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The tools of sound scholarship are amply demonstrated in the works of the writers in this volume and strongly support Itihāsology's stated intent of more advanced research projects in the future.'

DR. ARSHIA SATTAR

The Itihāsology Journal

Volume 1: Issue 1

itihāsology

The Itihāsology Journal

Volume 1, No. 1
10th January, 2022

Editorial Board

Design Team

Reviews for the Journal

Dr. Thomas R. Trautmann

Professor Emeritus of History and Anthropology, University of Michigan

Author of '*Elephants and Kings: An Environmental History*', '*Arthashastra: The Science of Wealth*', '*India: Brief History of a Civilization*' and several more titles.

Review

"Team Itihāsology should be pleased with itself for what it has created.

Beginning with the name it has chosen: a combination of Sanskrit *itihāsa* and Greek *logos* (via English). Having made such a hybrid, Team Itihāsology may be sure that this name has not been used before, *in the entire history of the world!* What if it is a hybrid? Team Itihāsology does not care! It shows a degree of confidence in its own judgement that borders on, dare I say it?--cheekiness. A bit of that is a good thing, indeed it is necessary when creating a new journal.

Secondly, since it was made by a team of tech-savvy young people, it has a good look to it.

Finally, it has attracted eight interesting papers across a range of topics to form the first number of the first volume.

As to the writers and what they have written . . .

ART HISTORY: Articles on painting by Diptarka Datta and Ramyani Sengupta**,** the first a close analysis of a nayaka figure in Pahari painting, the second a study of Kalighat painting for what it may tell of the Bhadralok class to whom it was marketed, attracted my eye. It was a surprise and a delight for me to find two articles on art in the inaugural volume. A surprise because in my country Art History has its own department in the university, and its own national organisation and annual meeting, separate from History. A delight because India's theory of *rasa* grasps that the emotion (*bhava*) depicted by the character represented in the work of art differs from the distillate of that emotion produced in the viewer/hearer/reader. This difference helps explain why we may feel *pleasure* contemplating the representation of a woman *suffering* from the absence of her lover. Perhaps historians will do what literary criticism people have not, as yet, namely show that this aesthetic theory has value for understanding representations in the world today, not only the ancient world.

CULTURAL MEMORY in many forms is the object of study for Nishitha Mandava on what she calls the polyphonic selves of Sita and Draupadi in the epics, and Gaurav Krishna Banerjee on the

famous firing of Derozio by the leadership of Hindu College, Calcutta. The first deals with the expressive *pluralism* of the voices of individual women characters in the great Sanskrit epics; the second with *contests* over cultural memory as between a teacher who is a challenger of the status quo and the college governors who are upholders of it.

CONSTRUCTING COLONIAL LAW IN INDIA is the topic of an article by Mehr Gandhi, emphasising the bumpiness of the process, its experimental quality, contentiousness among the framers, and the misapprehensions of Indian cultures on their part. India was not a settler-state, unlike other of the British possessions, and perhaps that is part of the reason for the high degree of contradiction the author sees in the outcome.

COSMOPOLITAN FORMATIONS: Two of the articles are on what we might call cosmopolitan formations. Charuta Ghadyalpatil writes on the dispersal of Gujarati traders to distant ports in the Indian Ocean; Anoushka Deb on the convergence of Sanskrit and Persian languages in North India. Here we have trajectories of very different kinds that have cosmopolitan formations of differing kinds as outcomes. The traders are dispersed across a larger area, but the cosmopolitan outcomes are the cities themselves, not whole countries. The convergence of writing cultures among cultural elites potentially has a broader horizon. The convergence in this case is of two languages that, long, long ago, had a common origin, if we accept what the philologists say about their concept of Indo-Iranian.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVES: In an article that seems to stand by itself, Abhimanyu Kalsotra proposes a better way of using old historical narratives to construct new histories. One of these is the *Prithvīrājrāso*, for which he cites Cynthia Talbot to the effect that it expresses the *vīra* rasa that is customary for (royal) historical and biographical works. It puts me in mind of a favourite work of long ago, V.S. Pathak's *Ancient historians of India: a study in historical biographies* (1966). Pathak reminds us that ancient histories and royal biographies of the past are in the first place works of poetry, and analyses the structure of notable works of this kind in the light of the *rasa* theory, which brings us back to the first two articles I discussed above. The firstness of analysing a written source from the past according to the logic within which it was composed, which for historians of India will be the firstness of the theory of *rasa*, is perhaps the implicit message that runs through the first issue of this new journal.

Well done, Team Itihāsology! You have given us a wide range of good articles, which stimulate us to think of them comparatively, so that the whole is greater than the pieces taken by themselves."

Dr. André Wink

Professor Emeritus, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Author of '*The Making of the Indo-Islamic World c.700-1800 CE*', '*Al-Hind, Volume 3 of Indo-Islamic Society, 14th-15th Centuries*', '*Land and Sovereignty in India: Agrarian Society and Politics under the Eighteenth-Century Maratha Svarājya*' and several more titles.

Review

"This new journal provides a window into the hearts and minds of India's youngest generation of historians. It is one of a number of recent initiatives by undergraduates and postgraduates that -- once again -- is changing, while rejuvenating, the study and practice of Indian history or what is here referred to by the inspired neologism of Itihāsology. Entirely free of Marxist or Hindutva dogmatism and eschatology, what impresses above all is the chronological depth of the new Itihāsology, which spans all centuries, and its sheer breadth and sophistication. In this inaugural issue (Volume 1, No. 1) alone, the editorial board of history students, all in their final year at St. Stephen's College, have brought together original and well-researched essays (all in English) on colonial law, art history, the Indian Ocean, oral history, the Bengal Renaissance, and Sanskrit and Persian literature and language. While the editorial board is entirely Delhi-based, the broad geographical coverage is commendable."

Dr. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay

Emeritus Professor of History, Victoria University of Wellington

Author of '*From Plassey to Partition and After*', '*Decolonization in South Asia: Meanings of Freedom in Post-independence West Bengal, 1947–52*', '*Caste, Culture and Hegemony: Social Dominance in Colonial Bengal*' and several more titles.

Review

" Congratulations to all those students of History who conceptualised the Itihāsology Journal and wrote for its inaugural issue. At a time when History as a discipline is under threat, both in India and across the world, it is a commendable initiative to encourage students to engage in serious History writing, deploying proper protocols of writing about the past, interrogating the extant secondary literature and constructing innovative arguments based on evidence. The eight essays published in this issue will be of interest to a wide range of readers as these cover a variety of topics relating to both pre-colonial and colonial periods of Indian history. A number of essays on

pre-colonial India are based on critical reading of textual and visual sources, such as *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to recover multiple voices of women as expressed through the utterances of Sita and Draupadi, local narratives like *Prithvīrāj Rāsó* and *Rāyavācakamuto* to highlight the importance of memory in the reconstruction of the past, and the depiction of *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* in Pahari Art to understand how they relate to the discussion of rasa and nayika bheda in the texts of the time. Other essays on pre-colonial India include one on the place of Persian and Sanskrit languages in the Mughal court seen through the patronage of Hindustani music, and migration of Indians to the Indian Ocean region and the development of diasporic cultures in Africa and Southeast Asia by these communities in motion. The essays on the colonial period deal with various aspects of colonial modernity, ranging from the evolution of colonial law, jurisprudence and praxis, decadence of Babu culture in early colonial Calcutta as depicted in Kalighata paintings, to contradictions of colonial modernity evidenced in the controversial sacking of the liberal Eurasian teacher Henry Derozio from Hindoo College. I thoroughly enjoyed reading all the essays, each offering an innovative argument – carefully crafted through critical reading of secondary literature and creative engagement with primary sources. This student journal stands out for its quality, and I wish it more success in future in generating student interest in serious history writing, giving us fresh ideas on India's past."

Dr. Arshia Sattar

Writer and Translator

Author of '*Valmiki's Ramayana: Abridged Edition*', '*Uttara: The Book of Answers*', '*Maryada: Searching Dharma in the Ramayana*' and several more titles.

Review

" It is heartening to see a journal of ideas run by and for students from Delhi University, all the more so because the articles in this first issue show promise. They hold out hope for a continued critical examination of history and culture based on solid research and well-reasoned arguments. Here is a chance for us all to welcome younger scholars into the public realm.The tools of sound scholarship are amply demonstrated in the works of the writers in this volume and strongly support Itihāsology's stated intent of more advanced research projects in the future."

About the Editorial Team

Eric Chopra: A final-year student of BA in History at St. Stephen's College and the Founder of Itihāsology, Eric is interested in histories of art, aesthetics, emotions, tangible & intangible heritage and sexuality. He is also the host of The Itihāsology Podcast and is currently responsible for managing the duties of St. Stephen's History Society in his role as the Vice-President.

Kudrat B. Singh: A final-year student of BA in History at St. Stephen's College and the Content Head at Itihāsology, Kudrat is interested in religious history, contemporary Indian politics, and ethnographic studies of North Indian communities. She captures the essence of built heritage through photography and story-telling as Itihāsology's travelling historian.

Hiba Abbas: A final-year student of BA in History at St. Stephen's College and the Creative Head at Itihāsology, Hiba engages herself with the political history of the British Raj, evolution of the legal system of India and gender studies. She has held a number of editorial positions in college publications and at legal think-tanks.

Sarthak Sharma: A final-year student of BA in History at the Delhi College of Arts & Commerce and a Content Advisor at Itihāsology, Sarthak finds himself absorbed in the world of ancient Sanskrit literature and theatre in addition to the beautiful realm of Urdu poetry.

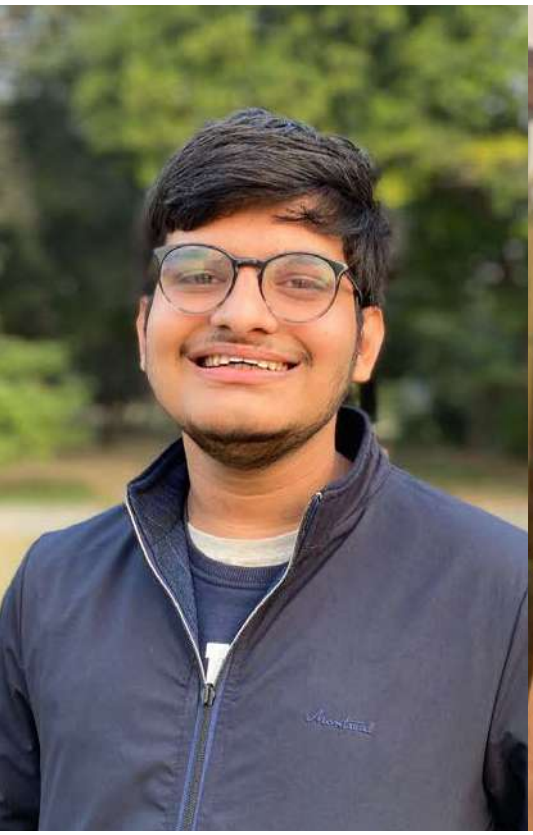
Sameer Seshadri: A final-year student of BA in History at St. Stephen's College and the Media Head at Itihāsology, Sameer has a penchant for military history and political developments of the 20th century. With a flair for cinematography, he immortalises stories through the lens of his camera.

Nandini Sharma: A final-year student of BA in History at St. Stephen's College and Creative Lead at Itihāsology, Nandini possesses valuable experience in communications and media. She is especially enthusiastic about engaging with the evolution of Hindi cinema, and her interests range from the history of fashion and aesthetics to women's studies with an emphasis on the Mahabharata.

Eric Chopra

Kudrat B. Singh

Hiba Abbas



Sarthak Sharma

Nandini Sharma

Sameer Seshadri

About the Authors

Mehr Gandhi: An undergraduate student of history at St. Stephen's College, Mehr is drawn to histories of interactions, interpretations and ideas. She is fascinated by the history and sources of law and the influence of historiography, knowledge-systems, social realities and contradictions on it. She is also interested in languages and psychology.

Diptarka Datta: A postgraduate student of Archaeology at Deccan College, Diptarka is also a research intern at Speaking Archaeology, an archaeology education group based in India and England. His research interests include critical heritage studies as well as ancient and early medieval iconography and history.

Charuta Ghadyalpatil: A postgraduate student of history at Delhi University, Charuta has a penchant for marine and cultural history, and is also deeply interested in mapping the evolution of cities. As someone passionate about connecting her academic experience with its creative possibilities, Charuta runs her own blog as a space to write about books and media on a variety of themes such as gender, art, linguistics, and identity.

Abhimanyu Kalsotra: A postgraduate student of Medieval Indian History at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Abhimanyu's paper on 'Archaeology and Adaptive Reuse' was recently published in a peer-reviewed journal. His interests include history of ideas, migration of narratives, cultural and historic memory, art, and aesthetics.

Gaurav Krishna Banerjee: A postgraduate student at the Department of History, University of Delhi, he has presented research papers in Delhi University and won prizes on themes of oral history, dissent and democracy and gender and Sufism. His research interests include - literature of early modern and modern Bengal, Sufism in South Asia, labour relations and gender studies.

Nishitha Mandava: A final-year student of BA in History, Nishitha is interested in the intersections between history, sociology and gender studies, especially in the colonial and post-colonial world. She studies these intersections through indentured labour, women's movements and education in 19th and 20th century South Asia. Her interest in gender stems from the female literary characters of the Sanskrit epics.

Anoushka Deb: A postgraduate student of History at Ambedkar University in Delhi, Anoushka's interests include gender and queer Histories, intellectual histories, oral narratives and memoirs, trauma and partition Histories, global history, and political, cultural and religious histories of Europe, West Asia, Middle East and South Asia. She has presented papers at Delhi University and University of California, Los Angeles.

Ramyani Sengupta: A postgraduate student of Museology at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Ramyani is interested in histories of art, aesthetics and language. She also possesses a deep passion for poetry and dance.

From Left to Right:
(Top) Anoushka Deb, Diptarka Datta, Charuta Ghadyalpatil, Gaurav Krishna Banerjee
(Bottom) Ramyani Sengupta, Nishita Mandava, Abhimanyu Kalsotra, Mehr Gandhi

From The Editor's Desk

On a golden platform composed of naturalistic designs sits a woman with leisure. The placement of her hands suggests that she is playing the musical instrument that she holds – she plays her songs and entertains the alluring gifts of nature that surround her: lotuses that float peacefully, a multicoloured flock of birds and a sky filled with grey clouds. It is this scene that decorates the front cover of this journal and though it may seem like one painting with elements that seamlessly harmonise, the cover is actually the result of a diverse set of historical paintings that have been fused together. The golden platform is a part of a Mughal painting made by the extraordinary artist Govardhan, the woman in the red sari can be found playing her musical instrument in a 19th century painting from Bengal, the lotuses at the bottom originally accompany a love-torn heroine from Kangra and the imposing backdrop with the birds, clouds and trees comes from an 18th century Rajasthani painting in which Krishna and several *gopis* can be seen taking shelter from the rain. We combined these different schools of art to convey the spirit of Itihāsology - a platform that strives to cover periods which span across history and makes an attempt to transcend the boundaries of the rigid notions that are commonly associated with the discipline of history. Our Instagram blog which has been running since 2019 is a page that aspires to make tales from the Indian past more accessible, engaging and inclusive. As a dedicated team of history enthusiasts, our goal is to show our audience that once you begin exploring this complicated discipline, you will be tantalised by the endless possibilities to which you will be exposed. To get closer to this goal, our team collectively decided to pursue the idea of publishing this journal. We wanted to provide a space to aspiring academicians, young scholars and history enthusiasts who possess a penchant for the Indian past - a space where there was a possibility to get creative with their ideas and where they

could express their own interpretations of the topics that they are fascinated by. Once we began to receive interesting abstracts from students all across India, we realised that there is a range of extraordinary themes that are waiting to be discovered. The 8 articles that feature in this journal are as diverse as the artistic elements that are celebrated on our cover - there are various themes that can be found in the following pages: colonial law, emotions imbedded in medieval art, histories of migration, tales of controversial dismissals, Mughals and music, the convergence of languages, the significance of oral traditions and the cultures that paintings reveal. Accompanying these articles are artworks (pages 111 to 135) by 9 different artists who are fascinated by Indian history and they express their love for the same through their works which are inspired by historical tales and techniques.

Dear reader, I sincerely hope that your journey through this journal is a merry one - it may have some obstacles along the way, like arguments you may not agree with, but it is exactly those obstacles that make this discipline so enchanting for they remind you that our understanding of the past is based on diverse interpretations and that the complicated nature of this discipline provides space for equally complicated and different ideas to co-exist.

