, initiated by the Charter Act of 1813, heralding the Renaissance in the nineteenth-century Bengal (Sarkar p. 97). Hare was a dynamic philanthropist who was not only pained to observe the socio-cultural, moral and intellectual degeneration of the Indians but also pondered over its causes and worked upon their suitable remedies (Mitra p. 2) by turning the clock of Bengal's education (Fraser np), being steered by his conviction of propagating liberal Western education through the European Sciences and Literature among the natives, urging the necessity of the introduction of an English system of education of higher standards (Mitra p. 2). He discovered that —

education was requisite ... and exerted [his] humble abilities to further the interest of India and with the sanction and support of the Government and of a few leading men ... to promote the cause of education ("Asiatic Intelligence" VI: p. 55), initiating the history of the beginning of modern Western system of scientific education in India (*A Biographical* pp. vii, viii).

Inspired by the Scottish intellect, and supported by enthusiastic natives David Hare diverted his attention from his watch-making trade (Fraser np) towards the necessity of progressive modern education in

India. His first initiative was proposing the idea and preparing a scheme for the establishment of the Hindoo College in 1815 (Mitra p. 3) which would accelerate modern, rational education for the native youths and thereby illuminate their understanding and purge their minds from pernicious cants (*A Biographical* p. xii). On May 14, 1816, at a conference at the house of Chief Justice Sir Edward Hyde East to set up a centre of liberal English education as an educational institution of the highest degree on the plan of David Hare was apparently backed by Raja Rammohan Roy (*Presidency College* p. 293; Bagal p. 300); the resolution being resolved on May 21, 1816 (Mitra p. 3) the Hindoo College for teaching 'English and Indian languages and in the literature and science of Europe and Asia' ("A Sketch of the Origin" p. 72) was opened in Goranahata on January 20, 1817 (*A Biographical* pp. xiii, 7). Having 'envisaged the prospects and possibilities of English education in India' (Bagal p. 300) David Hare, the watchmaker from Edinburgh (Fraser np) provided a concrete shape to the proposal on the necessity of establishing an educational institution for imparting instruction on the richness of the English literature to the younger generations. Jogeshchandra Bagal stated:

When the credit for the foundation of the Hindu College was sought to be divided between Sir Edward Hyde East and Dr Horace Hayman Wilson in 1830, a bitter controversy started in the newspapers, and it was agreed by almost everybody that the 'originator' of the College, truly speaking, was David Hare, because, the idea of such an institution at first originated with him. It was also David Hare who prepared the plan for the Hindu College. It was on the basis of this plan that subsequent efforts were made ("The Origins of the Hindu College" p. 300).

'A Sketch of the Origin, Rise and Progress of the Hindoo College' published in the first three issues (June - August 1832) of *The Calcutta Christian Observer* ascribe the merit of originating the Hindoo College, to David Hare (Mitra p. 3; *Information concerning Presidency College* p. 16) and stated in the June 1832 issue that :

... It is contended, on the one hand, by a Director of the Hindoo College, that on the [1]4th of May, 1816, Sir Edward Hyde East first

convened a meeting of Hindoos at his house, for the purpose of subscribing to, and forming an establishment for, the liberal education of their children. It was contended, on the other hand by one of the teachers of the Hindoo College, the late Mr Derozio, who, from his intimacy with Mr. Hare and the Native community, as well as from his knowledge of the proceedings of the College, certainly had good grounds for the assertion which he so resolutely maintained, that “previous to the aforesaid meeting being held, a paper, both author and originator of which was Mr. Hare, and the purport of which was, a proposal for the establishment of a College, was handed to Sir Hyde East by a Native for his countenance and support”. The learned judge having made a few alterations in the plan, did give it his countenance and support by calling the aforesaid meeting. But giving support or sanction to a measure proposed by anyone is not the same thing with originating that measure. Now, if it be the fact, as seems warranted by good authority, that Mr. Hare did first conceive the plan in his mind, and then circulated it, in writing, amongst the Natives, by one of whom it was subsequently submitted to the learned judge, for his approval, the merit of originating the Hindoo College must in justice be ascribed to Mr. HARE (*The Calcutta Christian* I: p.17; *Sambad Patre Sekaler* II: pp. 709, 710).

As the above report was not convincing to some of the people so it was further elaborated in the July 1832 issue of *The Calcutta Christian Observer* where it was reported :

It having intimated to us, that some doubts still exist as to the accuracy of our account regarding the prime mover of the Hindoo College, or the particular circumstances which led to its formation, we feel a pleasure in meeting those doubts with a confident assurance, supported by the most unquestionable authority that they are entirely without foundation. We have the evidence of some of the parties concerned, as well as of authentic documents, to substantiate what we have asserted. The following particulars, we therefore communicate, without fear of contradiction.

In 1815, a distinguish Native, not now in India, entertained a few friends at his house; in the course of conversation, a discussion arose as to the best means of improving the moral condition of the natives. It will readily occur to most of our readers, that the distinguish individual alluded to was Rammohun Roy, who, by his superior attainments in knowledge, and familiar intercourse with Europeans, became deeply imbued with a spirit of repugnance to the superstitious notions, and idolatrous practices of his countrymen. He was not only convinced of their errors, but animated with a fervent desire to correct them. For this end he proposed the establishment of a Brumha Sobha, for the purpose of teaching the doctrines of religion according to the Vedanta system, - a system, strongly deprecating everything of an idolatrous nature, and professing to inculcate the worship of one supreme undivided, and eternal God.

Mr. Hare, who was one of the party, not coinciding in the views of Rammohun Roy, suggested as an amendment, *the establishment of a College*. He wisely judged that, the education of native youths in European literature and science would be a far better means of enlightening their understandings, and of preparing their minds for the reception of truth, than such an institution as the Brumha Sobha.

This proposition seemed to give general satisfaction, and Mr. H. himself soon after prepared a paper, containing proposals for the establishment of the College. Baboo Buddinath Mookerjya, the father of the present native Secretary, was deputed to collect subscriptions. The circular was after a time put into the hands of Sir E. H. East, who was very much pleased with the proposal, and after making a few corrections, offered his most cordial aid in the promotion of its objects. He soon after called a meeting at his house, and it was then resolved, "That an establishment be formed for the education of native youth."