Acknowledgements

The idea to start working on a journal was very sudden and if this publication has been successful, it is because of the combined effort of a number of people. I would like to begin by expressing my thanks to my lovely editorial team - these stars have been a constant pillar of support since the beginning of this process. This team, composed entirely of undergraduate students, has been working since June of 2021 to ensure that the journal becomes a reality. Kudrat B. Singh's innovative ideas have been crucial to bring the journal to its final shape, not only did she fulfil her editorial duties but she also gave a creative direction to the journal, which helped in making it aesthetically pleasing. Hiba Abbas' contribution was extremely crucial, her sharp editorial eye scanned through various drafts of the journal and her insights were necessary to enhance its overall quality. I thank Sarthak Sharma, who has known me since the beginning of Itihāsology's Instagram journey, he assisted not only with the editing but also ran several checks to ensure that consistency was maintained throughout the journal. I also thank the design team, Nandini Sharma and Sameer Seshadri. Along with her creative contributions, Nandini also constantly lifted the spirits of the team and made sure that we felt motivated throughout the process. Sameer's assistance was also extremely vital - several discussions with him inspired me to have a vision for this journal and his impressive photography skills allowed me to have an editorial photo! I also express my sincerest gratitude to the esteemed set of scholars and authors who reviewed this journal: Dr. Thomas R. Trautmann, Dr. André Wink, Dr. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Dr. Arshia Sattar and Dr. Ursula Weekes. They were highly encouraging of this new venture and email exchanges with all of them were always extremely delightful. They took out time from their busy schedules to read through the entire manuscript and responded with detailed reviews - our entire team is indebted to them for their

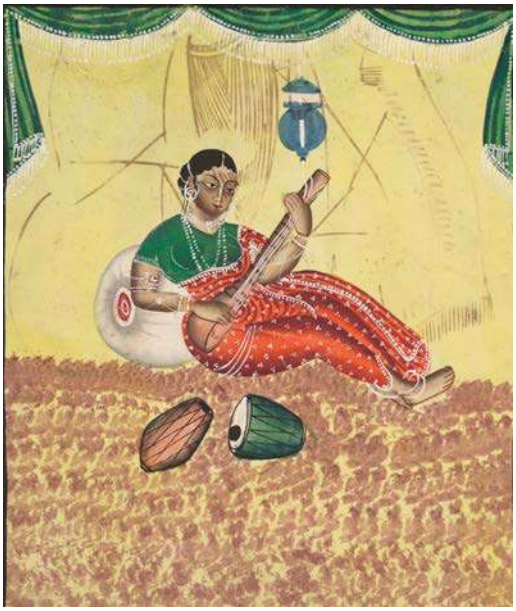
support. I am also very fortunate to be friends with one of the authors whose article features in this journal, Mehr Gandhi. Having edited a journal herself, her insights were a great help to me. I am also grateful to my dear friend, Ruchi Ruuh, who gave her valuable comments on the featured artwork. I thank all of the authors who have written for the journal, the team learned so much from them during this process - many stimulating conversations were held during online meetings and these helped in adding more nuance to their excellent work. I am also very grateful to the artists whose works enhance the beauty of this journal. Finally, I am immensely grateful to our Instagram family of 30,000+ history enthusiasts - I dedicate this journal to all of you, thank you for your continuous love and support and for constantly giving us hope to keep doing the work that we do!

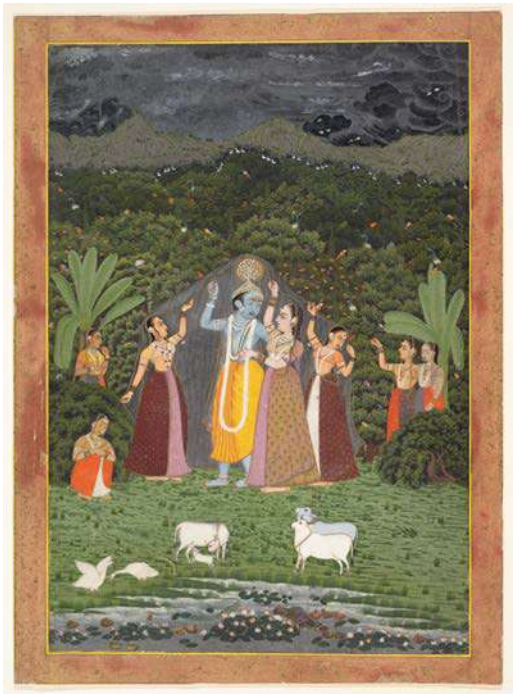
Eric Chopra

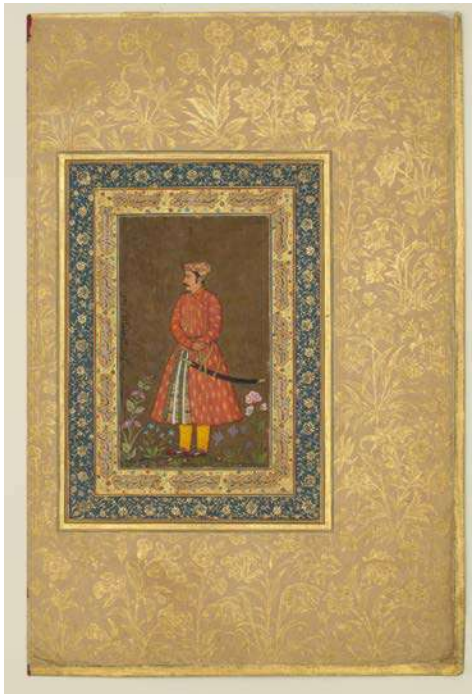
Founder, *Itihāsology*

About the Cover

The cover of this journal has been designed by Eric Chopra and Kudrat B. Singh by combining elements from various historical paintings that are now in the public domain. The paintings used have been digitalised by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and the Cleveland Museum of Art. Following are the original paintings:







Contents

Interconnected Contexts, Interactions and Contradictions in Late 18th and 19th Century Colonial Law in India

Mehr Gandhi

This article's title is suspiciously broad. Colonial, law, nearly two centuries… two centuries particularly eventful for colonial law. There is no one narrative for any of these. No one region to focus on and call it a day. No one approach, ideology or argument that will suffice. Just a vibrant mess of possible angles. A jumble of influences, ideas, situations, interactions, and translations. The article picks a theme of interconnections and contradictions as its focus. The hope is to get away with such a sweeping theme through three measures. Firstly, by employing examples and cases to demonstrate the broad arguments of the article: that historical contexts and ideas interacted and competed in the arena of colonial law-making and shaped application, with grave implications for social and political relations. Secondly, by focusing on the formative phases from the mid-18th to early 19th century. By extension, and lastly, by excluding from the discussion the changes after 1857, Thomas Macaulay's penal code, or the 'age of reform', except to acknowledge the existence of transformations, new questions and complications that merit attention. This creates a significant gap in the article, but seemed like a necessary decision, given the wide debates and permutations that studies of these developments encompass. Neither the British nor the Indian story was homogenous. There was a kaleidoscope of ideologies and regional variations.[1] Arguably, there were also differences between colonial interests and imperial interests and sovereignty.[2] The way the British viewed

themselves in relation to the colony kept changing,[3] and we see this reflected in law-making. Here, the two main aims are: to demonstrate that colonial law was a site of historical, ideological and social tensions, and to highlight the interconnections in the context in which it developed.[4] The focus will be on colonial law-making in formative phases of setting up an administration in India, where the existence of multiple authorities particularly necessitated compromises and negotiations. Brief points on and examples from later periods in the 19th century will mainly be used to examine possible changes in colonial self-perception. A few paragraphs will also highlight some conflicts emerging in criminal law and 'reform' that shook several legal assumptions. There were tensions between legal principles and practice, between British ideas about law and what were assumed to be 'Indian' ideas and practises, and among different British approaches to law-making in the colony. The process seemed often ambiguous, rarely coherent. When looking at interconnected contexts, the article will highlight that the imperial system had to balance broader philosophies, which could be applied beyond territorial nation-states, with particular situations, and that events in the colony influenced political thinking in Britain. Misunderstandings were inherent and translations necessary in law-making. The influences were reciprocal. Historiography (the way history was being written about), prejudices, assumptions and ideologies shaped the philosophies and justifications behind the legal systems. The extent of negotiation required in India was 'without precedent in British constitutional history' (Cohn 57). The colonies in North America had been settler colonies, while those in India were based on conquest (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 11; Metcalfe ix). Establishing and administering a

state in the latter demanded tactful compromises, governance, and legitimising strategies. It has been argued that the Company and its home administration were initially reluctant to take direct control of the government, or even of revenue collection in their acquired Diwanis (Stokes 1; Rocher 216; Cohn 59). In the initial phases, the urge was not necessarily imperialism, but trade and ruthless money-making (Rocher 216; Nandy 5-6). In Rosanne Rocher's words: 'Until the end of the eighteenth century the Company did not feel compelled to train its servants in the duties of colonial administrators... By and large, the rank and file of eighteenth-century civil servants... behaved like bees in a garden, come to collect honey from bush to bush, with little sense of responsibility toward their surroundings, save for their determination to preserve optimal conditions for their harvest' (217). Though these overlapped, distinctions may be drawn between colonial ambitions, reformism and imperialism (Nandy 6).[5] Among other factors, the decline of local polities necessitated growing intervention by the British (Stokes 1). In 1772, Warren Hastings became Governor of the Bengal Presidency, and Governor-General in 1773. The assumption of direct administrative control (including over the administration of justice) over Bengal meant the transformation of a private trading company into a colonial power (Rocher 216; Dirks 18). Again, the introduction of a colonial government and imperialism did not go hand-in-hand (Rocher 215-216; Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* xv-xvi), but saw contradictory interests.[6] One manifestation of the challenge of reconciling universal with particular laws became evident with the Regulating Act (1773). The Act was aimed at checking the excesses of the East India Company servants and making the company answerable to the British State. This raised two sets of issues. The vaguely defined

jurisdiction of the Supreme Court that it established in Calcutta could extend to civil justice in Bengal. Yet, its foray into criminal law was challenged, both on grounds of it clashing with native systems and of impinging on the rights of Englishmen in India. The jurisdiction of English Common Law was questioned. In granting Indians redress against the crimes of the colonisers, its wings were clipped. The Act both wrought rival claims to power -- between the Supreme Court and the Company executive, and between the Governor-General and his council -- and brought forth the clash between British and native systems through its attempt to establish rule of law,[7] based on English law (Stokes 2; Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 12, 25; Dirks 60). Other Acts followed, which tried different approaches to the pesky question of accommodating conflicting interests of trade and government, but these are not discussed here. Instead, let's glimpse two of the facets of early law-making: enactment (in the theatre of trials and court proceedings) and enshrinement (through the codification of 'appropriated and invented' traditions; Bhattacharyya-Panda). The Supreme Court set up in Calcutta in 1774 was established by the British Parliament and was under its direct authority (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* XV, 12). This was an important point in the relationship between the Company in India, and the British Government. The Supreme Court was to reign in and check the absolute power, arbitrarily exercised, that the Company had acquired over certain parts of India (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* XVII). Mukherjee argues that trials (as we will also see when discussing Warren Hastings' trial) and a body like the Supreme Court create a space for public discourse: 'the Supreme Court in colonial India turned into a site for a public critique of power in the name of justice under natural

law... The dialectic of colonial power and imperial justice often unfolded as a grand spectacle... of high ranking government officials being tried in public [which] caught the popular imagination... disproportionate though it was to the rather limited real impact of the Supreme Court in curbing the arbitrary rule of the Company government. *It was the Supreme Court as the theatre of justice—and not the countless treatises on politics by the philosophers in the West—that emerged as the primary historical source of much of Indian thinking and imaginings about politics and the state.*' (*India in the Shadows* xviii-xix). In this space, the colony could be represented, power negotiated, and dialogue initiated. This is not to celebrate the effectiveness of the Court, which was certainly limited. But, as Mukherjee again points out, the court also symbolised the 'predominant lawmaking or legislative body in the absence of a formal legislature and clearly laid out laws' (xviii). The Governor-General's council was the executive and legislative body in Bengal, but the Regulating Act had given the Supreme Court the power to review and veto all laws passed by it. The Governor-General himself had no veto power over the council now, and all executive and legislative actions and decisions were to be sanctioned by a majority vote in the council (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 12). Law-making within India was challenging in itself, but the relationship of the Company government with the British legal system also had to be defined and navigated. A legal system capable of responding to imperial needs had to be developed (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 20-21). The next facet, codification, brought its own challenges. This was also part of the ever tumultuous career of the rule of law in the Colony, which is discussed later in this essay. Law had to be identified, for it to rule, and some among the British argued that there

was no law in an India that had been ruled by despots. Even when the Orientalists (Hastings among them) argued for the existence of an ancient constitution, the process of recovering it, and codifying civil law, was riddled with biases and contrasting interpretations. It was premised upon an almost exclusive reliance on certain texts, which the British privileged over local customs and over practises, and assumptions about religious distinctions. There was a conflation of civil -- succession and marriage, for instance -- and religious themes. Within this, Muslim and Hindu laws were separated: the former deriving from the Quran, the latter from the Shastras (Rocher 220-222). Warren Hastings had both propagated the Oriental Despotism model that will be discussed later (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* Ch 1) and opposed the introduction of British law (Cohn 66, Stokes 3); under him, *A Code of Gentoo Laws* was commissioned in 1773, compiled from Shastric literature by 11 pandits (Brahamanas were conflated with priests; Rocher 221), translated by Bengali Muslims (who discussed it with the pandits in Bengali) into Persian, and finally into English by civil servant Nathaniel Halhed in 1776. A code for the use of newly appointed judges was, thus, extracted from a vast body of textual sources, subjected to a pass-the-whispers game of translation (Cohn 66), and went on less to hold sway over the legal system than to influence indological studies (Cohn 67). William Jones, orientalist supreme and founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, was critical of this code and uneasy about judges' necessary reliance on native interpreters of Sanskrit treatises (Metcalf 23). For him, the task was to rediscover an ancient, 'pure' and fixed body of laws, by cutting away at accretions and commentaries by these interpreters. With state support, he supervised a 'digest' of 'Hindu and Muslim Laws' on 'Contract and Inheritance', collected

by appointed pandits and maulavis and translated by himself to ensure the accuracy of the translation. Ultimately the translation was finished by H.T Colebrook and published in 1798 as *A Digest of Hindu Law on Contracts and Successions* (Cohn 68-70; Rocher 220). This 'Hindu Law', to which attempts were being made to align civil justice, was arguably merely its European notion. Here, Cohn draws attention to a discordance, between Jones and Colebrooke's training in English case law -- whose logic was essentially of responsiveness to change and flexibility to interpretations, in dealing with precedents -- and their insistence on a body of laws in India fixed since time immemorial, and to be used as such (Cohn 71). Moreover, while they sought *rights* of inheritance and succession in it, they saw Indian law as, in Colebrooke's words, a 'system of *duties*' (emphasis mine; Colebrooke qtd. in Cohn 71). This exercise would also have to reconcile two systems with different logical underpinnings: English jurisprudence sought certainty through rational analogy or principles of natural law; the assumed 'Hindu' law forged flexibility, reconciling contradictory texts using rules for interpretation of meaning and intention (*mimamsa*). The challenge of understanding the latter was only obscured by Colebrooke's division of 'Hindu law' into schools of law, analogous to what they assumed were the schools of Muslim law (Sunni and Shia, with Sunni divided into Hanafi, Shafai, Maliki and Hanbali schools) (Cohn 72-75). In 1785, Warren Hastings returned to Britain. Another bunch of negotiations is symbolised by his impeachment trial, which began in 1787, soon after his return.[8] The trial lasted almost eight years, and interest in it continues. It was even evoked during Donald Trump's impeachment trial (Gaurav).[9] It demonstrated layers in the political thinking that was part of the British Empire, and internal disputes. He was

brought to trial for 'high crimes and misdemeanors', corruption, and mismanagement. To an extent, this meant pinning on one person the culpability for the problems of the Company government (Bourke 577).[10] The trial involved some public discussion on colonial power (Mukherjee, "Justice, War" 589-90; Dirks 92). The theatre for this Act was distant, [11] but the colony in India was treated as one of the leads. Edmund Burke was representing it, in some sense, by leading the prosecution. Hastings was acquitted in 1795. Not to do as Burke did, and make a synecdoche of a man, but tracing the path of some of Hastings' antics, without exclusive focus on him, leads us to some interesting examples for interconnections and contradictions. Firstly, the trial. Conversation surrounding the long trial was important. Andrew Rudd has written that '…for the British public at large, the remote and unfamiliar subcontinent simply eluded the scope of the sympathetic imagination… ' (26). Perhaps, here we see the way public opinion had to be captured, and how it influenced the course of the empire. The colony was affected by the British state, but also the people. Ideology and law also developed through such balancing acts. The trial has been remembered and studied in different ways. Often, with Europe in focus. Some treat the trial as a moment in Europe's 'liberal ideas'. Some, as a response mainly to developments within Europe: for instance, as Burke's means for countering the shaking ideas preceding the French Revolution.[12] Some even point to more individual factors; Nicholas B. Dirks writes of Hastings' political disagreements and personal rivalry with Philip Francis, of his Executive Council,[13] and Francis' snitching on Hastings on returning to England: '[he] began to supply the detailed information that led directly to Burke's decision to pursue Hastings's impeachment' (18-19). Mithi Mukherjee has

talked about contradictions between 'colonial' and 'imperial' ideas. The 'colonial' focused on conquest, power, violence, and domination, while the 'imperial' claimed to use justice under natural law and speak for the people.[14] Prosecution represented imperial sovereignty and defence represented colonial sovereignty based on national interest. There were the challenges of reconciling perceived British notions of morality, liberal thought and justice with the situations in the colony. A legal system capable of responding to imperial needs had to be developed (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 20-21). There were implications not just for rule in India, but also for ideology and political thinking, and the consistency of its logic of constitutionalism and liberal law, in Britain (Stokes xi). Theories were shaken, hypocrisies revealed. Any imperial system would be compelled to balance the local and specific with the universal, to allow for an integrated system. For jurisprudence responsive to empire, Edmund Burke turned to natural law, 'which governs all law, the law of our Creator, the law of humanity, justice, equity' (qtd. in Mukherjee 22). In the words of Mehta, on 'the predicament of liberalism (and much else) in the context of the empire', 'the unity based on what is common does not dissolve the barrier of strangeness but merely articulates a starting position in which each views the other as embodying the abstraction of a certain type' (24). We have seen that Burke employed the argument of protection under Natural Law, perhaps to elicit sympathy for distant people, and address questions of jurisdiction. Different conceptions of 'Natural law' were circulating in Europe during what has been called the 'Enlightenment' (Hochstrasser). These, too, provided scope for universalisation, accommodating contention among entities not governed under common jurisdictions. The political crises, debates, intellectual

trends, and even scientific and epistemological developments during the Enlightenment were articulated and reflected in conceptions of law and jurisprudence. Law acted as a sphere for structuring political thought, reconciling ideals and pragmatism, legitimising different forms of authority (Schuppert), and, over time, depending on who you ask, for the organisation of civilisation, integration of particularities, formalisation of consensual coexistence, manifestation of substantive goals, maintenance of peace, navigation of relations (Letwin), or as an expression of the will of the community ("DECLARATION of the RIGHTS" qtd. in Paine 52). According to Judith Shklar, '"The Enlightenment" was a state of intellectual tension, rather than a sequence of similar propositions' (94). Some aspects of the ideas on law developing during the period owed their intellectual background to the Renaissance, and found predecessors and inspirations in Greek philosophical thought. Law, too, encompassed a 'state of intellectual tensions'. Sebastian Conrad, offering an anti-Eurocentric and global history perspective to the Enlightenment in his historiographic essay, had suggested reading it as 'a response to cross border interaction and global integration' (1001). Arguably, interactions may be a factor in the development of theories of law that alluded to a Universal law. Secondly, the process of codification has been studied as a form of producing knowledge (Cohn) and inventing tradition (Bhattacharya-Panda). Indian texts, specifically what were considered 'the textual traditions of the Hindus and Muslims', were treated as the site of knowledge and experience that could provide the contents for British administrative institutions (Cohn 61). It must be reiterated, that the idea of tradition, and of religions, was very limited. It may even be argued that in their final form

they were European inventions, or at least appropriations. Thus, knowledge about what religion is, and what Indian religions, traditions and schools of law are, was being produced. This produced knowledge was used in a nexus with power to codify, subdue, classify, and rule under the garb of recovering indigenous knowledge (Bhattacharya-Panda 3).[15] Bhattacharya-Panda discusses how this 'displaced Indian agencies' (5). Edward Said argues that Orientalism was a 'sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient' (6), creating such a knowledge-power nexus, and that it was 'the whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that peculiar entity "the Orient" is in question' (3). Ronald Inden wrote that scholars 'stripped agency' by 'imagining an India kept eternally ancient by various Essences attributed to it, most notably that of caste' (1). Here, we also see that historiography, or the Indian History was perceived and written about, and assumptions played a role in law-making. The process of Codification and translation, also involves an interesting conversation on the rule of law, as mentioned. Branching off from there, let us look at some other instances in its career in colonial India. There was an assumption that India was ruled by despots (the theory of Oriental Despotism), and not by any law. Assumptions about 'the rule of law' were contradicted by the potential for rule based on an individual's will. This presumed existence of oriental despotism was thought to vest all powers in the hand of a ruler; the rule of law ideal was overshadowed (Cohn 63-65; Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 16-17). It was even suggested 'notions such as justice and liberty could have no existence independent of [the sovereign's] will' (Mukherjee 17). The revenue collector -- 'an all-powerful discretionary official', with judicial and political powers -- in districts,

embodied this 'rule of man'. Later, after 1793, under Cornwallis, the creation of the District Judge and Magistrate, with control of the police, aimed at a shift from the rule of man to that of law precisely by depriving the collector of his discretionary powers (Stokes 7). Cornwallis' intervention subjected European officials as 'a system of Government' to the 'rule of English Constitutional principles', moving towards 'a new order of things': 'the administration of justice, criminal and civil, by rules… free of influence or control from the government itself' (qtd. in Stokes 4). The Permanent Settlement (though Wellesley underplayed its importance in this context; Stokes 8), Bengal Code of Regulations of 1793, and office of District Judge and Magistrate (mentioned above), marked steps in this direction. Cornwallis also took control of criminal justice from the Nawab, yet sought to regulate the government's power, vesting it in law instead. Another step towards the latter was sought by Wellesley, with his imperialist outlook and 'new constitution', through separating the judiciary, executive and legislature; he divested the Governor-General's Council of its powers in the judicial system, instituting courts of *Sadr Diwani* and *Nizamat Adalat*. According to Stokes, central to their measures was the Whig belief that 'all power was inherently liable to abuse' (Stokes 3-8). Wellesley's own subordinates, the Romantics, -- contemptuous of civilisation, conscious of history, and cossetors of natural simplicity, Munro, Malcolm, Elphinstone and Metcalfe -- opposed this anglicisation (Stokes 9). They condemned the interpolation of abstract English principles into the Indian system: both rule of law and division of power had to be modified to fit the Indian context (Stokes 15). According to Stokes, they 'envisaged submission to authority as necessary to the anarchic nature of man' (16) -- reminiscent of

the orientalist position on sovereign authority (Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows* 17) -- opposed Cornwallis' impersonal bureaucracy and favoured personal government and paternal direction and the preservation of Indian States (20). Once again, a unification of powers in the hands of the collector -- now the *mai-baap* of the peasantry (Metcalf 25) -- was sought. Thus, there was a contradiction among attempts to create a rule of law or enforce rule by the individual; even within the latter, the ruler was not always considered a despot. Romantic notions arguably imagined a paternal figure ruling simplistic subjects. Besides natural law and rule of law, another prominent idea was a realm of juridical power that was based 'on a notion of indivisible sovereignty and its claims over an equal abstract and universal legal subject' (Singha viii). Here, examples from criminal law are relevant. Studied by Radhika Singha, the contradiction between the homogenous individual abstract legal subject in principle, and the treatment of entire collectives as criminal, was to emerge later with the Thuggee Act XXX of 1836, criminalising entire communities (Singha Ch 5). As Subramain writes, "Singha's work in fact suggests that an unequal application of the laws was not the only issue but that these laws were an aggressive abbreviation of judicial procedure which gave the stamp of due process to crude devices of policing and prosecution "(Subramanian 11). Another law declaring entire groups criminal through hereditary occupation was the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Part II, especially applied in the North Western Provinces, criminalised the occupations, culture and ultimately the existence of *Hijra* communities, and has been studied in Jessica Hinchy's extensive and detailed work on the impact of the colonial government's policies, assumptions and actions on *Hijras*. The sphere of law also saw

the governance, classification and restriction of genders and sexualities. Singha writes, '[a] range of social transactions… shaped the process of colonial state-formation. Law-making [in her book] is treated as a cultural enterprise in which the colonial state struggled to draw upon existing normative codes - of rule, rank, status and gender- even as it also re-shaped them to a different political economy with a more exclusive definition of sovereign right' (viii). Customary laws of communities also came to be significantly impacted by reformism and often long drawn processes of outlawing. Lakshmi Subramanian has looked at the case of Devadasis, in the context of law, social reform and criminalisation. Hampering the principle of treating cases alike, 'in British India… a whole range of special exemptions and statuses divided the legal domain.' (Hussain 9). The fragility of the colonial government's position in the phase of transition politics also necessitated concessions to traditional authority (Subramaniam 10). The norms of justice had to constantly deal with political and social realities. Finally, we move on to the different ideological approaches among the British, which impacted law making, and the changing self-perception of the British in relation to the colony. Orientalism has already been briefly discussed in this article. Though inadequate, the discussion hints at how ideologies impacted law-making. The Romantics have also been mentioned, as has their opposition to anglicisation. Despite sharing some features with the Utilitarians, the Romantics were in fundamental disagreement with them over aim and ideology. They did not attribute to the government a fundamental role in shaping society, and potential to reform it (Stokes 24). The focus on reform was a dominant feature for the Utilitarians, especially under the

influence of the Evangelicals (Stokes 30), though the former's approach was secular, and privileged law and government, and the latter's centred on God. Both acknowledged a necessary burden of punishment for reform, and emphasised education. The central focus of both was the individual, to be freed from custom, superstition and tyranny (Stokes 54-55). The Evangelicals sought a reform of, what some of them seemed to think was, the immoral, despotic and misguided Hindu form of law and government (Stokes 31-32).[16] A stark development in the late 18th century had been of notions of inherent superiority among the English (Metcalf 27). The 19th century colonial policy rallied for what it believed was, in Macaulay's words, 'triumphs of reason over barbarism... the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws' (qtd. in Stokes 45). However, while 19th century liberalism was a policy of anglicisation (Stokes 40), Jeremy Bentham's legal procedures, which emphasised powers vested in a single judge, seemed to some to lean closer to that of the Romantics and Orientalists. The Age of Reform was to inaugurate a new set of challenges. It was in radical opposition to the restrained approach of the initial administration, which sought to preserve traditional systems. In the latter half of the 18th century, a precarious balance between anglicisation and preservation, justice and power, 'native' and 'modern', had been constantly sought. The tensions of reconciling familiar systems with the ones encountered in India were stark, especially in the context of an emerging dominion. While biases and assumptions ran deep, the questions were different from the ones in the decades to come, where, as Metcalf writes, 'much that was to endure in the framework of the Raj had been set firmly in place. The British had convinced themselves of the righteousness of their conquest of India, and...

of their own moral superiority over their Indian subjects' (39). The challenges and consequences that followed were, thus, to be different from those in an age where the British regarded themselves, in Stoke's words, as 'inheritors rather than innovators, as the revivers of a decayed system and not the vanguard of a new' (1).

Notes

1. The variations should not be overemphasised in the case of India. Subramanian writes of the tendency of 'pathologising India as the site of permanent difference' (7). Variations, exceptionalism, customs, and a lack of standardisation were prominent in Europe. For instance, Mcphee (2002) writes of France: 'Every aspect of public life in eighteenth-century France was marked by regional diversity and exceptionalism, and the continuing strength of local cultures. The institutional structures of the monarchy and the corporate powers of the Church and nobility were everywhere complicated by local practices, exemptions and loyalties' (21). David Skuy (1998) points out that the English legal system itself was not 'modern'. We cite Cohn later in the essay, but Skuy remarks that 'Cohn and his fellow historians have characterised India's indigenous legal systems as primitive for failing to meet a standard that English law failed as well' (517). In Skuy's article, this is particularly discussed with regard to criminal law.

2. See Mukherjee 2010 xv-xxvi and Chapters 1 and 2.

3. See Metcalf 1995.

4. Some influencing events may be more obvious because of their overall shaking effects and the attention paid to them since. We allude to reactions to the French Revolution while discussing Warren Hastings' trial. Another series of events, the American Revolution, played out in the settler colonies. Nicholas B. Dirks starts his book on the *Scandal of Empire* (2006) with the following lines: "Empire was always a scandal for those who were colonized. It is less well known that empire began as a scandal even for those who were colonizers... one of the many lessons of America for England was the need to control the circulation of its own people. Otherwise they would first claim to be

more English than the English—startled into identity politics and national claims by their violent if often also intimate encounters with other "races," then they would siphon off the potential profits of empire, and finally they would declare independence. And if the loss of America led to the heightened realization of the importance of India, it also heightened concern about scandals of the East." p.7

5. Also see Metcalf 1998 and Mukherjee 2010.

6. D.C. Somervell wrote in his *English Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (1929): "… the Imperialism of the late Victorian Period went deeper than any political action or political theory… Imperialism was a sentiment rather than a policy; its foundations were moral rather than intellectual…". This is from the section on "The Last Third of the Century". p.186; Nandy (1983) writes: "The gentlemen of the East India Company had not actually intended to govern India but to make money there, which of course they did with predictable ruthlessness. But once the two sides in the British-Indian culture of politics, following the flowering of the middle-class British evangelical spirit, began to ascribe cultural meanings to the British domination, colonialism proper can be said to have begun." pp. 5-6.

7. To borrow from Skuy (1998, Footnote 4 p. 514.) and Metcalf (1995, p.27): as opposed to discretionary or arbitrary powers, the Rule of Law requires that all people be uniformly covered under the same law, reflecting and based on a fear of power being inherently liable to abuse if unchecked. It constitutes 'a fundamental principle in English jurisprudence' (Skuy), and is assumed to be a universal principle (Metcalf). Metcalf writes: 'Indeed the entire structure of the rule of law established by Hastings and Cornwallis can be seen in large measure as a way of containing British fear of their own complicity in Asian despotism'. P.18.

8. Bourke (2015) "Chapter 12. The Opening of the Hastings Impeachment, 1786-1788" gives an account of part of the process behind the case, the charges, and Burke's opening speech for the trial.

9. See Gaurav 2021.

10. In Dirks' words, 'in holding Hastings accountable to Parliament, Burke believed that he was interrogating the duplicity of the empire itself' p. 19.

11. See Dirks pp. 87-92 for a brief description of the theatrics.

12. For instance, Dirks writes: 'As he began to present his arguments against Hastings, Burke was aware that he was wielding a vital constitutional resource that distinguished the constitution of Great Britain… Just over a year before the advent of the French Revolution, Burke found the politics of Europe in a state of agitation, with many established securities to liberty being discarded. In that context, the deployment of such an inveterate legal instrument as impeachment in order to restrain the abuse of public power stood as a lesson to the wanton innovations of the Continent." p. 650

13. Refer to the section on the Regulating Act and the tensions that followed, particularly between the Governor's Council and the Governor.

14. To refer to a development in the next century, Mukherjee writes of the later invention of complementary discourses of justice as equity and justice as liberty, which were used to justify colonial government by turning its foreign origins to an advantage. Under justice as equity, India was treated as a 'society in chaos', a 'society of warring communities, to be ordered and unified by an external force. 'The principle of justice as equity was grounded in the 'conscience' of the monarch, that is, in the person of the monarch' (here Mukherjee alludes to the shift post-1857). Justice as

liberty conceived a future of liberty for India, which it could reach when guided by the British Empire. Mukherjee thus describes the shift: '… justice as liberty… allowed the British Empire to present itself as a pedagogical mission whose ultimate goal was to take India in the direction of self-government. Even as justice as equity came to be deployed as the discourse of colonial governance in the present, justice as liberty held the promise of self-governance for Indians in the future. Paradoxical as it sounds, Indians were to receive liberty as a gift from the imperial monarch. This new dialectic of the twin discourses of justice as equity and justice as liberty replaced the earlier dialectic of the colonial and the imperial, even as they also incorporated much of the substance of the earlier discourses'(*India in the Shadows* "Introduction").

15. See also: Said 1995 who draws on several works, among others, of Michel Foucault.

16. Stokes cites *Charles Grant's views in Grant's Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals and on the Means of Improving it.* (privately printed, 1797).