Thus it appears, that Sir Hyde East, though he had not the merit of originating the College, is nevertheless entitled to get credit, for the

very prompt and effective aid which he afforded. By his example, his high station, and extensive influence, especially among the Natives, many doubtless were induced to lend their assistance, who would otherwise have regarded the proposal with indifference.

Besides holding frequent meetings at his house, he, as well as Mr. Hare, contributed largely to the fund, and exerted himself in various ways towards the success of so useful an undertaking (*The Calcutta Christian II*: pp. 68, 69; *Sambad Patre Sekaler II*: pp. 710, 711).

Therefore the above reports affirm the role of David Hare as the originator of the Hindu College; however besides Peary Chand Mitra's biography of David Hare, Sir Edward Hyde East's letter to J. H. Harrington written on 18th May 1816 and the reports published over the 8th July 1831 issue of *Samachar Darpan* affirm that Raja Rammohun Roy was closely associated with David Hare<sup>3</sup> and "some of their common friends in communicating the plan of the College to their opulent as well as learned countrymen. It may be presumed that the weighty support of no less a distinguished person than Rammohun was responsible for its being publicized in so short a time. It is, therefore, difficult to appreciate the view of those who say that Rammohun had no connection whatsoever with the foundation of the Hindu College" (Bagal p. 300) in spite of being objected by orthodox pundits regarding Roy's association with the recommended institution.

Being educated on modern science and social philosophy eminent students<sup>4</sup> from the Hindu College, including the Young Bengals ushered in a social movement 'sending cold tremors to hollow spines of the seasoned conservatives' (*A Biographical* pp. xiii, xiv) followed by an acculturation of the East and the West realizing Hare's paradigms of modern English education within the edifying forge and heritage of India. On the occasion of the centenary of the Presidency College (1855-1955), Dr. Jatischandra Sengupta, the Principal of the Presidency College at the Centenary Commemoration Meeting on June 15, 1955 offered his respect to David Hare by stating in his address —

If anyone among the founders of the Hindu College has to be singled out for particular mention, it is David Hare. It was this

great-hearted Scot watch-maker, who made Calcutta his home and came to love the country and its people as his own, who first mooted the idea of an advanced English school for the city, and the scheme he drew up led to the foundation of the Hindu College (Principal's Address).

Hare was also enthusiastically associated with the Calcutta School Book Society which was founded by several humane Europeans on July 4, 1817 for —

the preparation, publication and cheap or gratuitous supply of works useful in schools and seminaries.... Its *primary* object was to provide suitable books of instruction for native schools in the English and Oriental Languages (*The Bengal and Agra* p. 352) and thereby not only aided in their improvement but also established and supported any further schools and seminaries ... with a view to the more general diffusion of useful knowledge amongst the inhabitants of India ("Asiatic Intelligence" XXVIII: p. 341).

Hare effectively endorsed the Society; he wrote to its Secretary on October 6, 1827 that —

I believe there is no other institution in Calcutta that publishes books of the same description and I think the friends of education in this country are much indebted to your Society for the regular supply it has afforded (De p. 75).

The Second Report of this Society [Calcutta School Book Society] stated —

some arrangements should exist for conveying its publications, with certainty and regularity, to the numerous indigenous schools, and to those individuals among the natives who might value them for their own use or that of their families ... Through this channel large distributions have already taken place to great effect ... the demand for the Society's books must augment with great rapidity (pp. 26, 27).

It therefore emphasized the proper distribution of the Society's publications among the needy and Radhakanta Dev was in charge (A

*Biographical* p. 56). Periodical examinations were held at the house of the Babu ("Letter respecting the Calcutta School Society" p. 416) and prizes were offered to students and teachers (*A Biographical* p. 56); for the efficient functioning and supervision of the schools the city was also divided into four districts ("Letter respecting the Calcutta School Society" pp. 413, 414). Hare along with the other members of the Society extended their unwearied attention towards the promotion of benevolent education in this country ("Letters illustrative of the utility and acceptableness of the School Book Society's Publication" p. 95). The members of the Calcutta School Book Society established the Calcutta School Society on September 1, 1818 with the aim —

to assist and improve existing schools and to establish and support any further schools and seminaries and to seek pupils of distinguished talents and merits from elementary and other schools and to provide for their instruction in seminaries of a higher degree with the view of forming a body of qualified Teachers and Translators who may be instrumental in enlightening their countrymen and improving the general system of education ("Foreign Intelligence" p. 224).

Hare's The School Society played a pioneering role in establishing five regular vernacular schools and two English schools open for all students, the first being at Arpooly opposite to the Kali Temple at Thanthania (Mitra pp. 8, 11; Fraser np), where Rev. Krishna Mohan Banerjea was a student before moving to Pataldanga school and to the Hindu college (*A Biographical* p. 57). Education through the Arpooly School bore —

... the best proof that can be offered of the estimation in which it is held by the native inhabitants of the neighbourhood is, the frequent and earnest solicitation from the most respectable natives to have their children educated in it ("Asiatic Intelligence" XXVIII: p. 341).

The reports authenticate that both the societies aimed at the education of the lower and higher classes. Hare also established and personally managed the schools at Simla, Pataldanga [The Calcutta School Society's

School' or 'Mr. Hare's School' later 'Hare School'] and at Arpooly for imparting free education (*A Biographical* p. xviii) among the poor students. With the passage of time the number of students in these schools increased; they were taught by a pundit and four native teachers and were divided into eleven classes, occupied with —

different Bengali studies from the alphabet upwards ... reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and arithmetic from the books published by the Calcutta School Book Society ... nearly similar to an English school ("Asiatic Intelligence" XXVIII: p. 341).

The School Society appointed three sub-committees for the establishment and support of his schools (*A Biographical* p. 54) where Hare may have accepted the model of Dr. Bell tried in his Military Orphan Asylum of Madras in 1791 ("Letter respecting the Calcutta School Society" p. 417), and the model of Robert May who established schools around Chinsurah (Mallick p. 84). Classes were graded and meritorious students taught the juniors in the 'monitorial' method. The First Report of the Calcutta School Society concluded that —

nothing will be wanting to their successors in future years but funds and personal exertions to carry the benefits of the Society to an indefinite extent. Adult and female education, the extension and improvement of the indigenous system, and the education of a greater number of clever boys in English, as well as providing them with the means of acquiring scientific education, are all objects of great importance to be vigorously pursued in the metropolis and its vicinity; while the neglected state of the vast population under British dominion, and the means of improving them afforded by the application particularly of the indigenous system, call loudly upon us to embrace every opportunity to extending our operations in the country ("Literary and Philosophical Intelligence" X: p. 368).