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'Lady with a Sojourning Husband': Identifying *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* in the Pahari School of Art

Diptarka Datta

Acknowledgment: *This paper started as a research task pursued at Speaking Archaeologically, an archaeology education group based in India and England. I express my sincerest gratitude to Ms Shriya Gautam, Founder and Research Supervisor at Speaking Archaeologically, for her careful guidance at the initial stages of my research. I must thank the editors at Itihāsology , and their entire team, whose constant assistance and cooperation helped this paper take its final shape.*

Much of Indian art is characterised by a close relationship between *rasa* and *bhava*. *Rasa* or 'flavour' is the essential element of any piece of art, as expressed in the traditional Indian notion of aesthetics. *Bhava*, on the other hand, denotes the dominant mood or feeling that a piece of art embodies. A combination of *rasa* and *bhava* enables the audience to perceive the real essence of art (Goswamy "Another" 71). Thus, art that possesses *rasa* is known as *rasavant*, and the connoisseur or *rasika* derives enjoyment by engaging in aesthetic contemplation of such art (Coomaraswamy *Dance* 40). This paper attempts to identify and classify the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* paintings in Indian art. *Proshitabhartruka* constitutes one of the *Ashtanayika* or eight *nayikas* of Indian art, which are female embodiments of the *shringara rasa* or the 'erotic *rasa*', emanating from love. In the following sections, first the concept of *rasa* will be understood, followed by an exploration into the nature and types of *nayikas* in Indian art and aesthetics. After that, paintings depicting the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* will be studied to understand the various defining characteristics of this *Nayika*, only with respect to the Pahari School of Art. Thus, an

attempt will be made to highlight how the *Nayika* is described by the rhetoricians, and in what ways the artists recreated the *Nayika* in their paintings. While conducting this research, no museum could be visited in person, due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions, and samples could be studied from some limited number of museum websites online. Based on these, a database was created with a total of twelve samples.

The Theory of *Rasa* in Indian Art

Since the term *rasa* is not perfectly translatable into English, it is somewhat difficult to convey the complete meaning of this word. As already observed earlier, in the classical Indian tradition of art and philosophy, the prime intent of any work of art is supposed to be to help the viewer experience *rasa* and produce a feeling of heightened delight (*ananda*) in the heart of the viewer, or the person who undertakes to experience that work of art (*rasika*) (Goswamy *Essence* 17). The meaning of *rasa* can be understood at three levels: it is the physical extract of something like the sap of a plant or juice of a fruit; it is the non-physical, essential core of something that cannot be touched or be seen but needs to be experienced; and it is the fundamental flavour of something that needs to be savoured to experience pleasure (Pande 92). However, *rasa* may not be something inherently present in the work of art itself, owing to its being an experience. In order to enable the perception of a particular *rasa*, art is generally endowed with certain elements that constitute *bhava*; *bhava* serves as the essential counterpart of *rasa* by arousing particular kinds of sentiments and feelings in the heart of the individual encountering a work of art (Goswamy "Another" 71). The rhetorician Bharatmuni, in his *Natyashastra* (c. first century BC- second century CE) [*Natyashastra, VI.15*, 102], proposed eight types

of *rasas* as being crucial in drama (*natya*); in later times, rhetoricians proposed nine kinds of *rasas.* Out of these eight or nine *rasas*, the most important and foremost, according to all rhetoricians, is the *shringara rasa* or the erotic *rasa* [*Natyashastra, VI.15*, 102]. There are two bases of *shringara-rasa*—the love emanating from union (*sambhoga*) and the love resulting from separation (*vipralambha*) [*Natyashastra, VI.44-45*, 108]. In Bharatmuni's conception of the *shringara-rasa*, it is primarily associated with bright and beautiful attire of the lovers, and the fullness of their youth [*Natyashastra, VI.44-45*, 108].

The Classification of Nayikas: *Ashtanayika*

The expression of the different *rasas* or emotions, including that of *shingara rasa*, required their enactment by heroes (*nayakas*) and heroines (*nayikas*). It must be noted here that although the term *nayika* has also been interpreted as passionate and devoted lover, the term literally implies the heroine of a plot. Bharatmuni, in his *Natyashastra,* described eight types of heroines (*Ashtanayika*) pertaining to *shringara rasa*, in both union (*sambhoga*) as well as separation (*vipralambha*). The following table elaborates upon the eight kinds of *nayikas*, as described in the *Natyashastra* [*Natyashastra,* XXIV. 210-24, 467-9]:

Table 1: Classification of *Ashtanayika* According to Bharatmuni's *Natyashastra*

Name of Nayika	**Meaning**	**Associated Base (Sambhoga or Vipralambha)**
Vasakasajja ('the one dressed up for union')	A woman who in eager expectation of love's pleasure dresses herself joyfully when the conjugal union is due	*Sambhoga*
Virahotkanthita ('the one distressed by separation')	The one whose beloved does not turn up on account of his preoccupation with many other engagements and makes her sad	*Vipralambha*
Svadhinabhartruka ('the one who has her husband in subjection')	One whose husband, captivated by her conduct as well as by love's pleasure, stays by her side	*Sambhoga*

Kalahantarita ('the one separated by quarrel')	One who is impatient for her lover who has gone away due to a quarrel or jealousy and does not return	*Vipralambha*
Khandita ('the enraged one')	One whose beloved, on account of his attachment for another female, does not come for the conjugal union when it is due	*Vipralambha*
Vipralabdha ('the deceived one')	One whose beloved does not come to her for a certain reason even when a female messenger was sent to him, and a tryst was made	*Vipralambha*
Proshitabhatruka ('the one with a sojourning husband')	One whose husband is abroad owing to various duties and	*Vipralambha*

	who wears her hair hanging loose	
Abhisarika ('the one secretly moving to her lover')	One who due to love or infatuation is attracted to her lover and gives up modesty for going out to meet him	*Sambhoga*

Later rhetoricians and poets of the *riti* literary tradition elaborated and detailed upon the theme of *nayika bheda* or classification of *nayikas* and accordingly, many more *nayikas* were added to Bharatmuni's classification. In Bhanudatta's *Rasamanjari*, a fifteenth century Sanskrit treatise dealing exclusively with the theme of *rasa*, the subject of *nayika bheda* was discussed for its own sake for the first time (Pollock *A* 362; Randhawa and Bhambri 1). Bhanudatta provided different names to identify the same type of *nayikas* that Bharatmuni had mentioned in the *Ashtanayika* series, although the characteristics of each kind of *nayika* remained largely similar. Thus, the *Ashtanayika* in Bhanudatta's classification are called: *Vasakasajja, Utka, Swadhinapatika, Abhisandhita, Khandita, Vipralabdha, Proshitapatika* and *Abhisarika* (Jha and Pathak 48-91). The following chart summarizes and explains the major modifications made by Bhanudatta in his *Rasamanjari*

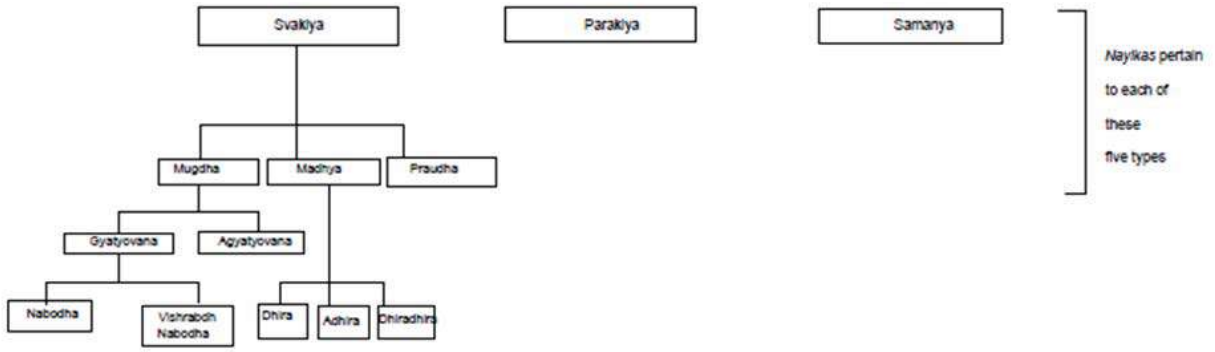

Figure 1: Schematic Diagram Elaborating upon Bhanudatta's Classification of *Nayikas*

In total, Bhanudatta accounts for 384 different types of *nayikas*. Following Bhanudatta, a detailed classification of *nayikas* was also provided by the poet Keshava Dasa (1555-1617 CE), in his long poetical text in Braj, called *Rasikapriya*. This treatise on erotics, composed in the sixteenth century, was written in the form of a *rasakavya*. Another commentary on Bhanudatta's text, Akbar Shah's *Shringara Manjari* (*circa* seventeenth century CE), had added further to the list of *nayikas*. For the sake of simplicity, this paper is not intended to delve into all these other classifications. The identification of a particular *nayika* in a painting largely depends on the primary source or the text one is following while identifying the *nayika*. The name of a single *nayika* varies across texts, as has already been highlighted. Thus, if the painting under study is specifically illustrating a particular text, the classification of *nayikas* according to that text must be prioritised. The problem before researchers arises when a particular museum uses two different kinds of nomenclatures to identify the same *nayika* across different

paintings and confuses the researcher trying to identify a particular kind of *nayika*. To avoid such confusions, uniformity regarding the use of textual sources might be practised (Gautam 127).

Nayika Paintings in the Pahari School of Art

'The Pahari School of Art' is an umbrella term used to denote the various artistic traditions that developed in the Punjab Hill States of the Western Himalayas, around the seventeenth century CE. These artistic traditions were largely centered around the courts of the different principalities, such as Basohli, Guler, Mandi, Nurpur and Kangra (Kossak 18). The different painting traditions are also often identified according to an artist or a family of artists practicing a particular artistic style, known as *chiteras* of the class of *tarkhans* or carpenters (Mitter 151). The earliest developments are believed to have taken place in Basohli, under the patronage of Raja Sangram Pal, who was perhaps a close friend and associate of the Mughal prince Darah Shukoh. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, the Basohli style also spread into the nearby areas of Guler, Chamba, Mankot and Nurpur. However, the more popularly known paintings only developed with the emergence of Manaku and Nainsukh, two brothers who showed close influence of the Mughal traditions of naturalistic painting. The second half of the eighteenth century witnessed the development of Pahari art in and around the Kangra region, chiefly under the patronage of Raja Sansar Chand (r. 1775-1823) (Kossak 18-9). Besides the ruler's patronage to Pahari Art, a range of other patronages were offered by other members of the royal family, rich courtiers and nobles, or religious establishments (cf. Goswamy). A series of major political events in the Pahari region, such as the Gurkha invasion of Garhwal and

Kangra in the early nineteenth century and the later Sikh occupation of these areas generated repercussions in the development of Pahari Art. Some of the most popular themes depicted in the Pahari paintings and miniatures included scenes from the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, scenes from the tenth chapter of the *Bhagavata Purana* dealing with exploits of Krishna as a child, and verses from Jayadeva's lyrical poem *Gita Govinda* dealing with the love of Krishna and Radha (Archer xxii-i). These also featured paintings of *nayikas*, especially those based on established textual stereotypes. An interesting anecdote refers to the importance accrued to the enjoyment of *rasa* and the appreciation of a true *rasika* by an anonymous painter who had once made a painting of the *Svadhinabhartruka Nayika* for his patron, supposedly the king himself (Chakraverty 106-9). The earliest paintings pertaining to *nayika bheda* as well as illustrations of Bhanudatta's *Rasamanjari* probably pertain to the reign of Raja Sangram Pal of Basohli, somewhere around 1660 and 1670 CE, as already noted. Later, an illustrated set of *Rasamanjari* dated to *c.* 1695 CE was produced, containing a colophon bearing the name of Devidasa (probably from a carpenter-family in Nurpur), probably an artist in the service of Raja Kirpal Pal of Basohli (Chakraverty 117). Single-page *nayika* paintings, studded with beetle-wing, are said to have been produced in the reign of Raja Dhiraj Pal. Thus, some of the earliest instances of *Rasamanjari* illustrations and *nayika* paintings were produced under royal commission, in and around Basohli. In later times, Kangra and Guler artists also produced *nayika bheda* paintings and illustrations of Bihari's *Satsai*, among several others (Chakraverty 117-2

Identifying the *Proshitabhatruka Nayika* in Pahari Art

The *Proshitabhartruka Nayika*, as described by Bharatmuni in his *Natyashastra*, is one whose husband is abroad owing to various duties [*Natyashastra*, XXIV.218, 468-469]. Longing for reunion, she wears her hair loose [*Natyashastra*, XXIV.218, 468-469]. Bharatmuni suggested that the depiction of the *Proshitabhartruka* should be like that of the *Khandita*, *Vipralabdha* and *Kalahantarita* [*Natyashastra*, XXIV.223b, 469]. Thus, she should be represented through expressing anxiety, sighs, lassitude and burning of her heart; the heroine might be conversing with her *sakhis* (or female friends), or she might be looking at her own condition and feel weak or depressed. She might have tears, or she might as well appear angry and give up her ornaments and toilet. She might be full of sorrow, and even weep [*Natyashastra*, XXIV.221-223, 469]. According to Bhanudatta, *Proshitabhartruka* is one whose lover (not necessarily her husband) has gone abroad to make an earning and she is eager to meet her beloved [*Rasamanjari*, 48]. She might also be known as *Virahini* or *Pathikvanita* (Jha and Pathak 48). Accordingly, Bhanudatta has also described the five types of *Proshitabhartruka* as pertaining to the categories—*svakiya* (*mugdha*, *madhya* and *praudha*), *parakiya* and *samanya*. The *Proshitabhartruka* suffers from agony and pain borne out of her mind; thus, it is only Kamadeva, the god of Love, who can comprehend her suffering as he resides in her mind (Jha and Pathak 48). Once the basic identifying characteristics of the *Proshitabhartruka* has been investigated, their depictions in Pahari paintings may be now analysed. This painting (Figure 2), titled 'The Mature Heroine whose Husband is Away (*Praudha Proshita Bhartrika*)', is presently housed in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, USA (Accession Number: M. 75.4.29). According to the museum sources, it is a folio from the *Rasamanjari* series of Bhanudatta

and pertains to the Nurpur *kalam* of Pahari Art (where the earliest known *Rasamanjari* painting had probably been produced somewhere in the 1710s) (Pollock *Bouquet* xxxvi). The painting dates to sometime between 1730 and 1740 CE and is attributed to the artist Golu of Nurpur, the son of Devidasa. The family of Devidasa therefore seems to have been employed by rulers of different Pahari courts to illustrate different sets of *Rasamajari* paintings (Aijazuddin 69).The *Nayika* can be seen wearing a red-coloured skirt and her hair is let loose. She is looking dejected and facing downwards, sitting on the floor, with a bolster placed behind her. A female attendant, seated in front of the *Nayika*, is probably trying to talk to her but the *Nayika* does not pay attention to her. The dejected state of the *Nayika* has made her friend immerse into deep thought, perhaps conjuring up words that she can say. Perhaps, she is trying to think of ways to make the *Nayika* feel comfortable. Describing the condition of the *Praudha Proshitabhartruka*, Bhanudatta writes:

Her garland made of fresh water lilies,

her necklace strung with pearls,

and the belt she wore--all left her the moment

her lover, Hari, left.

And there's one thing more to tell: her armlet

slipped down her thin arm

to the wrist, poor thing, as if to see

if any pulse was left.

(Pollock *Bouquet* 41)

Quite faithful to Bhanudatta's description of the *Praudha Proshitabhartruka,* the heroine in this painting is shown in an advanced stage of her agony. Her attendants know about her

mental state, without her having spoken a single word about her lover. The house is brightly painted in shades of red and yellow and orange. However, the scene at large seems to ooze sorrow, exemplified by the darker shades of grey used to portray the empty space outside the house. This is a clear reflection of the *vipralambha dasha* or the state of separation that the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* is in. One could almost see the *Nayika* imagining either her lover being with her or being away. The *Nayika* seems to be filling the 'emptiness' of her physical space through her mental imagination. These could also be understood as the elements of *bhava* in this particular painting, which eventually contribute to the arousal of *shringara rasa* in the audience's heart. The *Nayika*'s sufferings are comparable to that of Radha, whose beloved Krishna has left for Mathura. Her lotus-like face has dried up and her ornaments seem to have become loose on her skin (Jha and Pathak 50). Another painting (Figure 3), titled 'A *Nayika*, probably '*Proshitapreyasi Nayika*', is presently housed in the Cleveland Museum of Art, USA (Accession Number: 2018.100). It could be dated to *circa* 1740 CE and belongs to the Jammu *kalam* of Pahari Art, according to the museum records. The painting shows a lady, seated on a small bed, accompanied by a bolster. She sits with her face turned downwards, in a crestfallen state. This could be the *Nayika* waiting for her lover to return. An adjoining inscription with the painting identifies the scene as depicting "Radha waiting to her Krishna". Thus, the painting could be using the figures of Radha and Krishna, popular in the *Bhagavata Purana* and *Gita Govinda*, to depict the secular female heroines and their emotions. As already observed earlier, Bhanudatta's *Rasamanjari* describes Radha's agony once her beloved Krishna had left for Mathura, comparing her

condition to that of a *Praudha Proshitabhartruka* [*Rasamanjari*, 50]. In his poetical work, *Rasikapriya*, Keshava Dasa narrates Radha's state of mind through the following verses:

My lover Krishna, has gone away

Unto a foreign land, afar,

Since he left, friend, in truth I say

With him did sleep also depart!

(Bahadur, 185)

The *Proshitapreyasi* is a commonly used label by museums to identify the *Proshitabhartruka*. She is accompanied by a *sakhi* or female attendant who seems to be trying to talk to her and possibly coax her. However, the *nayika* is probably not interested in what the *sakhi* says to her and is lost in her own thoughts. In the previous painting, the *Nayika* looked downwards, she still faced towards her *sakhi*, probably with an iota of hope in her heart. In contrast, here, she seems to have given up all hopes, shutting her ears and turning down her eyes. She looks away from her *sakhi*, who seems to be saying:

Who is the woman without a lover?

Who is the woman whose lover goes not

To a foreign land, nor parts from her?

The bird, with an effort, is trapped and caught,

Does the trapper run to catch her say?

(Bahadur, 182)

The *Nayika*, identified as Radha, is shown wearing various ornaments—earrings, tyra, necklaces and bangles. Her hair is shown untied and hanging loose. She wears a long, red skirt and a pink upper garment. A transparent piece of drapery veils her hair. The female attendant wears a yellow drapery and a parting pink skirt, with a golden border. The setting of the scene is that of the

rooftop or balcony of the heroine's house, built in probably white marble. In the background, a canopy of green trees and the associated scenery is visible. The brightness of the scene here seems to be acting like an "aesthetic filter" that is probably aimed at toning down the grief and sorrow involved in the actual narrative. It is almost as if the painter strives to make this sorrow bearable for the audiences, such that it becomes highly improbable for someone to perceive the real essence of the *Nayika*'s sorrows. Another possible interpretation of the painting could be arrived at, upon reading Bharatmuni's *Natyashastra* and its treatment of the theme of *shringara-rasa*. Thus, while the depiction of such elements as palatial structures, the *Nayika*'s bright and colourful attire and her elaborate ornaments, is in conformity with the prescribed norms of representing the *shringara-rasa* in art, the simultaneous depiction of yearning, indifference and a state of dreaming-awakening in the *Nayika*'s self is perhaps meant to heighten and indicate the overarching mood of separation (or *vipralambha*) that the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* experiences [*Natyashastra,* VI.44-45, 108]. A painting (Figure 4) titled '*Prositapatika Nayika*', is presently housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, UK (Accession Number: IS.105-1951). According to the museum records, the painting is dated to around 1760 CE and pertains to the Guler *kalam* of Pahari Art. The setting of this painting is very similar to that of the previous one: it shows the balcony or rooftop of the heroine's house, with the lush greenery and a waterbody, at some distance. The *nayika* here is shown seated on a mat, with a bolster behind her, and holding a cushion on her lap. She holds a bunch of flowers in her hand. She is probably being entertained by a female attendant playing the *veena*. Another female attendant stands behind her, fanning her with a fly

whisk. The *nayika* wears a dark green dress and different ornaments, such as necklaces, earrings, tyra and bangles. There seems to be an open box kept in front of her, probably containing *paan* (betel leaves). Despite the company and entertainment being provided to her, the *nayika* still looks pensive and dejected. Her state of dejection reminds one of the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* as described by the rhetoricians. The darker shades of her dressing seem to add to her melancholy. Added to that, the darkness of the waterbody, visible in the backdrop of the *Nayika*, seems to convey the sense of an impending crisis, or even an inevitable doom, in the *Nayika*'s life. In contrast to the brightness of the previous paintings, here, darkness and gloom seem to be dominating. The lady is shown being offered various entertainments to keep her engaged, while in the previously studied painting, the lady looked down in dejection. The title '*Proshitapatika Nayika*', used by the museum to identify her, is another name for the *Proshitabhartruka*. Thus, from the three painting samples studied above, it can be observed that the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* is generally depicted as being dejected and pensive. One or more of her attendants might be seen around her, trying to digress her attention or coax her. They might play some musical instrument, or fan her, or even try to talk to her, offering a *paan* at times. However, the *nayika* looks disinterested in everything happening around her. She might turn her face downwards, or away from that of her attendants. The thoughts of her lover seem to have completely occupied her. The same *nayika* might be referred to as *Proshitabhartruka*, *Proshitapreyasi, Proshitapatika* or *Proshitapriyatama,* in various paintings, depending on the inscription accompanying the painting, or a particular museum's identification of the concerned *nayika*. Some *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* could

also depict the *Nayaka*, as in the case of a Kangra painting of the *Nayika* Radha, that was studied for this paper. It is housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, UK (Accession Number: IS.130-1949), and shows Krishna as the *Nayaka*, on one side of the painting. When paintings depicting the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* are compared with those depicting other *nayikas*, such as the *Kalahantarita* and the *Vipralabdha Nayika*, they might sometimes appear visually similar. Yet, there do exist subtle differences between these depictions that could become apparent if analyzed carefully. As according to Bhanudatta's *Rasamanjari*, while the *Proshitabhartruka* is distraught with grief owing to her lover's absence in another land, for the *Vipralabdha* and the *Kalahantarita*, the lover is absent not owing to his being in another land, but due to some other reason unknown to the *nayika* (Pollock *Bouquet* 39). To demonstrate an example, see the three paintings (Figure 5, 6, 7) placed together. The first two paintings are depictions of *Kalahantarita Nayika* and *Vipralabhdha Nayika*. The third is a *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* painting. The inscriptions adjoining the first two paintings identify the *Nayika* as the *Kalahantarita* (Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, UK ; Accession Number: EA2012.202) and the *Vipralabdha* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, USA; Accession Number: M.73.2.5), respectively. The third painting depicts a *Prosita Patika* (Victoria and Albert Museum, UK; Accession Number: IM.75-1912). All the three paintings show the *Nayika* with a female attendant. In the first painting, the *Nayika* is crying angrily and is shedding tears. Her *sakhi* tries to console her. In the second painting, the *Nayika* is upset and is visibly offended. Although the *Vipralabdha* is generally shown as throwing away her ornaments after being deceived by her lover, in this painting from a *Ragmala*

series, she is offended and is being coaxed and cooled down by her *sakhi*, although she is not willing to listen to what the attendant has to say. In the *Proshitabhartruka* painting, the *Nayika* is turning her head down and is again being consoled by her female attendant. However, she is neither crying nor visibly angry. She is extremely sad and is lost in the thoughts of her lover. Although the three paintings look visually similar, the subtleties of the moods and expressions of the *Nayika* in the three paintings help them identify as separate types of *nayikas*. The *Vipralabdha* looks very angry at her lover's demeanour, while the *Kalahantarita* is crying just after having a fight with him. The *Prosita Patika* thinks about the fight she had before and looks sad and dejected. In this essay, the identification of the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* in Pahari Art has been attempted through a closer analysis of different parallels from museums across the globe and comparing them with the primary texts that engage with the theme of *nayika bheda*. A set of characteristic features have been obtained through such an analysis. This is an important exercise for several reasons. Firstly, students and researchers studying *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* paintings in Pahari Art, pertaining to various *kalams*, could use this as an effective tool to enable correct identification. Problems of wrong identification might arise when different museums use different labels to identify the same *nayika*. As has been observed in this paper, the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* of Bharatmuni has been differently labelled as the *Proshitapatika Nayika, Proshitapriyatama* or the *Proshitapreyasi Nayika*, by different museums, although they all refer to the same *nayika*. Identification of a particular *nayika* as the *Proshitabhartruka* should be based on careful observation of the different conditions and settings in which the heroine is depicted. In the case of Pahari Art,

as has been observed in this study, the nuances of depiction vary according to the regional *kalam*, and all such differences need to be accounted for. Not all secular female images would necessarily be depictions of *nayikas*; similarly, the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika* should not be confused with the other close parallels—the *Kalahantarita*, *Vipralabdha,* and the *Khandita Nayika*. Although they might look visually similar, closer analysis reveals subtle differences in the moods and emotions of the *nayika* and her attitude towards her attendants. In case the painting has an adjoining inscription, identification of the *Nayika* should be based upon a reading of that inscription, as seen in the case of the Sample I. All relevant accession details and information provided by the museum, or the concerned authority should be considered while attempting to identify the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika*. This essay was an attempt to explore the relationships between textual and visual representations of the *Proshitabhartruka Nayika*. Depictions of *Proshitabhartruka Nayikas* in other regional artistic traditions, such as in Rajasthani Art, could also be subjected to similar methods of analysis. Future research in this direction would hopefully explore more such related issues and enrich the present study.

Images:

1. **Figure 2:** The Mature Heroine whose Husband is Away (*Praudha Proshita Bhartrika*)
2. **Figure 3:** A *Nayika*, probably *Proshitapreyasi Nayika*
3. **Figure 4:** *Prositapatika Nayika*
4. **Figure 5:** *Kalahantarita Nayika*
5. **Figure 6:** *Vipralabdha Nayika*
6. **Figure 7:** *Prosita Patika Nayika*

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Communities in Motion: Migration and Diaspora in the Indian Ocean

Charuta Ghadyalpatil

In 1762, Ponja Velgi, a Gujarati Banya merchant in Mozambique (East Africa), sought permission from the authorities to appear in public wearing a hat and to be carried in a palanquin. Velgi was one of Mozambique's leading merchants, and in the same petition, he computed the customs duties he paid between March 1760 and December 1762, which added up to 134, 114 *cruzados* – a figure significantly bigger than the total income of the royal treasury in Mozambique (Alpers, "Gujarat" 41). Velgi is also believed to have been the leader of the Banya community in Mozambique. What he and his petition represent, then, is not only the economic capital of the Banyas in Mozambique, but also their formidable social capital. Velgi belonged to a commercially successful, upwardly mobile community that had, over the past few centuries, captured the trade in Mozambique as well as in larger East Africa. Meanwhile, the Gujarati Banyas themselves were part of a larger collection of groups that, driven by commerce, had crisscrossed the Indian Ocean for generations, even on occasion choosing to settle along the coastal rim. Indian merchants like Velgi, setting out from the Indian peninsula, were quite literally at the centre of a vast interconnected commercial network that stretched from the Red Sea to the Straits of Malacca and connected Europe to Asia. Equally importantly, they were key carriers of culture, for, as Milo Kearney points out in *The Indian Ocean in World History*, long-distance trade brought together different people and created an atmosphere conducive for the 'exchange of ideas and the leisure and

investment in learning' (2). Culture travelled with these communities in motion along trade routes, but it did more than that, for when these communities settled overseas, which they were often known to do, culture also became a means of social cohesion and the basis for collective identity. Their penchant for mobility, on the other hand, makes their history a history of movement itself. Migration and mobility, then, are really two interconnected stories: one about cultural and commercial exchanges, and the other, more importantly, about migration itself as a historical process. In this essay, I bring together these different strands of mobility and trace the patterns of migration and settlement of Indian communities in the Indian Ocean space. While this mobility has a very long history, this essay will focus on the time between the 15th and the 18th centuries CE. By this time, patterns of movement well-rehearsed for more than five hundred years were driven by two major interlinked strands: trade and faith. This is also the period that marks the entry of European power, led by the Portuguese in 1498 – an event that went on to fundamentally alter mobility not only in the Indian Ocean but in the entire world. These four centuries then offer a peek into inter-Asian connections and circuits of movement both at a time when they had existed for centuries and on the eve of change. Of all the histories of mobility in the Indian Ocean, those of the Europeans are best known. Much less has been conventionally said about the movement of indigenous populations, and pre-colonial Indian Ocean is often treated as an isolated, homogeneous space with very low spatial mobility. A further blind spot in studying migration and diasporas comes from the state-centric theories that emphasise the movement of people contingent on state structures. Modernising models, meanwhile, see

migration as part of larger processes of urbanisation and hence a disruptive force as people move from rural to urban settings. Both these explanations effectively ignore the voluntary nature of migration, portraying it instead as both inevitable and contingent on larger political and economic dynamics. An emphasis on the state as a catalyst, moreover, marginalises the patterns of mobility that have traditionally operated outside and largely without the state (Kerr 86-87). That said, this trend has been reversing in recent times. The importance of migration in contemporary public debate the world over has, in turn, fostered a greater interest in its historical aspects, both within the Euro-Atlantic sphere and outside of it (Lucassen et al. 6). The aforementioned claim of low spatial mobility has also been increasingly called into question with a combination of archaeological, genetic, and linguistic analysis making it more than evident that, in general, migration has been a structural feature of Indian society, and that more specifically, the Indian Ocean has a very long history of mobility (Manning and Trimmer ch. 7). A growing interest in maritime history too has led to greater attention being paid to the relationship between India and the Indian Ocean. A reading of oceanic migration, therefore, furthers our knowledge of maritime migrations as well as of the ways in which the ocean has shaped the history of its coasts. The Indian Ocean has several natural advantages that make a geographical definition relatively easy to pin down. For one, it is, unlike its other three counterparts, defined by its coasts which form natural boundaries for the waterbody. As a result, the entry and exit points in the east, west, north, and south define the geographical extent of the Indian Ocean. The Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and Aden mark both the north-western end, while

Africa's east coast forms the natural geographical border. The Cape of Good Hope acts as the southwestern end. In the east, the Straits of Malacca and Singapore are the natural exits, while Australia is the south-eastern end. The ocean centres around the Indian peninsula, which divides its long and connected shoreline into the eastern and western spheres. Given its central location, the peninsula has also been the natural mid-way point for travellers in the maritime space, while for Indian merchants this has ensured a presence in either geographical sphere (Abulafia ch. 3). This has also led to the Indian Ocean being increasingly conceived of as a 'region', a line of thinking pioneered by Fernand Braudel's study of the Mediterranean Sea and its coasts.[1] To apply this logic to the Indian Ocean, then, is to ask two inter-related questions: one, what – if anything – unites this maritime space? And two, when and how did the Indian Ocean start acting like a region – that is, when and how did the interaction and mobility within it become regular enough for 'region' to be a valid assessment of the space? This, I argue, is where migration intersects with the history and geography of the Indian Ocean, and thus offers a way to explore the unity (or lack thereof) and the history of interactions in the maritime space. The central unifying factor in the Indian Ocean was the regular monsoon cycle which linked all parts by organising movement along predictable patterns. Between June and October as the monsoon advanced towards the Indian subcontinent, was the season to travel north and eastward. As the monsoon returned between September and the next summer (broadly, May), west and southward travel to Africa and the Persian Gulf resumed. A ship sailing from the Malabar Coast at the start of the year would thus go to Aden on the returning monsoon winds, sailing back between August and early