Hare was never aloof of the socio-cultural movements of his time, he neither supported the Progressives-Conservatives nor the Anglicists - Orientalists<sup>5</sup> but ensured a comprehensive development of the masses through a sound education, as 'a champion for the cause of modern education in the dawn of the age of reason and renaissance' (*A*

*Biographical* p. xx). For the efficiency of the educational institutions, Hare regularly visited, inspected the Society's schools, the Hindoo College<sup>6</sup> and the Calcutta Medical College which was established on February 1, 1835 (Mitra p. 13; Hare pp. 267, 268) and he was also its first Secretary (Mitra, "Education" p. 464). Dr. Bramley in his report stated:

This zealous co-adjutor and valuable assistant was Mr. David Hare. Scarcely had the order of Government for the institution of the college appeared before this gentleman, prompted by the dictates of his own benevolent spirit, having ascertained the objects of the undertaking and becoming convinced of the vast benefits likely to accrue from it, immediately afforded me his influence in furthering the ends it has in view ... In truth, I may say, that without Mr. Hare's influence, any attempt to form a Hindu Medical Class would have been futile, and under this feeling I trust I may bespeak the indulgence of the Committee, in availing myself of the present opportunity to record publicly, though inadequately, how much the cause of Native Medical Education, owes to that gentleman as well as the extent of my own deep obligation to him personally (*Report of the General Committee* pp. 34, 35).

Hare lived for his educational institutions as he served the country as an educator and contributed towards the socio-political amelioration of Bengal as is evident from his petitioning the Governor-General to repeal the press regulations of 1824 (*A Biographical* p. 75). Though Hare had not actively undertaken any measure for the development of the education for the females but was a subscriber of the Calcutta Female Juvenile Society whose name was changed into the Ladies' Society for Native Female Education<sup>7</sup> (*A Biographical* p. 62).

Nineteenth-century Bengal will always be indebted to David Hare for introducing a balanced education for the native children. He stressed the proficiency in the liberal western education and the Bengali language (*A Biographical* pp. 59, 60). The Report of the General Committee of Public Instruction (1835) stated:

Few will be found, like Mr. Hare, to bestow years of unremitting labour upon this object, noble and interesting as it is, without any

expectation of reward except what is to be derived from the gratification of benevolent feeling ("Mode of Educating" p. 279).

Hare aimed at an introspective enlargement as his daily schedule was a moral teaching and an inspiration for the age, benefitting young men (*A Biographical* p. 145). Hare's generosity was equally felt and through his philanthropic service for the welfare of the youth he emerged as 'the world-worker' (*The Religion* p. 55) indoctrinated in *ātmano mokshārtham jagad hitāya cha* (Secretary p. 13). Hare dedicated his life towards the amelioration and improvement of the general masses (*A Biographical* p. 149). All that we oblige to western education we are indebted in a way to David Hare. His care, and dedication towards his students is well evident through his recommendation letter for Baboo Ram Chundra Mitter, dated: 14 July 1837 obtained from the archives of the Presidency University Library —

I have much pleasure in stating that I have known Baboo Ram Chundra Mitter from his childhood and I may almost say that he has been brought up under my control. He received his education at first at the School Society's Bengalee and English Seminary and afterwards at the Hindu College and his acquirements both in Bengalee and English are most respectable. Since he left school he has for many years been employed as an English Teacher in the College and has always conducted himself much to the satisfaction of everyone connected with the institution. His family is very respectable and I have no hesitation in saying that I believe him to be a very deserving young man of strict integrity and qualified to hold any situation to which a native may be eligible (Letter 0546).

With his scientific temperament Hare bore the dynamism which proved extremely effective in protective and nursing the sapling of Renaissance, so that it could, in time, grow into a mighty banyan tree encompassing a whole sub-continent and inspiring subsequent generations (Chakravarti p. 118).

James Kerr's *A Review of Public Instruction in the Bengal Presidency, From 1835 to 1851* (1852) provides a heart-warming account of David

Hare whom Bengal reveres with an affectionate gratitude (Mitra p. 24) as his life was "so instructive - so ennobling - so enduring as long as disinterested benevolence and philanthropy are appreciated as true manifestations of the soul and means of fitting it ... to hold communion with the infinite source of love, power and wisdom" (*A Biographical* p. 150)

as evident through Captain D. L. Richardson's tribute which is inscribed on a mural table at the Hare School erected on 1847 —

Ah! warm philanthropist faithful friend!  
Thy life devoted to one generous end,  
To bless the Hindoo mind with British lore,  
And truth's and nature's faded lights restore!  
If for a day that lofty aim was crossed  
You grieved like Titus that a day was lost!  
Alas! it is not now a few brief honors  
That withholds, a heavier grief o'er powers  
A nation whom you love'd as if your own  
A life that gave the life of life is gone.

David Hare's association with India is best expressed through the inscription upon his tombstone at College Square, which states that he had:

... adopted for his own the country of his sojourn and cheerfully devoted the remainder of his life with unwearied zeal and benevolence to one pervading and darling object, on which he spared no personal trouble, money or influence, viz., the education and moral improvement of the Natives of Bengal.

On 17 February 1831, in the address presented to David Hare by Dukinnundun Mookerjee and 564 young Indians, he was described as a

representation of the man who has breathed a new life into Hindoo society, who has made a foreign the land of his adoption, who has voluntarily become the friend of a friendless, and set an example to his own countrymen and ours, to admire which is fame, and to imitate immorality ("Asiatic Intelligence" : p. VI 55).

Hare's humility and inspirational nature is evident in his reply to the address where he expressed his mission to spread education and its necessity for the progress of the country with the able efforts of the countrymen in the future. He stated :

... A few years after my arrival in this country, I was enabled to discover during my intercourse with several native gentlemen, that nothing but education was requisite to render the Hindoos [Indians] happy, and I exerted my humble abilities to further the interests of India; and with the sanction and support of the Government, and of a few leading men of your community, I endeavoured to promote the cause of education ... I have now the gratification to observe, that the tree of education has already taken root; the blossoms I see around me: and if it left to grow up for ten years more, it will acquire such strength, that will be impossible to eradicate it... To maintain and to continue the happy career already begun, is entirely left to your own exertions ... It remains for you to gain that object, and to show the inhabitants of other countries in what manner they may render themselves useful ("Asiatic Intelligence" VI: pp. 55, 56).

He will always be esteemed for his benevolence and humanism which contributed towards the ushering of the Bengal Renaissance - a new phase in the intellectual history of the people which steadied the path for the unity and continuity of the Bengali culture (Dasgupta, Introduction p. xxii) 'with a manifold sound to crescent honours, splendours, victories vast' (Owen p. 14).

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### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The first sentence of 'A Sonnet' by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, written on March 8, 1830; published in *Modern Review* (January-1933); reprinted from *Modern Review* by courtesy of Mrs Mary Ann Dasgupta and present as a prologue to the *David Hare Bicentenary Volume 1975-76*.
- <sup>2</sup> 'Uomo Universale' is an Italian word for the 'Renaissance Man', 'Universal Man', an ideal of Renaissance Humanism that was developed in Renaissance Italy by Leon Battista Alberti 'one man can do all things if he will' ([www.britannica.com/topic/Renaissance-man](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Renaissance-man)).
- <sup>3</sup> Raja Rammohun Roy and David Hare 'equally opposed sectarian or theological education' and aimed towards the 'cultivation of English literature and European science rather than Hindu theology or metaphysics' (Banerjee and Mukherji p. 2).
- <sup>4</sup> Dakhinaraman Mookherjee, Ram Gopal Ghose, Tarachand Chakravarty, Krishnamohan Banerjee.
- <sup>5</sup> The Progressives were led by Raja Rammohun Roy and the Conservatives were led by Raja Radha Kanta Deb. The Anglicists were led by Macaulay; while the Orientalists were led by Hastings, Minto, Munro and Elphinstone (*A Biographical* p. xviii, xix).
- <sup>6</sup> Hare was appointed the visitor and superintendent of the Hindoo College from June 12, 1819, besides being the Superintendent of the School Society (Mitra p. 11).
- <sup>7</sup> The 'Ladies' Society for Native Female Education' was established in 1824. Hare believed that if he would have lived for ten years more then he would have surely endeavoured measures for active female education in Bengal (Mitra p. 15).

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V.—*Notes on Charaka Sanhitā.*—By DR. MAHENDRA LAL SIRCAR.  
(Abstract.)

Charaka Sanhitā has not yet been examined by scholars either of Europe or America. The account of Charaka in Boëhtlinck and Roth's Dictionary publishing at St. Petersburg is taken from the *Sabdakalpadruma*, in which we have a fabulous account of the author, taken from *Bhaba Prakasa*, a very modern work on Medicine.

It appears, there is a MS. in Wilson's Collection, about which Dr. Roth writes to Mr. Hoernle, Professor, Jayanārāyan College, Benares, as I learn from a letter from the former to Bábu Rājendra Lāla Mitra, who did me the honor of referring to me on the subject, and very kindly sent me Mr. H.'s letter to him.

According to Dr. Roth, there are 11 parts or sections in the Charaka of Wilson's Collection, which are called *Sthānas*.

Now in the MSS. in my possession, one of which is a careful transcript from a very old and reliable MS. in possession of one of the Kavirājas of Berhampore, made (purposely for myself) under the order of the late Rājā Prasanna Nārāyana Deva Bāhādur, as well as in other MSS. in possession of other Kavirājas, which I have seen, there are eight parts or sections or *Sthānas*. Dr. Wise, the only European writer who gives any correct account of Charaka, mentions only eight parts or *Sthānas*, the names of which exactly correspond with those in our MSS. Besides, the additional parts mentioned by Dr. Roth are but *adhyāyas* of one or other of the eight *Sthānas*.

All our MSS. thus agreeing, I conclude, the original Charaka Sanhitā consists of eight *Sthānas* or Sections. The following list shows the names of these sections, and the number of the chapters or *adhyāyas* they severally contain :—

|                  |     |     |     |                |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|----------------|
| १ सुत्रस्थानं    | ... | ... | ... | ३० अध्यायानि । |
| २ निदानस्थानं    | ... | ... | ... | ८ ,,           |
| ३ विमानस्थानं    | ... | ... | ... | ८ ,,           |
| ४ शरीरस्थानं     | ... | ... | ... | ८ ,,           |
| ५ इन्द्रियस्थानं | ... | ... | ... | १२ ,,          |
| ६ चिकित्सास्थानं | ... | ... | ... | २० ,,          |
| ७ कल्पस्थानं     | ... | ... | ... | १२ ,,          |
| ८ सिद्धिस्थानं   | ... | ... | ... | १२ ,,          |

1870.]

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Charaka is not the original author of the work which goes by his name. That author was Agnivesha, who, along with five other rishis, Bhela, Jatukarna, Parásara, Hárta, and Ksháripáni, received instruction from Bharádvája, who himself was taught by Indra. Indra had received the science from the twins Ashvini Kumáras ; Ashini Kumáras from Prajápati, to whom the science (Āyurveda) was revealed by Brahma, the supreme creator.

But Charaka does not pretend to the authorship of the work. At the end of every sthāna, nay at the end of each Chapter or Adhyāya, we have the admission :

अग्निवेशकृते तन्त्रे चरकप्रतिभंस्कृते ।

from which it appears that he gives the authorship to Agnivesha, and takes credit to himself only for revision and correction.

In the fabulous account of Charaka in Bhabaprakasha, quoted in Rájá Rádhá Kánta's *Sabdakalpadruma*, and alluded to above, he is said to have compiled from the works of the six disciples of Bharadvaju. This is very probable, but he does not say so himself.

As to the antiquity of the work, it is impossible to fix the date when it flowed from the lips of Átreya, or issued from the pen of Agnivesha, and when it was revised and edited by Charaka. All that we can say, at the present stage of our inquiry, is, that it seems to us to be anterior to Sushruta, the only other ancient Hindu work on medicine extant. Sushruta calls himself the son of Vishvá Mitra, who was the contemporary of Ráma, and claims to have derived his knowledge of medicine from Dhanwantari. Now, Dhanwantari is a mythological personage, but the Dhanwantari from whom Sushruta received instruction in Āyurveda was he who was called Dibodása and was king of Kási, which is now our modern Benares. It is singular that neither of these works makes any allusion to the other. Both make Āyurveda of divine origin, and they agree in tracing this origin from above downwards as far as Indra. But after that they diverge. Charaka, as we have seen, makes Bharadvája derive his knowledge from Indra, whereas Sushruta makes it Dhanwantari. We are inclined to think Sushruta to be a later work, inasmuch as his preceptor is a later personage than Bharadvája.