October with the advancing monsoon (Abulafia ch. 3; Alpers, *Indian Ocean* 7). The most important implication of this monsoon cycle was that it was impossible to cross the entirety of the ocean in one year, and journeys had to be broken up into segments. Add to this the volume of trade, which further grew around the 12th century. Both in turn meant that trade in the Indian Ocean was divided between different merchant groups such as the Arabs, Armenians, Gujaratis, and Tamils, all of whom complemented and collaborated with each other. (Abulafia ch. 3; Pearson 12). There is also reason to believe that – once again, largely due to the cyclical monsoon – these migrations were circulatory, with people moving back and forth between places in frequent and regular batches. Moreover, dependence on the wind also imposed on travellers a long stay in port cities along the Indian Ocean rim as they waited for it to return. There is evidence of '*funduqs*' and '*mahallas*' in Arab towns where Gujaratis and Banyas shared the cityscape with other travelling merchants like the Armenians or the Jews. Cities like Aden, Basra, and Constantinople all had sizable communities for foreign merchants. These merchant settlements formed the nuclei of what would turn later into diasporas in the Indian Ocean space (Chaudhuri 224; Malekandathil, "Maritime Migrations" 271) Possibly the largest of these overseas settlements was that of the Gujaratis in Malacca, where around a thousand merchants and nearly thrice the number of seamen lived by the end of the 15th century. They formed such a large portion of the population that they had their own representative – called the *shahbandar* (literally, 'harbour master'). Other than being the main channel of communication between the ruler of Malacca and the Gujarati community, the *shahbandar* was also responsible for managing warehouses,

ensuring that standards of measurement were duly maintained, and to adjudicate disputes within the community (Alpers, "Gujarat" 29-30). In the western sphere, Gujarati merchants were primarily concentrated in east Africa, in the regions along the coast and the Zambezi River that lie between present-day Kenya and Mozambique. Portuguese traveller Duarte Barbosa's writings include references to Gujaratis living in Melinde (now in Kenya) in the 16th century and rice, millets, and a series of other wares (including textiles from Cambay) being traded in the Melinde market. Barbosa specifically delineated the commercial links between Cambay and east African centres like Mogadishu, Sofala, and Melinde. These commercial connections became the basis for further settlement, and indeed by the end the 16th century, Gujarati settlement in east Africa had grown both in number and clout. The aforementioned Ponja Velgi is a symbol of the strong Gujarati presence. Similarly, around the same time, Bashira Mucali, a Gujarati Muslim, was the paymaster for the Mozambique government, while Anangi Monagi, another Indian Muslim, was named the inspector of ivory at the customs house in Mozambique (Alpers, "Gujarat" 41-42). Trade and trade-induced movement was also offset by Portuguese presence after the 15th century. After they arrived in Calicut in 1498, the Portuguese sought to build a naval empire in the Indian Ocean by displacing the existing commercial networks. It is a testament to the tenacity of these networks that numerous repeated attempts at displacing Gujaratis and Banyas from their positions of power in the commercial network all failed, and a humbler approach based on collaboration had to be adopted. Partly as a result of this, the Portuguese empire in Asia was, unlike the later British or the Dutch empires, made up outposts along the coastlines and relied

heavily on collaboration with existing mercantile networks. Indian merchants then worked within this larger structure called *Estado da India*. By the 1520s, ships were sailing from Diu to 'Meca, Adem, Zeila, Barbara, Magadaxo, Melinde, Brava, Mombaça, and Ormuz' (Alpers 26; Machado 8). Meanwhile, merchants from Diu, Surat, and Kathiawar continued private trade much like they had up till the 15th century. That said, these merchants were not entirely indifferent towards the Portuguese state. The relationship was based rather on selective engagement, with either side working together as far as it made economic sense to do so. Banyas from Diu, for instance, took advantage of the conditions created by Portuguese imperialism and expanded in East Africa, while also leveraging their financial strength when it came to negotiating terms of trade. Indian merchants thus adapted to and exploited the newly created economic and market conditions while at the same time drawing on their existing patterns, could also reap the benefits created by Portuguese trade (Machado 8-9). In the newly-created *Estado*, Gujaratis became so important to the Indo-African trade that in 1686, merchants founded the Companhia de Comercio dos Mazanes to organise east African trade (Malekandathil, "Portuguese" 216).[2] By the 17th century, furthermore, the flow of Banyas to Mozambique had also increased, with a noticeable number coming from their erstwhile establishment in Yemen as it became progressively inhospitable for trade (Machado 21-23).[3] By the late 1750s, an overwhelming majority of the Indian community in Mozambique was made up of Gujaratis and Banyas, who numbered over two hundred people – larger, even, than the Portuguese community in Mozambique. In the next two decades, this number had grown

by nearly fifty per cent. This demographic growth was accompanied by economic growth: by the 1790s, Banya landholdings formed a prominent part of Mozambique's hinterland (Alpers, "Gujarat" 40). Up north, Aden was another important centre. Between the 10th and 12th centuries CE, it had skyrocketed in importance, becoming the bridge East and West as merchants carrying spices and textiles from South and Southeast Asia for trade with Europe would frequently stop here. Copper-plate inscriptions in Malayalam, dating to the 12th century, form some of the earliest evidence pointing to the existence of regular contact between the Malabar Coast and Aden, as well as to the potential existence of merchant settlements. By 1384, Banyas – dealing in coffee – formed one of Aden's foreign communities, so much so that on the eve of English occupation of Yemen, there were anywhere between fifty to hundred Banya merchants, complete with a communal temple. Similarly, Indian migrants were also seen in Aleppo, Basra, and Baghdad; while in Hormuz, a few Gujarati traders even 'maintained their own *yogis* for the purpose of their spiritual needs' (Malekandathil, "Maritime Migrations" 271-272). In Muscat, the Kaphol Banyas of Diu and the Moplahs of Malabar formed the largest migrant communities. Oman, meanwhile, had a sizeable and growing population of upwardly mobile Kutchi Bhatias who, in the 18th century, funded the resident Busaidi ruler's project of expansion to the island of Zanzibar (Malekandathil, "Maritime Migrations" 271-272; Machado 12). Although a bulk of these movements were pushed by commerce, religion was also an important factor in the movement of people. Moreover, trade and religion were interlinked. This was particularly true for Buddhists and Muslims: monks and pilgrims were as likely to travel with merchants as they were to be

participants in mercantile activity themselves. Brahmin migrants were not unheard of, either. By the 5th and 6th centuries CE, Funan had a settlement of Hindus with around a thousand Brahmins living on the coast.[4] They facilitated cultural and religious exchange, leading to what historian David Abulafia calls the "Indianization" of Indo-China (ch. 7). Indeed, migration to Southeast Asia has long been driven as much by trade as it was by faith and politics. As Hall points out, South India was 'ideationally influential in, if not the inspiration for, the development of new Southeast Asian monarchies' like Funan, Srivijaya, Java, and Angkor Cambodia (220). Indeed, the origins of Java's Shaivite cult are believed to lie in contemporary Vijayanagara. Additionally, Sanskrit inscriptions found in Srivijaya from the 7th and 12th centuries CE also point towards a degree of cultural contact between India and Southeast Asia (Hall 221). In later medieval times, additionally, Gujarati Muslims are supposed to have been essential for the Islamisation of Indonesia (Walker and Slama 1). Trade-induced migration between South and Southeast Asia also has a long history. An inscription dated to 883 found in Java lists foreign merchant communities from numerous places in South Asia like "Kling" (Kalinga), "Singhala" (Sri Lanka), and "Aryya" (Ayyavole/Aihole), while an 11th century inscription lists "Pandikira" (Pandya) and "Drawida" (Chola) as residents. Over the following centuries, references to "Karnataka" and "Malyala" also find their way into these inscriptions. This prolonged influx of foreign communities in Java also uniquely translated into their incorporation in the local political system:

> By at least the time of the 1305 Balawi inscription members of these trade communities served as

> tax farmers (*wargga kilalan*), who as individuals were recruited to act as the Java rulers' revenue agents. Among these were Kling, Aryya, Singhala, Karnataka, Cina, Campa, Mandisa, Caremin (Ramanyadesa), and Kmir (Hall 225).

Tamil inscriptions have also been found in Sumatra and the Malayan Peninsula. Furthermore, these sources also mention these merchant communities endowing temples in the region, which in turn points to the existence of a degree of what Hall calls residential commitment. These temples – like the Vishnu temple at Bagan – were not only a way for the foreign Hindu community to bind together, but also a means to affirm 'their own legitimacy and a sense of place', especially in face of the fear surrounding loss of caste. Furthermore, donations to local temples (Hindu and Buddhist), when made by Southeast Asian rulers, were also ways to initiate and facilitate inter-community dialogue (Hall 247-249). The nature of migration to Southeast Asia also brings home an important characteristic of migration as a human condition: that it is necessarily embedded in social institutions. Gender, family, kinship, religion, and caste all have a bearing on people's ability to move. Especially after Hindu customs and laws were codified between the 2nd and 4th century CE, restrictions were placed on overseas mobility due to 'fear of contamination' and 'loss of caste upon return', both of which were in turn related to the practical difficulty of observing caste rules and rituals in distant lands (Tumbe 16). The centre of maritime mobility, then, was usually at a distance – both physically and symbolically – from the Indo-Gangetic sphere, in regions less affected by taboos on long-distance mobility. This explains the older history of maritime mobility along the

Malabar and the Coromandel Coasts compared with the rest of the subcontinent. State-formation in South India, too, was linked with trade and commerce. Both the Pallavas and the Cholas owed a sizable amount of their economic prowess to maritime trade with Southeast Asia. These empires also extended their political and cultural influence across the water, further facilitating the migration of religious scholars and the aforementioned Brahmins. Jaffna in Sri Lanka had cultural ties with the Tamil lands that went back to the 7th century CE, owing in part to the Pallava influence that stretched beyond the peninsula and across the Palk Strait. Over the next few centuries, much of Sri Lanka was open to frequent contact with Indian traders from both the Malabar and the Coromandel coasts. Tamil Chetty settlements in Sri Lanka were prominent in Colombo, Negombo, Chilaw, Mannar, Jaffna, Kottiyar, and Batticaloa even before the Portuguese and Dutch arrived (Arasaratnam 227-228). Meanwhile, the Chola raid to Srivijaya in the 11th century remains one of the strongest proofs of the empire's transoceanic reach. It is important to note that these circuits of movement existed largely independent of the state. While empires like the aforementioned Cholas, or the later Mughals, did facilitate mobility, it was on the whole overwhelmingly self-regulated, both in India and overseas. As a result, by the 14th and 15th centuries, maritime mobility had fallen into familiar patterns that were perfectly capable of sustaining themselves through periods of depression and political instability. Even after Chola power declined and much of south India's commercial wealth slumped, trade continued – restructuring itself to the new landscape – and by the time the Vijayanagara Empire took form, even picking up pace, as references to the importance of Kalinga merchants in 15th and 16th century

Malayan inscriptions indicate. Similarly, faith-induced mobility continued: Southeast Asia's Hindu and Buddhist temples supported and encouraged the flow of pilgrims and monks between them, as well as between India and China through Southeast Asia (Hall 228; 232). Trade and religion intersected with 'trade-related connectivities' moulding these communities as economic groups and 'faith-related networking' helping them maintain their cultural identity (Malekandathil, "Maritime Migrations" 272). The presence of numerous overseas settlements leads us to ponder the nature of these communities – more specifically, whether they can be called diasporic or not. A diaspora literally refers to dispersion, or a group of dispersed people, bound together by cultural ties that they all share, or believe to share. As Walker and Slama point out, since very early on in its linguistic history, the term has been used to denote different forms of dispersion and different forms of relationship with the homeland (79). It is as much a symbolic place as it is a physical place that plays an anchoring role in the construction and sustenance of diasporic identities. Consider the building and patronage of temples in Java and Bagan by Hindu communities, or the presence of a temple in Aden for the resident Banya community, or yet the presence of a *yogi* in Hormuz with the Gujarati community. Subcontinental culture and religion served as important threads of social cohesion in these diasporas. Homeland too, remained in the imagination, especially as overseas migrants were sometimes known to return to India to die peacefully. Furthermore, this itinerant nature of migration also meant that connections and interactions occurred in vastly different places very far removed from the homeland. Identities were then made in movement as 'spatially dispersed and geographically

overlapping' communities interacted across dispersed contact zones. According to this logic, to call these communities in the Indian spaces diasporic is to in turn think of the Indian Ocean as not only a diasporic space but also an instrumental space – that is, a medium through which a diaspora and diasporic experiences are constructed (Walker and Slama 79). Finally, these communities, like most diasporas, share a complicated and multi-layered relationship with the space they occupy. While the diasporic experience is often treated as one formed and existing in liminal spaces, it makes more sense to think of these diasporas as not people 'out of place', but instead acknowledge that the space that a diaspora occupies *is* the space it is at home in (Walker and Slama 80-82). This gives an incredible amount of agency to settlements in port cities which, by their very nature, were perpetually in a state of flux. The demographic makeup of the residents, at any given point, depended on a variety of factors from the current wind pattern to market conditions. Even with the sections of the community that settled, it is more apt to think of them as members of larger, more fluid communities, as members of 'communities in motion'. Revolving around the wind, these communities were sometimes sedentary, sometimes mobile, and often both within the same year. As a result, identities of these diasporic groups were derived from a variety of sources such as the commodity they provided at any said port or more universal markers like religion or ethnicity (Hall 238). This state of flux does not diminish the permanence of the diaspora, or invalidate its existence. The transitory state is where they belong, and to recognise this is to also recognise that movement is structural to these communities, that their histories communities are intrinsically tied up *with* movement – both in the homeland and at the

foreign land. To take this state of flux as the state that matters, furthermore, has far-reaching implications for how we understand migration and history, as this places movement itself at the centre of study. In a world where distance is being progressively demolished, where migration is increasingly becoming central to public debate, and where tensions between globalisation, multiculturalism, and nativism only heighten, such a study is imperative if we are to truly understand migration in the present, both in terms of the human experience and in terms of a larger social process. Migration is, by its very definition, multidisciplinary. It sits at the intersection of history, culture studies, economics, and policy. The study of diasporas in the Indian Ocean thus opens us up to the twin histories of mobile communities and the role these communities played shaping the social, political, and economic history of the homeland and their destinations. It also offers a lens to study the relationship between India, particularly the peninsula, and the Indian Ocean. Migration history thus links the regional and global perspectives to take into account everything that takes place in the overlaps of the two. Most of all, to link migration and the formation of diasporas is to reorient our focus to see mobility as central and structural to history instead of treating it as a peripheral anomaly.

Notes

1. The pioneering work in studying the Mediterranean Sea and its coasts as a coherent region was done by Fernand Braudel in La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Epoque de Philippe II in which Braudel argued for an interconnected Mediterranean region in the study of long-term social, economic, and cultural history.

2. Over the following century, Gujarati control over the city and its economy declined significantly, not least because Portuguese power in the Indian Ocean and East Africa was eclipsed by the British, and further as European rivalries started playing out in the African continent, making conditions all too unstable for trade to be carried out. For more, see Machado (chapter 1); Alpers ("Gujarat and the Trade of East Africa" and The Indian Ocean in World History).

3. Banya presence in Mocha was threatened when in the late 17th century, the imam of Mocha forcibly converted many of the city's Jews and Banyas. This, accompanied with restrictive conditions of trade and economic exploitation, became one of the chief factors pushing Banyas to look for avenues elsewhere. For more see Machado (particularly pp 20-26) and Calvin H. Allen Jr, "The Indian Merchant Community of Masqat," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, vol. 44, no. 1 (1981), pp 39-53.

4. Hindu Brahmins were not the only religious group living in coastal Indo-China. In fact, they were only one of the many groups that contested for space in port cities in Southeast Asia. These cities too were distinctly cosmopolitan, with Armenians, Jews – and later Arabs – living in close quarters. For more see Abulafia (ch. 7).

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Historical Narratives, Oral Traditions and Cultural Memory: Unconventional Sources for Conventional Studies

Abhimanyu Kalsotra

Historical narratives have always been part of a large corpus of writings and oral traditions passed down generation after generation creating historical and cultural memory helping us reconstruct the past as it is remembered. Looking at the historiographical trends, one can witness the absence of narratives as a source of understanding the past. Narratives were equated with falsified accounts of the glory of kings marred with mythical connotations. It is only the recent work that has highlighted the importance of these narratives to look at the past in their context. It has further reinstated the notion of historical tradition and historical consciousness attributed to Indians, if not historical writing. [1] The focus of this paper would be on the nature and role of historical narratives in creating memories and historical understandings about the nature of the state and political ideologies in medieval India. The two historical narratives referred to for understanding the scope of the paper would be *Prithvīrāj Rāsó* and *Rāyavācakamu*.[2] A general overview of the themes used in these narratives would be studied, rather than the contents, to understand the historical context of these narratives and how they shape present understanding about the past ideologies and the nature of the state. A research case study would then be taken of the Krimchi Temples of Jammu and Kashmir to understand how myths and oral traditions help in the formation of memory. The basic idea is not to reconstruct the past by measuring its authenticity but to see the past

as it is remembered in the present. 'Memory is a cognitive process that enables one to ponder on awareness of selfhood at a personal and collective level' (Assmann 109). Scholars have argued time and again that memories are constructed by various social groups (Burke 44). Amos Funkestein says while remembering is a personal act, what and how one remembers is guided by society at large. No memory, not even the most intimate and personal, can be disconnected from society, from the language and the symbolic system moulded by the society over many generations (7). Memories exist in a chain of sequence; from the past into the present; negotiating and interacting between an individual and a group, and different groups at large. Since this dynamic process of negotiation and interaction brings out multiple memories (rival memories, alternative memories, family memories, local memories, class memories, national memories), (Burke 54-55) it becomes important to inquire about the pluralistic uses of such memories to different social groups, who remember the past according to the need of present context. Afterall, Romila Thapar notes: 'Each version of the past which has been deliberately transmitted has a significance for the present, and this accounts for its legitimacy and its continuity' (Thapar 2003: 124). 'The past is seen as a flexible entity but its flexibility is significantly conditioned by its previous history of use' (Cubitt 203). And the memory of the past cannot be seen out of the institutional framework of the society. These memories are often seen as a tool to reconstruct the past in the present (Halbwachs 39-43).[3] Scholars have tried to look at these memories and identify them as Communicative memory and Cultural memory. Communicative memory is the one passed on orally for three to four generations. Cultural memory is a more formal form of memory institutionalised by symbols, rituals,

artefacts, and texts (Assmann 116-117). For the scope of study of this paper, both Communicative and Cultural memory is used. Communicative memory for shaping the basic features of the narratives by the social groups and Cultural memory for our understanding of the longevity of the narratives. Thapar in *The Past Before Us* utilises the memory studies approach to look at the way the past is perceived, recorded, and used to offer insights into Indian society. Memory is utilised in the formulation of historical traditions.[4] There are certain aspects of having historical traditions and these being – consciousness of the past events thought of as significant, placing these events in a chronological framework, recording these events which meet the requirements of the social group (Thapar 4).