Besides the above, we have other grounds for believing Sushruta to be a later work. Though not so full and copious, it is more

systematic and more logical in its classifications than Charaka. It is more precise and accurate in its anatomy. Sushruta does not make any mention of beef as an article of diet, which Charaka does. Hence, Sushruta could not have flourished at an age when beef was still an article of food. Again, both Bagbhatta, and Misrabhava, the author of Bhabaprakasha, by far the most ancient of the modern class of medical writers, both these authors, we say, agree in giving priority and superiority to Atreya (or Bharadvāja), the preceptor of Agnivesha, the author of the work which now goes by the name of Charaka.

Hence, if we take Sushruta to have flourished about the time of Rāma, the illustrious contemporary of his father Vishvá Mitra, we must claim for Charaka a date anterior to that of Sushruta.

But Charaka could not have flourished in the pre-Paurānic age, inasmuch as Indra is called in the work, बलहन् (the slayer of a demon called Bala, mentioned only in some of the Purānas).

Such being the antiquity of Charaka Sanhitā, it must possess very unusual interest, not only for the historian of medicine, but no less for the philologist and the historian in general, and the philosopher. As for its value in a medical point of view, this is not the place to dilate upon it. This much, however, I must say, that its pathology apart, I have found it to contain excellent and sound remarks on therapeutics, dietetics, and hygiene.

The history of any period should now be deemed incomplete, unless we had an insight into the nature of the diseases which prevailed in that period. In this point of view, we have no doubt, the study of Charaka would throw much light on the history of the time in which it was written. From it, we shall be able, in a great measure, to decypher the mental characteristics, the various occupations, the mode of living, and various other circumstances, connected with life and its preservation which prevailed in that age.

The receipt of the following communications was announced—

1. *Descriptions of New Land Shells from the Shan States and Pegu.*—By W. THEOBALD, Esq.
2. *On the Land Shells of Bourbon with descriptions of new species.*—By G. NEVILL, Esq., C. M. R. S.
3. *Descriptions of new species of Mollusca from Ceylon.*—By MESSRS. G. and H. NEVILL.



REVIEW ON DR. MAHENDRA LAL SIRCAR'S  
STUDIES ON ĀYURVEDA

ANJALIKA MUKHOPADHYAY

In September, 1870, in the "Proceedings of the Asiatic Society" we have come across an article, titled *Notes on Caraka Samhita* by Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar. It was described as an 'abstract' implying that a more detailed write up was on the offing. It is a short three page note but full of informations about the prevalent status of the Āyurvedic studies by scholars of India and abroad. Let me analyse the note point by point to present a complete picture of Āyurvedic studies at that period.

In the first paragraph, Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar commented that *Charaka Samhita* was not examined till date by scholars either of Europe or America. The text was mentioned in 'Bæthlinck' and Roth's Dictionary published from St. Petersburg. The account was taken from *Śabdakalpadruma*, which was again based on *Bhāvaprakāśa*. Dr. Sircar added that the account was 'fabulous' and the *Bhāvaprakāśa* was a very modern work on medicine.

Several books were mentioned here. Details of these books will show the amazing extent of Dr. Sircar's research.

The dictionary- a Sanskrit dictionary named *Sanskrit Wörterbuch*, by Otto von Bæthlinck and Rudolf Roth, published in St. Petersburg in 1865.

*Śabdakalpadruma* – an encyclopaedic Lexicon in Sanskrit. It is a glossary, a book of synonyms, a cyclopaedia and an index to every branch of Sanskrit Literature and Science. It is compiled by Raja Rādhākānta Deb of Shobhabazar.

*Bhāvaprakāśa* – This compendium was composed in the 16th Century by Bhāva Miśra who collected all informations given by earlier texts in this book. Here for the first time 'phiranga roga' (syphilis) was mentioned. The portugese came to India in the 15th century and their close relations with the Indian community was believed to be the cause of this disease. For this, it is named after the 'phirangis' or foreigners.

In the *Bhāva prakāśa*, the traditional account of the origin of Āyurveda, its branches, respective authors and editors are mentioned. This mythological description naturally seemed 'fabulous' to rational-minded Sircar. *Bhāva prakāśa* had repeated only the traditionally accepted version.

His comment that *Caraka Saṁhitā* was not examined by western scholars may seem to be a sort of understatement. It was already introduced to the western world and stunned the scholars. They were already toiling to tackle the huge obstacle of language and subject. He himself told us about interested scholars in the following paragraphs.

The contents of next two paragraphs disclosed that serious search for manuscripts of *Caraka Saṁhitā* was already on. Apart from Dr. Roth, 'Mr. Hoernle' was mentioned by Dr. Sircar. He spoke about some correspondence on the subject, in which he himself was included.

Here, a couple of great scholars were mentioned, who started their researches on manuscripts.

August Rudolf Friedrich Hoernle was a great indologist. He was born on 19.10.1841 in Agra. After completing his studies in Germany and London, he returned to India in 1865 and held high academic positions. His studies on *Bower Manuscript* was highly acclaimed. He was keen on collecting manuscripts of ancient medical texts.

Sri Rajendra Lal Mitra was a versatile scholar and a renowned manuscriptologist. He was associated closely with the Asiatic Society. He produced many great scholastic editions of unpublished manuscripts on various subjects. He included Dr. Sircar in the matter of *Caraka Saṁhitā* because he knew that Dr. Sircar was in possession of several manuscripts of the same.

Actually Dr. Sircar admitted in the next paragraph that he had a number of mss at his disposal at that time. He mentioned a manuscript from Berhampore which, according to him, was 'a careful transcript from a very old and reliable ms in possession of one of the *kavirājas* of Berhampore, made (purposely for myself) under the order of Rājā Prasanna Nārāyaṇa Deva Bāhādur.'

I should explain the Berhampore connection here. The ms from Berhampore was surely a copy of Gaṅgādhara Kavirāja's edition. This edition became well known and popular to the Bengal school of Vaidyas. Dharaṇīdhara Ray, his son, first published the text from Berhampore in 1879. Then Abinash Chandra Kaviratna published it in

1884. Devendra Nath Sen and Upendra Nath Sen reprinted it in 1897. But Prof. Hoernle was not happy with the edition. He described it as 'full of incongruities and inconsistencies'. He also added 'the spurious, thus originated was afterwards unquestioningly and thoughtlessly adopted by Gaṅgādhara's Bengal successors'.<sup>1</sup>

It seemed that Dr. Sircar had already gone through the mss very well because he confidently refuted Dr. Roth's claim about the number of *Caraka Saṁhitā*'s sections. He declared firmly that the *Saṁhitā* had eight (8) *sthānas* or sections, not eleven (11) as claimed by Dr. Roth. He further provided the actual names of the *sthānas* and the number of *adhyāyas* therein. Here he mentioned one Dr. Wise who had given a correct account of the *Saṁhitā*. This statement is a clear proof that studies on *Caraka Saṁhitā* were already on.

Now I proceed to discuss the traditional account of the origin of major Āyurvedic texts which seemed fabulous to Dr. Sircar. The word 'fabulous' means something difficult to believe. Any account related even distantly to mythology is preposterous. One has to glean out only the tenable parts from a heap of absurdity.

This is the chronological order :

The science of medicine was incepted by Brahmā Prajāpati. He handed it over to Dakṣa, who passed it to Aśvina twins, the celestial physicians. Indra learnt it from them. At this stage, the science branched out in three sections – *kāya cikitsā* (general medicine), *śalya tantra* (surgery) and *kaumārabhyāsa* (paediatrics). The *kāyacikitsā* branch was headed by sage Bharadvāja, who learning it from Indra, brought the science to earth from heaven. He taught his able disciple Ātreya Punarvasu thoroughly. Ātreya had six talented disciples, who composed a text each to spread what they learnt from their preceptor. These disciples were Agniveśa, Bhela, Jātukarṇa, Parāśara, Kṣārapāṇi and Hārīta. Of these only the complete text of Agniveśa survived. It was subsequently redacted by Caraka and reedited by Dṛḍhavalā. This is the extant *Caraka Saṁhitā*.

On the other hand, the surgery branch was believed to be headed by Dhanvantari (alias Divodāsa alias Kāśīrāja). Dhanvantari happened to be a mythological person, who emerged from the ocean at the time of its churning (*samudra-manthana*). He was a great physician too.

Divodāsa was known in the vedic age and he might also be the king of Kāśī. The identities of these three persons are hard to determine. Suśruta was said to be a direct student of Dhanvantari. The text on surgery was composed by Suśruta.

The third branch is associated with the names of sage Kāśyapa, sage Vaśiṣṭha, sage Atri and sage Bhṛgu. Bhṛgu's sons and disciples continued the line.

Dr. Sircar assumed that *Caraka Saṁhitā* is anterior to *Suśruta Saṁhitā*. It is very difficult to ascertain the precise age of these two books. However, he gave following reasons for his assumption —

- i) In Caraka's line, the original author Agniveśa took his lessons from sage Bharadvāja, Caraka came into the picture at a later period.
- ii) Suśruta took his lessons from Dhanvantari or Divodāsa, the king of Kāśī. Suśruta's father Viśvāmitra was posterior to Bharadvāja. Consequently Suśruta was a later personage.
- iii) The *Suśruta Saṁhitā* seemed to be a more methodical work and showed more accurate and precise anatomical knowledge.
- iv) Suśruta did not mention beef as an item of food, which Caraka had done, indicating the fact that in earlier times beef-eating was socially sanctioned.
- v) Tradition (Vāgbhaṭa and Bhāva Miśra both) accepted Caraka as anterior to Suśruta.

Next Dr. Sircar raised a very pertinent question. He suggested that the *Caraka Saṁhitā* should be examined thoroughly from the angles of philology, history and philosophy.<sup>2</sup> The thesis is published by the Asiatic Society. Medical value of the text, according to Dr. Sircar, is beyond all estimation, particularly from the points of therapeutics, dietetics and hygiene. In his opinion, proper study of the text would reveal the history of that period, the socio-cultural picture would come out clear and bright. I think this is a most thought-provoking suggestion.

This point indicates Dr. Sircar's deep insight and brilliance of thought. His sharp desire to unfold any mystery, to explain any obscurity and to solve any puzzle is amply proved.

Drafting and redrafting of Āyurvedic text were going on since very old times. This meant revision of chapters with newly gained knowledge was always in progress. We can include composition of commentaries in this category too. Commentaries are most important tools for correct textual interpretations. Commentaries of different schools offer divergent views from which the intended and suitable meaning can be ascertained easily. Some very important commentaries in chronological order are mentioned below.

6th-7th Century – An incomplete (upto 3rd chapter Of *Sūtrasthāna*) commentary named *Caraka nyāsa* by Bhaṭṭara Hariścandra.

9th-10th C. — Jejjāta composed 'Nirantara pada vyākhyā' on *Caraka Samhitā*, commentary on *Suśruta* too.

10th- 11th — Gayadāsa wrote *candrikā* commentary on both *Caraka* and *Suśruta Samhitās*.

11th-12th C — Gayisena commented upon *Suśruta Samhitā* and Bakuleśvara Sena commented upon *Caraka Samhitā*. Baṅgasena wrote commentaries on both *Caraka* and *Suśruta samhitās*.

13th C — Dalhaṇa composed *Nibandha Saṁgraha* – the famous commentary on the *Suśruta Samhitā*.

15th-16th C — Śivadāsasena composed *Caraka tattva pradīpikā* on *Caraka Samhitā*.

18th -19th C — Gaṅgādhara Ray composed the famous commentary *Jalpakaḥpataru* on *Caraka Samhitā*.

19th – 20th C — Haran Chandra Chakravarty wrote *Suśrutārtha sandīpana bhāṣya* on *Suśruta Samhitā*. Yogindra Nath Sen composed the commentary *Carakopaskāra* on *Caraka Samhitā*.

So it is clearly proved that studies and researches on medical texts never came to a halt. The *Caraka Samhitā* became so popular and its demand was so extensive that it was translated in various languages from time to time. It was translated into Persian and Arabic in 10th Cent A.D. English translation came out in the 19th Cent A.D. The Jamnagar edition in 1949 contains Hindi, Gujrati and English translations. Āyurvedic studies and researches are still popular as found from numerous papers published in the journals and presented in the seminars.