To understand the nature of historical traditions and narratives, one could look at *Prithvīrāj Rāsó*, part of *Rāsó* literature of Rajasthan which is a genre of poetry, biographical or historical with extensive usage of heroic sentiments or *virā rasa* (Talbot 37-61). The date of composition is debatable but it finds extensive mention in the *A'in-i Akbari* of Abul Fazl, written during the reign of Akbar. It is important to note that the *Rāsó* narrative did not arise in a vacuum but gained impetus from a larger corpus of earlier written and oral narratives of Indic and Persian origin. *Prithvīrāj Vijaya* (Prithviraj's victory), a *mahākāvya* text, *Kharataragaccha-pattāvali*, a Sanskrit text, short accounts of Prithviraj's career, namely, *Prabandha Cintāmani, Hammīra Mahākāvya,* and *Purātana Prabandha Saṅgraha*, Jaina narratives and lastly, Persian histories like *Tabaqqat-i nasiri* are all examples of prevailing narratives surrounding the life of Prithviraj. In *Prithvīrāja Vijaya*, he is heroic; in Indo-Persian histories, he is an ignorant and an arrogant infidel; in Jaina traditions, he is shown as a Jaina intellectual offsetting the

greatness of Gujarat Kings (Talbot 68). Thus it is quite evident that all these narratives were written in a certain context that appeased the author and the intended audience the most. For some, he became a hero, and for others, an ignorant individual. It further becomes important to look at these narratives in the context in which they are situated and verify the historical accuracy by a constant process of comparison and contrast among the available sources. It is important to not see *Rāsó* as a continuation of these earlier narratives as one finds constant deviations, as well as new devices, invented to show the heroic personality of Prithviraj, again placed in a socio-political context. Cities become an integral part of imperial power. Cities not just hold the seat of power but also give power to the seat. Abul Fazl in *A'in* places Prithviraj, not at Ajmer but Delhi, a deviation from the previous narratives and in compliance with the *Rāsó*. This deviation should be seen as a conscious effort rather than a historical inaccuracy as Abul Fazl had access to most of the prevalent histories (Talbot 73). Scholars have stated various reasons for the shift and the most prominent one being the symbolic imperial power attached with Delhi. Delhi had witnessed not only the prominent epic battles like *Mahābhārata* but it also remained in the social memories of the people as the most important city. *Rāyavācakamu*, to be discussed in the next section, also mentions Delhi as one of three Lion-throne centres. Another reason could be the militaristic, economical, and political fame of Delhi which Ajmer lacked. It was seen as a religious centre due to the *dargāh* of Khwaja Moin'ud-din Chishti, which could have evoked more Islamic emotion as the defeat of Prithviraj and conquest of Ajmer was attributed to Khwaja (84-88). Furthermore, *Rāsó* links Prithviraj with Delhi but does not deny his connections with

Ajmer. The episodes which made Prithviraj take control over Delhi have been explained in great detail in the *Rāsó*, 'Tale of Delhi's Pillar' (*dillī killī kathā)* and 'Tale of the Gift of Delhi' (*dillī dān kathā*). It is mentioned that Delhi was passed down to Prithviraj from his maternal grandfather, Anangpal of the Tomar dynasty, according to the Brahmanical law of inheritance (Talbot 74). Another narrative that comes into play here is that of the foundation of the city of Delhi by the ancestors of Prithviraj. The narrative of a rabbit confronting a wild dog is used to explain the foundation of the kingdom. Similar troupes are used all across South Asia with alterations but the basic premise is the same. An example of this would be the foundation of Vijayanagara, which will be discussed later in the paper. A major difference between those narratives and the one discussed here is the presence of an iron pillar. The history of the pillar is debated by scholars but is believed to have been brought to Delhi in the twelfth century by Qutub-din Aibak (Kumar 140-182), Iltutmish (Flood 248) or Anangpal Tomar in the eleventh century (Cunningham 149-155).[5] Thus, the link of the pillar with Anangpal, which was an old tradition, was incorporated in the *Rāsó*. What one sees here is that the memory of the king was not just attached to a city but also to a 'talismanic artefact' (Talbot 81) that embodied the political greatness of the city. It is argued, 'while memory attaches itself to sites, history attaches itself to events' (Nora 22). This is illustrated in the concept of - *lieux de mémoire* or 'realms of memory', which identifies four types of realms or sites: symbolic, functional, monumental, and topographic.[6] Thus, attaching memory to the monuments becomes important as it serves an important social function of remembering the past. The theme of dynastic change through conquest was something that Abul Fazl constantly talks

about. The transfer of power through military means was also considered legitimate in both Indic as well as Islamicate political cultures and hence, one sees how the power transfers from the Tomars to Chauhans and later to Shihab al-Din by the conquest, followed by a series of Turkic rulers (Talbot 95; Prasad 1-43). The three records from the vicinity of Delhi which talk about the same are the Palam Baoli Inscription, the Delhi Museum Stone Inscription, and the Sarban Stone Inscription (Talbot 92).[7] Henceforth, it becomes clear how the authors of these narratives had a sense of history and were aware of linking these narratives with the material artefacts and inscriptions. One of the most elaborate themes of the *Rāsó* was the valourisation of Prithviraj and his warriors. In order to portray this, *Rāsó* envisioned the presence of enemy territories lying to the east, Gangetic Kingdom of Kanauj led by Jaychand, to the south-west was Chalukyas led by King Bhim, to the west was Shihab al-Din Ghuri, often quoted as 'Shah'. It was to show how the kingdom of Prithviraj flourished around the greatest of threats. It further led to the formation of a distinct 'aristocratic Rajput identity among the martial lineages of the area'. The conflict with Kanauj is discussed in the chapter, '*Kanavajj Samay*' and contains three major segments. These included Prithviraj's journey from Delhi to Kanauj; Prithviraj and Chand Bardai's adventures in Kanauj, along with elopement with Jaychand's daughter Samyogita; the battle fought by Prithviraj and his hundred *samant* warriors against the army of Kanauj. The episode verifies the exemplary militaristic skills of the king and his *samants* who upheld the 'warrior code of behaviour' (Talbot 112-118). There is a stress on the marital heroism by winning of the brides through battles to testify king's Kshatriya-cum-Rajput identity. The space in which *Rāsó* expands borrows from

Mahābhārata and *Manusmṛiti.* According to the Laws of Manu, 'the abduction by force of a maiden, weeping and wailing, from her house, after smashing and cleaving and breaking [her relatives and household].'[8] These kinds of marriages were deemed fit for only *Kshatriyas* because they alone were supposed to acquire objects through force (Talbot 130). Lastly, the theme of Mughal era Mewar can be discussed which was trying to be the bulwark of Hindu resistance to the Islamic aggression and admired the great heroism depicted by the Rajput past institutionalised by the redaction of *Prithvīrāj Rāsó.* James Tod identifies *Rāsó's* manuscript of 1703 CE attributed to Maharana Amar Singh II's rule. The manuscript highlights a newer narrative that puts light on the elite Rajput warrior class of different lineages serving as a testimony to the greatness of the Rajput community. The notions of *Svāmī dharma* are included in the *Rāsó* which helped 'inculcate young men with martial ideals and dissuaded them from retreating or avoiding battle altogether' (Talbot 174). Thus, it can be seen how the state was utilising the cultural memory of the past in the present context under the leadership of the Sisodiya Kings. This can further be strengthened if one looks at the military advancements undertaken by Amar Singh shortly after the death of Aurangzeb. Later in 1708 CE, he joined Ajit Singh of Marwar and Jai Singh of Amber in a military alliance. These military alliances were possible partly because Amar Singh could build on the persona of Prithviraj and motivated the youth to rally against the Mughal forces. It becomes quite evident how these narratives not only add to the historical memory but also shape the present. The memory of the past utilised the ease and convenience of the present state to show conflict, intrigue, and alliances. Narratives like these also become a source to understand

not just the past state but also the present one. Before discussing the nature of the state, the text *Rāyavācakamu* could also be examined for a better understanding of these narratives. *Rāyavācakamu*, a unique specimen of Telugu historical prose from the sixteenth century, literally means 'reports' or 'tidings' (*vacākamu*) of the 'king' (*rāya*). The text was earlier looked at as a contemporary account of the reign of Krishnadevaraya (Wagoner 6-11). But only after some advanced scholarship, the text could be dated to the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century. This changed the way one would look at the text now. The authorship and the dates of the text could have further helped us understand the context in which it's written but there is no mention of it. Ethnohistorical analysis suggests that the text was composed at the end of the sixteenth century, at the locus of Madurai, at a royal court. This could be inferred due to the precise details of the various personalities mentioned, which only the officials had access to (Wagoner 22). As it will become apparent, it became a rich source to look into the history of Nayaka state of Madurai instead of the Vijayanagara of Krishnadeva Raya. The text follows a unique style of narration within a narration. The narrator is the *sthānapati*, who resides at the court of Vijayanagara and reports to his lord Kashu Vishvanatha Nayanayya, who is identified as one of the Nayaka of the Vijayanagara throne. Curiously, the institution of *sthānapati* is not mentioned in other texts from the period but it is roughly understood as an institution concerned with reporting political intelligence. Nuniz further adds light to the institution and says that they served as secretaries (Wagoner 15). The text uses anachronistic fusion to show active communion between Krishnadevaraya and Nayakas of Madurai. Narration is used as a bridge to show active communion between

the past and the then present. The link was established as having common political origins. Both the throne and Nayakas depended on each other. Nayakas rulers' authority over the local chiefs was legitimised by the service to the *dharmic* king at Vijayanagara. With the decline of the power of Vijayanagara, however, Nayakas of Madurai took the centre stage to assume the greater role as the Kings and the respective local chiefs also elevated their roles. The text actively rejects the later Vijayanagara rulers after Krishnadevaraya and by historiographical construction. The Aravidus who took over Vijayanagara are conveniently removed from the list using the foundational narrative of the imperial city (Wagoner 25-32). The foundational story of the kingdom is somewhat similar to that narrative of *Rāsó*. Vidyaranaya, a prominent sage is asked to go to the north and look for another sage with divine powers who could guide Vidyaranaya, where to establish the kingdom and whom to appoint for its protection as sovereign. Vidyaranaya meets the sage at Kashi and is ordered by the divine mandate of the sage to establish the kingdom in the south with the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi and put Harihara and Bukka at the throne of City of Victory, which would survive for three hundred and sixty years. The spot which Vidyaranaya selects is where a rabbit scares away a wild dog, the same narrative mentioned in the *Rāsó* and other foundational narratives all across South Asia. The fact that the whole chapter was invested with explicating the founding of the city (Wagoner 34-45). Thus, the city becomes a talisman for authority. King depends on the city for the authority and is explicitly brought out in the text with various examples. The city was not only the centre of power but also a source of power. And so after the battle of Talikota, the city was destroyed by the Turks and was

rendered without any power. That is why Aravidus could never rule as kings. Here, again, one can see the employment of realms of memory - topography, to explain the foundational story to gain legitimation but as soon as the city was attacked, the source of power collapsed. The destruction of the city by 'Turaks' led to a change in the orientation of the ideologies. Enough evidence is available to show the commix of Islamicate culture[9] at the Vijayanagara, including the archaeological records. But the destruction of the city certainly brought little evidence of communal undertones justified using no religious affiliations but the ordinary and personal behaviour of the Turks. Three sets of opposition are offered to the Turks. One, narrative surface, where they are compared with the Gajapatis and are found to be 'deficient in terms of dharma, modes of social and personal conduct' in contrast with 'Gajapati's excellence of character'. Second, Turks occupied an inhospitable zone, a no-man land between the borders of the three Lion-thrones, *Ashvapatī* (lord of horses), the Mughals; *Gajapatī* (lord of elephants), the Gajapati lords of Odisha; and *Narapatī* (lord of men), the Vijayanagara emperor. Third, the opposition between *adharmic* usurping Turks and *dharmic* kings of three Lion-Throne represented in terms of a mythical paradigm. Indeed the usurpation marks the temporary nature of these Turkic kingdoms against the eternality of the Lion Thrones. Mughals are 'casted in the same mould' as other righteous legitimate kings which was no irony since this opposition against the Deccan Sultans was not based on religion to begin with. Turks are said to be of base origin, ruling in recently created polities destined to last for a limited period (Wagoner 53-63). The narrative employed here is that of the slaying of the demons of three cities (*tripurāsura-saṃhāra*). Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh are implicitly

compared to the three Lionthrone capitals of Mughals, Vijayanagara rulers, and the Gajapati kings respectively, who are to unite together to defy the three cities of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, and Golconda. To adopt the myth here, the other two Deccani states: Berar and Bidar, are not mentioned. Another myth used is the comparison of Krishnadevaraya to the avatar of Vishnu and that of the Turks to the demons of the *Kali* age (*kaḷi-yuga-rākṣasulu*) (Wagoner 69).[10] These narratives are used because they are available in the social memory of people. They are the integrative features of the text used for structuring paradigms. Furthermore, it can be seen that with the disturbance in the mythical order of the South by an alien socio-cultural order, the only available resort was to use the myths to categorise the Turks as demons (Wagoner 69). It becomes interesting to note how the Nayakas of Madurai used a literary device not only to justify their legitimacy after the decline of power at Vijayanagara but also to create a narrative that could demonise the Turks for the attack on Vijayanagara, only to be later confused by the present scholars as a Hindu resistance to the Muslim rule in the subcontinent. Whereas, the context of the text states otherwise. Narratives and cultural memories, thus, play an important role to understand the nature of the state and question the institutions of power. The royal ideologies are shaped at the imperial courts and then are furthered via such narratives. If read without considering the context, they can create inaccurate impressions and reconstructions of the past. The image of Prithviraj or the rulers of Vijayanagara is often portrayed as guardians of Hindus fighting against the 'outsiders'. Clear evidence of this can be seen when James Tod calls Prithviraj the 'last Hindu ruler'. Here the communal undertones, approved by the western scholars, were soon enough

appropriated by the nationalist scholars writing history with faulty periodisation (Talbot 16). Talbot, in another essay, talks about how communal undertones affected the historical writing on Prithviraj when the date of *rāsó* was first contested (Talbot 2011: 171-205). Romila Thapar highlights the problems attached with the model of the state and how it sets a chronology of Indian history into the Hindu, Muslim and British periods (*Early India* 18).[11] Recent work by scholars like Cynthia Talbot and Philip Wagoner tries to place such narratives in their contexts which highlights a deviation from the previous understanding about the nature of the states of Rajasthan or Vijayanagara as the Hindu states. The communal undertones of these narratives are also debunked as stated in the above discussion, giving such narratives and with it the societies that created them the nuance they need for an accurate depiction. Furthermore, the political ideology of the state institutionalising these narratives has shown quite opportunistic intentions to avail and adapt the historical, social, and cultural memories. These states had the resources to manipulate the local and existing narratives and built them into bigger narratives suiting their cause. The State of Mewar under the Sisodiyas used this to push for an imperial Rajput warrior ideology based out of certain lineages around a social setting to ally with other Rajput states. Similarly, the Nayaka State of Madurai used the narratives to legitimise their position as the rulers after the decline of the power of Vijayanagara under the Aravidus. 'We choose to centre certain memories because they seem to us to express what is central to our collective identity. Those memories, once brought to the fore, reinforce that form of identity' (Novick 7). This is what the narratives and memories were trying to do in the case of *Rāsó* and *Rāyavācakamu*, building an identity of the

state they operated. Hence, to call these states Hindu states fighting Muslim imperial power would be an injustice to the rich corpus of literary and oral narratives available. The historical narratives play a vital role in creating memories that legitimise the ideology of the state. To further substantiate the arguments, interdisciplinary research should be conducted in archaeology and studying material culture, which could help one understand the cosmopolitan and militaristic nature of the state in medieval India.[12] Oral traditions, folklore, and myths have always been part of the social frameworks of remembering the past. These oral traditions are mostly passed down the generations by the elders of the social groups. This constitutes the Communicative Memory as understood by Assmann (112). Only later with the formalisation of these oral traditions with the help of symbols, rituals, monuments, that one finds them as part of Cultural Memory (Assmann 112). To understand how the myths and oral traditions shape our memories of the past, a case study of the Krimchi temples of Jammu and Kashmir would be considered. Krimchi Temple Complex is a group of temples located in Udhampur district in Jammu and Kashmir. The temple site is located on a small mound on the bank of two rivulets, namely, Birhama and Krimachi. Out of the seven original structures, only five are remaining at the site. Although the temple complex is called Krimchi Temple Complex, it is popularly known as *Pāndava* Temples; built by the *Pāndavas* of *Mahābhārata* during their period of exile. It is believed to be five thousand years old. A few pertinent questions to be addressed here are if *Pāndavas* built these temples and if these temples are five thousand years old. Although the myth surrounding the *Pāndavas* building temples is common in North India, a micro-analysis of the site in

question would be considered.[13] According to archaeological research, as conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India, the temple complex dates from the eighth to the ninth century CE. These facts make one question the two myths of the *Pāndavas* being the builders of the temple and it dating back five thousand years. While these facts can make one question the authenticity of these myths, the important question of why such myths were constructed is still unanswered. The architectural style of the temple complex identifies with that of the *vesara* style of Central India. Even if it is assumed by observing the trends, it can be speculated that the temple resembles the temples built by Gurjara Pratiharas (mid 8th CE to 11th CE, in the Northern part of the subcontinent) during the time. Due to the lack of research, it is difficult to assert them as the builders but one can fairly postulate that the local *rājās*, under their patronage, might have built them.