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### Note

- <sup>1</sup> H.F.R. Hoernle – *Studies in the Medicine of Ancient India*, p. 22.
- <sup>2</sup> Philosophical aspect of the *Caraka Samhita* has been researched by Dr. Dalia Bandury under the guidance of Late Dr. Brahmananda Gupta. The thesis is published by the Asiatic Society.

## BOOK REVIEW

Sutapa Sinha, *Coin Hoards of the Bengal Sultans 1205-1576 AD From West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam and Bangladesh*, pp. 232, Shubhi Publications, Gurgaon, 2017, Price. 1995/-

The study of coin hoards has been a recent trend in numismatics research and various aspects of coin hoards are studied. The study primarily includes the documentation of coin hoards from different regions, publishing of a particular coin hoard with detailed catalogues and hoard analysis. Besides, various facets of economy such as currency system and circulation pattern etc. have also been studied with the help of coin hoards.

Author of the present book is well known to the students of Indian numismatics for her contributions in medieval Indian numismatics in general and coins of Bengal sultanates in particular. The present work is yet another contribution of the author towards the medieval numismatics in the region of eastern India, covering west Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam, it also includes Bangladesh. This study is exclusively on the coin hoards of Bengal sultans as reflected from the title itself. Besides, the list of illustrations, foreword, preface, introduction, bibliography and index the book has been divided into four chapters and each chapter contains coin illustrations and about 240 coins are illustrated. The foreword of the book is penned by Dr. John Deyell, one of the doyens of Indian Numismatics.

Well written thirty five pages introduction covers a brief survey of Persian, European and other traveller accounts which deals with the history of Sultans of Bengal. The author has advocated the role of inscriptions and numismatics in reconstructing the history of Bengal sultans in general and their chronology in particular. About two and half pages are devoted in explaining hoard and various forms of hoards such as long term hoards, common hoards and emergency hoards etc. About 52 coin hoards including minor findings are discussed in four chapters. After analysing each hoard, it has been fixed with a particular category of hoard. 12 hoards each and 3 minor finds are classified under long term hoard and common hoards categories while two hoards each are classified under composite hoard and collector's treasure. Short term hoards, emergency hoards and royal treasure have been represented in fourteen, nine and one hoards respectively.

Author has made a brief survey of published coin hoards of sultans of Bengal since 1841, followed by disposal of these coin hoards. Besides, a detailed study of the coin hoards of Bengal sultanate in Public collection in Europe and India have been made and it is revealed that these hoards are located in United Kingdom (British Museum, London, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge National Museum, Scotland), France (Bibliothèque Nationale Paris), Germany (Bode Museum, Germany) and Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka. Public collection in India includes National Museum, New Delhi, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala, Patna Museum, Bihar and State Archaeological Museum, West Bengal. Interestingly, the author has personally examined these coins with the help of accession register and other records both in Europe and India which may be considered a commendable job.

Introduction is followed by chapter one entitled Coin Hoards and Minor finds of Bengal Sultans from West Bengal. The classification of the coin hoards are divided into two groups — coin hoards and minor finds. These are classified on the standard performa which covers 14 heads such as find spot, year of find, reference, find, circumstances of discovery, probable time of inhumation, place of deposit, state of preservation, category of finds, house represented, total number of coins, breakup, classification and remarks etc. The breakup of the coins is followed by classification which is explained in table form covering ruler, mint, date, type and number of coins. The legend of the type is understood with the help of published museum catalogues such as Indian Museum Catalogue (*IMC*) by Nelson Wright and British Museum Catalogue (*BMC*) by Lane Poole. The author observation and notes on any coin are mentioned under the heading of Remarks and Observation. The chapter includes 14 hoards with Cooch Behar hoards (13500 coins) as biggest hoards ever reported for Bengal sultans and Gaur hoard (14 coins) is the smallest hoard included in this chapter. Besides, two minor finds reported from Sundarban and Pandua, each consists of two coins are also included. Author has tried to give a detailed description of Cooch Behar hoards since its discovery and later distribution. This hoard was unearthed in 1863 which was informed by Col. Haughton with exact location of find and number

of coins i.e. 13500. Later, Edward Thomas in his article published in the journal of Asiatic Society informed us that Haughton has suggested that the present hoard may be taken as a bullion and may be considered as annual tribute from protected state Cooch Behar and entire hoard was sent to Calcutta mint. Later, the hoard was examined and published a report by Rajendra Lal Mitra, a scholar of that time. He selected some of the coins for government. The hoard was classified into two groups — the coins of Delhi Pathan and Bengal Pathan. The former includes the coins of Mamluk sultans (Balban and Kaiqubad), Khaljis (Jalaluddin Firoz, Alauddin Muhammad Shah), Tughluq (Ghiyasuddin and Mohammad bin Tughluq) and Suri (Adil Shah). The latter covers the coins of only five Bengal sultans (Shamsuddin Firuz, Bahadur Shah, Ilyas Shah, Sikander Shah and Azam Shah). Maximum number of coins are attributed to Azam Shah. Interestingly, the Cooch Behar hoard was also examined by the present author and argued various points in the light of hoard and nature of hoard. But the classification includes only 143 coins as described by Edward Thomas in his *Initial Coinage of Bengal I (ICB I)* and the chapter includes the illustrations of only 39 coins. Chandir Jhar hoard is another interesting hoard in this chapter which consists of 767 coins covering the coins of Bengal sultans (273 coins representing twelve sultans including Afghan supremacy), Suri sultans (266 coins representing Sher Shah, Islam Shah and Adil Shah) and 222 coins of King Narayana of Koch Behar. Besides, this hoard also represents a few coins of Bahamani (Tajudddin Firuz), Mughal (Akbar) and Tripura (Vijaymankiya I). Out of 767, only 17 coins are illustrated.

Chapter two entitled Coin Hoards and Minor finds of Bengal sultans from Bihar and Jharkhand. It includes 8 hoards and 3 minor findings. The biggest hoard from Bihar and Jharkhand is reported from Fort of Bihar which consists of 37 coins, representing Iltutmish and Iwad, Iltutmish's governor in Bengal. Malhepur (Sasaram district) hoard is very interesting as it consists of 18 gold coins, representing Delhi sultanate (Muhammad Tughluq, Firuz Tughluq), Bengal sultanate (4 sultans), Bahamani, Jaunpur and Mysore king Krishna Raja Wodeyar. The representation of the coins of Bahamani and Krishna Raja Wodeyar in the coin hoard of Bengal sultans reported

from Bihar is interesting, these coins must have reached in the hoard through the trade. Three minor findings are listed, out of which two are reported from Jharkhand and one from Bihar. These findings consist of three, four and six coins.

Chapter three is on Coin Hoards and Minor finds of Bengal sultans from Assam which includes six hoards and three minor findings. Haleshwar and Mathanguri are the big hoards reported from Assam which consist of 167 and 127 coins respectively. The author informs us that Haleshwar hoard includes 167 coins while Assam museum records only six coins and these are donated by six individuals. Author's information about Haleshwar hoard is based on the report published in English daily *The Newsfront*, Guwahati dated 17th November, 1993. Mathungiri hoard, however, has been properly documented, representing ten sultans of Bengal beginning from Bahadur Shah to Ghiyasuddin Muhammad, but maximum numbers of coins belong to Alauddin Hussain Shah and Nasiruddin Nusrat. Gauhati and Sibsagar hoards represent the coins of Delhi sultanate and Bengal sultans. Three minor finds consist of six and three coins are included in this chapter. Rajaduar finds includes the coins of Bengal sultanate, Bahamani and Suri.

The study is not confined to India but also covers Bangladesh, therefore, a separate chapter entitled Coin Hoards and Minor finds of Bengal sultans from Bangladesh is included. It includes twelve hoards with Biyani bazar hoard consist of 800 coins as the biggest hoard with representation of twelve sultans of Bengal. No classification has been made as author informs us the coins were dispersed from Dhaka Museum and a few was procured by Dhaka Museum. The information about this hoard is based on the article published in Bengali journal *Itihas*, vol. 23, no. 1-3, pp. 38-50, 1989, published by Bangladesh Itihas Parishat.

Ketun hoard consists of 346 coins is the second biggest hoard in this chapter. It represents 11 sultans from Ghiyasuddin Bahadur to Mahendra Deva. The hoard is dominated by the coins of Muhammad Shah (122 coins about 35%), followed by Azam Shah (72 coins about 20%). The lowest representation is of Mahendra Deva with one coin only. This hoard was examined and published by Bhattasali's book

*Coins and Chronology of Early Sultans of Bengal.* This hoard was disposed off to many government museums including Indian Museum, Decca Museum, Lucknow Museum, Nagpur Museum, Peshawar Museum and British Museum etc. Besides, many other hoards such as Raipara Hoard and Nawabgunj hoard are also listed. Nawabgunj hoard consists of 199 coins mainly Ilyas Shahi sultans –Ilyas, Sikander and Azam with exception of two coins Tughlaq sultans of Delhi. The hoard was classified and incorporated in the Corpus of Karim. Six minor finds are included which consist of 1 to 6 coins.

A few short coming may also be pointed out here. Almost every hoard has been classified in a table form (in the serial no. xiii) and type of the coin is understood with the reference of published catalogues such as *CIS*, *BMC*, *IMC* etc. It would have been better if full legend in Arabic or its transliteration in English was used. The reference was required only after the coin legend. The present method is difficult and not reader friendly as for every coin legend one has to check catalogue referred. When coin types are discussed, one expects the details of the coin inscription on the page where it is being explained. Interestingly, author has tried to give every single detail of the coin hoard but not a single coin has been fully deciphered.

Coins are illustrated with good printing quality and most of the coins are properly arranged with exception of a very few illustrations which notice ups and down images (fig. 1.12, p.53). Besides, some of the coin types are not illustrated uniformly particularly may be mentioned the coin legend with Kalima as coin nos. 3.10, 3.13, p.163 bear kalmia on the reverse while Kalima on coin nos. 3.12, 3.45, are illustrated on the obverse. A small care was required to avoid these minor mistakes.

Although quite a big number of coin hoards are discussed but illustrated coins are low in comparison with the coins discussed. Chapter one includes 135 coins while chapter two, three and four have been represented by 37, 27 and 21 coins respectively. Most importantly, the author has not given the basis for the selection of these coins. For example English bazar hoard, (chapter1, p.80) and Bhorel hoard, (chapter 1 p. 95) possess 50 and 83 coins respectively but why only 11 coins from each hoard are selected for the illustrations.

There are many more such examples. An author has freedom to select coins for illustrations as per his/her requirement but it should be with proper justification. Here, we lack justification for the same which confuses the readers.

In chapter 3 (Haleshwar hoard, p. 156) illustrates 6 coins but these do not match with description on page no. 155. The description mentions the coin no. 1 as Alauddin Mohammad Shah but it is actually illustrated at the six number while the coins of Dhanujmardan and Jalaluddin Muhammad are mentioned as 3 and 4 but these are illustrated in number 1 and 2 respectively.

As mentioned above that Haleshwar hoard with 167 coins is biggest hoard reported from Assam but museum records show only six coins and author's information about this hoard is based on a report published in English daily *The Newsfront*, Guwahati dated 17th November, 1993. Since museum records do not mention this hoard, it was not required to study as a part of hoard. This information will mislead the data of coin hoards of Bengal sultans for future researchers. If at all it was required it should be mentioned separately so that researchers should know the fact. Though the printing and paper quality of the book is good but it has been priced on higher side which may limit the sale of the book to the libraries and not for the general students.

Apart from a few shortcomings, the book is a significant contribution to understand the coin hoards in general and Bengal sultans in particular. It is one of the few works which were exclusively produced towards understanding of coin hoards. It is indeed a master piece work for the coins of Bengal sultans.

Danish Moin

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**Edited Volumes :**

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**Articles in Edited Volumes**

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## SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

### SANSKRIT

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| आ = ā   | ई = ī   |
| ऊ = ū   | ऋ = ṛ   |
| ऌ = ṛ̥a | च = ca  |
| छ = cha | ज = ja  |
| ट = ṭa  | ठ = ṭha |
| ड = ḍa  | ढ = ḍha |
| ण = ṇa  | श = śa  |
| ष = ṣa  | ' = m̐  |

### TIBETAN

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





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Sir William Jones  
on the publication of the Asiatic Society