The construction of the myth of linking these temples to the *Pāndavas* can be understood in terms of asserting power and legitimation. *Mahābhārata* as a text has been highly popular all over the subcontinent. In many instances, 'outsiders' took legitimation and royal claim to rule by building temples and linking them to the *Mahābhārata*. Thus, it can be observed that the temple is not only used as a place of worship but as a tool for legitimation, power, and assertion of their ideology (Gautam and Thakur 38-45). Just as the site of the Delhi pillar was attached to the memory of Prithviraj, these temples were also given a social function; a way of remembering the past. Furthermore, the myth of temple structures or monuments being five thousand years old is common across the subcontinent. The narrative of the five-thousand-year-old history of Hindustan is a colonial construct demonstrating the nature of the past (Asif 14). The colonialist scholars wanted to create a

geographical notion of India as being timeless, taking agency from the 'Classical Sanskritised Golden Age'. They took onto the customary rituals, especially the practices of immolation by the women, and tried to undo them. In constructing the history of Hindustan, these five thousand years were seen as the Golden Age to be disrupted by the advent of Islam in the subcontinent.[14] The specific notion of 'five thousand years' can be traced from Jones's work 'The Enchanted Fruit; or, The Hindu Wife,' from 1784 in which he narrates the story of Draupadi and the five *Pāndavas* from the *Mahābhārata*. He demonstrates the Golden Age of India in a fixed timeline as:

But, lest my word should naught avail,

Ye Fair, to no unholy Tale

Attend. Five Thousand years ago,

As annals in Benares show,

When *Pándu* chiefs with Curus fought (38).[15]

This paradigm of five thousand years invoked a golden past for India and this is why it got incorporated into the oral traditions and myths surrounding the temples and other important monuments. Historical research was heavily based on an empirical approach. From the late twentieth century CE, the monopoly that history had over the past was challenged explicitly by memory studies which employed Historical Narratives and Oral traditions, Myths to understand the past. In the Indian context, it is only in the early twentieth century CE that we find scholarship of work pursued on the subjects involving memory studies. Cultural memory is like a 'repository of traditions', a scheme of continuous thoughts, it denies the 'pastness' of its objects and focuses on a continuing presence (Misztal 99-108). To understand the past as it is remembered today, it is important to see it as a continuous and dynamic process of negotiation and interaction. In postmodern

research, the lines between disciplines are narrowing, thus, promoting interdisciplinary research. The impetus should be given to such research not only to understand the past in its present context but also to set aspirations for the future. 'Memory, on which history draws and which it nourishes in return, seeks to save the past in order to serve the present and the future. Let us act in such a way that collective memory may serve the liberation and not the enslavement of human beings' (Le Goff 99).

Notes

1. Works by scholars like Philip P. Wagoner, Cynthia Tablot, Romila Thapar (used in the paper) along with Sanjay Subrahmanyum, David Shulman's *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800*; Partha Chatterjee (ed.) *History and the Present*, Daud Ali's *Invoking the Past: The Use of History in South Asia*, Thomas R Trautmann's *Does India Have History? Does History Have India?* are some texts which explore historical writings in India before colonialism.

2. *Prithvīrāj Rāsó* is an epic poem in *Braj Bhasha* about the life of 12th Century CE ruler, Prithviraj Chauhan, written by Chand Bardai. Scholars like Cynthia Talbot date the text back to 16th Century CE. *Rāyavācakamu* is a Telugu historical prose from the 16th Century CE. It talks about the reign of Vijayanagara king, Krishnadevaraya. The authorship of the text, according to Wagoner, is contested.

3. Halbwachs theory on Collective Memory was developed building on the legacy of Emile Durkheim's collective psychology. He opined that the act of remembering the past is done at an individual level but what that individual remembers is dictated by the collective identity of the social group that individual belongs to.

4. Romila Thapar in her book *The Past Before Us* tries to look at how the people of the subcontinent had their own way of recording and preserving history. This was overlooked by the colonial historians since these frameworks of writing were not in concurrence with their own writing schemes. V.N. Rao, Sanjay Subrahmanyum and David Shulman's *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800* dwells on the issue in detail.

5. For more information see Sunil Kumar, "Qutb and Modern Memory" in *Partitions of Memory* (pp. 140-182); Flood, *Objects of Translation*, p. 248; Cunningham, *Four Reports Made during the Years 1862–63–64–65,* vol. 1. Delhi: Indological Book House, 1972. pp. 149–55.

6. For more information see Pierre Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory,* Vol. 1, trans. A. Goldhammer. New York: Columbia University Press. 1996.

7. For more information see Pushpa Prasad, *Sanskrit Inscriptions of Delhi Sultanate 1191–1526*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1990.

8. Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Law Code of Manu*, Oxford University Press, 2004. p. 45. Also, 1.67.11 & 13 in V. S. Sukthankar, ed., *Mahābhārata*, vol. 1, Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1927. .

9. Islamicate culture can be explained by the excessive usage of Islamic-inspired *kabayi*, a long-sleeved, long-hemmed tunic derived from the Arab *qaba*, and the *kullayi*, a high conical cap of brocaded fabric, derived from the Perso-Turkic *kulah*. Moreover, Firishta talks about Devaraya II (1422–46) who modernised the Vijayanagara army along the Turkic lines by recruiting large numbers of mounted Turkic mercenaries. For more information, Phillip B. Wagoner, "Harihara, Bukka, and the Sultan, The Delhi Sultanate in the Political Imagination of Vijayanagara" in *Beyond Turk and Hindu, Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* Edited by David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence. University Press of Florida, 2000. pp. 300-26

10. *Kali Yuga* is the fourth yuga (cycle), as per the Indic sacred text, wherein sins and conflict are at a peak. During this cycle, human civilisation degenerates spiritually leading to moral conflict in society. For more information, see RS Sharma, *Early Medieval Indian Society, A Study in Feudalism*.

Kolkata: Orient Longman, 2001. He talks about the '*Kali* Age Crisis' in the Early Medieval period of Indian history causing economic and social chaos.

11. The periodisation of Indian History was first attempted by Utilitarian scholar, James Mill in his nineteenth-century book *History of British India.* He viewed the political institutions of India as despotic and undemocratic and thus, opined for an appropriate legislative system that could correct the age-old despotic and stagnant nature of Indian society. A theory often connected with Utilitarian views is also of Oriental Despotism. The theory became 'axiomatic to the interpretation of Indian Past' as backward and divided along the communal lines. This further led the Nationalist Scholars to challenge the view which led to another problematic trend of viewing the Indian past as the Classical/Golden Age. For more information, see Romila Thapar, *The Penguin History of Early India, from Origins to AD 1300*. London: Penguin Press, 2002. pp 1-37

12. For more information on how archaeology can give a nuanced picture of institutions like the state, see Karl Wittfogel, "The theory of Oriental Society." In *The Asiatic Mode of Production: Science and Politics*, ed. A.M. Bailey and JR Llobera. London: Routledge.

13. Various examples of temples called *Pandava* temples are Kala Dera Temple, Band Temple, Harihara Temple in Jammu and Kashmir; Mahadera Temple near Basoli, border of J&K and Punjab; Madhyamaheshwar Temple in Uttarakhand; Kunti Devi Temple in Delhi, near Purana Qila.

14. For more information on the historiographical debate on Orientalism and Colonial constructions, in the case of Arabs, see Edward Said, *Orientalism, Western Conceptions of the Orient.* Penguin India, 2001.

15. See also, Jones, "The Enchanted Fruit or The Hindu Wife: An Antediluvian Tale, Written in the Province of Bahar," in *Sir Williams Jones: Selected Poetical and Prose Works*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995. Pp.81-82

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Appendix 1: Site Vulnerability Report

Name of the site: Krimchi Temple Complex

Location: Krimchi village, Udhampur District, Jammu and Kashmir

Co-ordinates: 32°53' N and 75°07' E

Dateline: 8-9th century CE

Organisation under which site is protected: Centrally Protected Monuments of Jammu and Kashmir, Archaeological Survey of India, Srinagar Circle, Jammu and Kashmir.

Distance from Delhi: 620 kms

Is there a tourist reception centre? No

Is it easily located? Yes, if you ask for directions from villagers

Is the site encroached due to construction? No

Are there basic amenities like toilets, cafeteria etc? No

Is relevant material available about the site? No

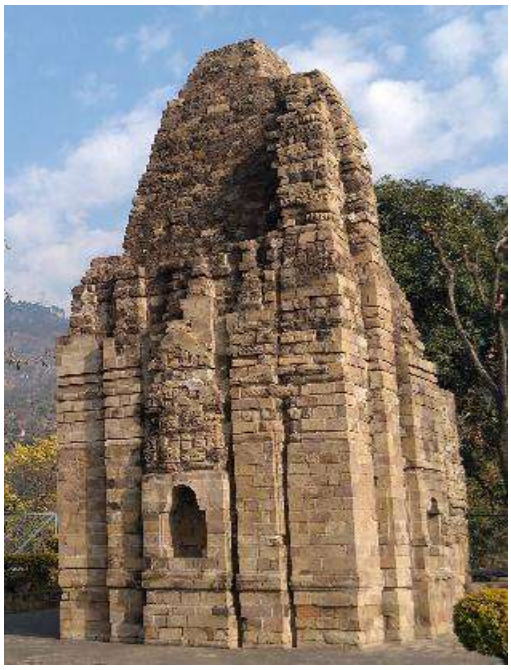
Is there any information board about the site? Yes. Installed by ASI

Is there need for further excavations? Yes

List of temples at the site:

Temple	Image
Temple 1	

Temple 2	
Temple 3	

Temple 4	
Temple 5	

ART

A Note from Dr. Ursula Weekes

We instinctively want to know what images mean. But does the meaning of an artwork lie in the thoughts and intentions of the artist or in the interpretative mind of the viewer? Both of course are true and hold equal importance depending on context and purpose. The Itihāsology Journal breaks new ground by inviting contemporary artists to submit their works alongside scholarly essays, forging a dialogue between words and images, and between the practice of history and the practice of art. It bids us consider contemporary artworks through a historiographical as well as an aesthetic lens and opens a space for new kinds of conversations. The possibilities of such visual and verbal interlocutions remind me of one of my favourite quotations from a Persian album of the sixteenth century. In 1564, the calligrapher Mir Sayyid Ahmad at Herat penned a preface for an album commissioned by Amir Ghayb Beg. He wrote,

'they [the paintings and calligraphies] are devoted to each other as a unity in peace and war. Not two-faced, or two-coloured like people of the world. Night and day they share lodgings with each other. People in conversation without hypocrisy.'

In this journal, essays share lodgings with artworks, and it is my privilege to reflect and comment on these artworks as an art historian. I hope to do so in a way that allows the images to speak and breathe for themselves.

All of the works chosen for the Journal have rich resonances with the material culture, past and present, of South Asia. Let us begin with Anupam Anu's pencil drawings of celebrated Hindu and Buddhist stone sculptures belonging to museums in Kolkata and Bangladesh. They invoke a celebrated period of stone craftsmanship in medieval India. Marked by careful observation and a deep sense of volume and shade, Anupam Anu's drawings seemed, at first, to me to be driven by an empirical urge to catalogue and describe. But as I reflected further, I began to understand them as deeply personal, arising from a meditative process of slow looking that was deeply devotional and involved the artist in journeys, physical and spiritual, akin to a pilgrimage. It is this aspect which brings contemporaneity to the works and reclaims for the present a visual vocabulary that is more often associated with taxonomic drawings of the nineteenth century.

Pencil is also the medium of Amina Jameel's stunning works. They offer a unique response to Mughal miniatures with their dense intersecting motifs taken from Mughal paintings. Look closely and you will find Persian and Indian faces of nobles, warriors, kings and servants, falcons, goats, leaves, flowers, and two angels writing on an hourglass. The economies of scale and multiple orientations of the motifs require close-looking and capture the Persianate love of embedded riddles within an image. The overall rhythm has echoes of works by Basawan and its musicality reminds me of Kandinsky on a small scale. To Amina Jameel, the jumble of intersecting images arises from a 'naïve understanding of our roots', but to me it captures the multidimensional life of the Mughal world and its artistic culture. Jameel's second work is set against a pixelated grid of small squares. Famous motifs of early seventeenth-century Mughal paintings are placed together and they acquire a kind of coherence on account of the unifying landscape. This was exactly how early Jahangiri album pages were compiled, but the ethereal landscape also captures something of early twentieth-century surrealism.

Mughal album pages as sites of memory and connected history are the inspiration for the collaborative works of Dr Seema Bhalla and a group of contemporary artists who work in the so-called Company School style of the nineteenth century. The artworks explore the allure of India to the Dutch, French and British East India Companies. They encompass art, craft, textiles, trade, politics, society and culture and explore the dynamics of colonial desire and power. Both 'album' pages have skilfully rendered copies of Company paintings of nautch girls as their centrepieces. The borders have delicate arabesques of flowers and birds in gold taken from Indian chintzes and palampores made for export. The borders also feature copies of textile labels, such as the Nautch Girl brand designed by Ralli Brothers of Manchester, and motifs from celebrated paintings like 'Sir David Ochterlony, British Resident to the Mughal Court, watching a nautch in his house' c. 1820. As composite works, these album pages retroactively insert material and visual traces of nineteenth-century India into the idiom of a seventeenth century Mughal album. In so doing, they function as a reassertion of the Indian culture which the Europeans found so alluring.

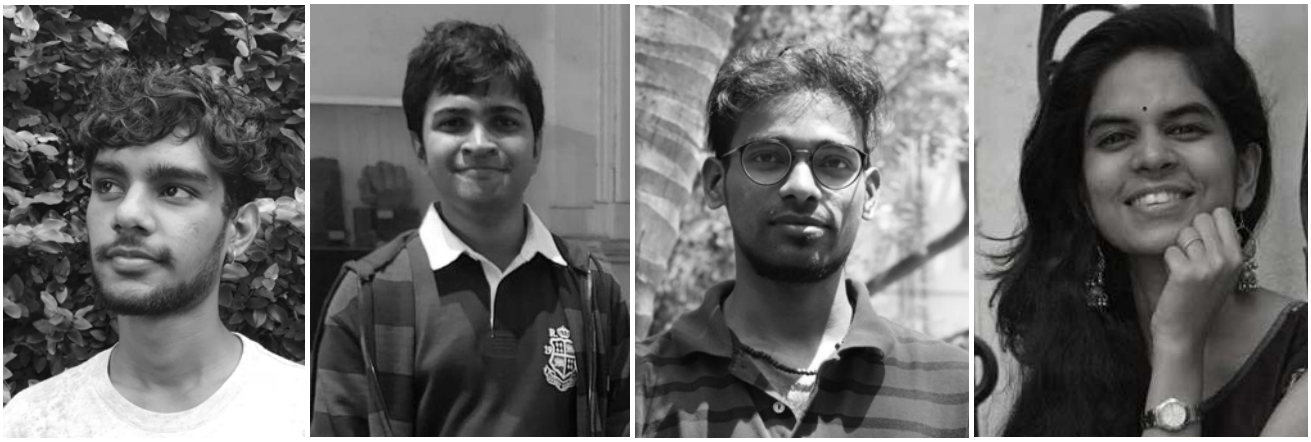
Material trace is also a key aspect of the works of Kandula Pradeep Kumar. Using papers from family archives, he draws on written sheets, which over the years have been folded, thumbed, scorched, and suffered water damage, or deliberately aged. His drawings in coloured pencils blend with these ephemeral residues of time, reactivating images from his childhood in Northern Andhra Pradesh. There is the bhishti, with his thin muscled frame, carrying two huge vessels of water that skim low to the ground. There are stacks of large metal vessels; a string of dried chillies and lemons like a Spanish Still Life to ward off the evil eye; and on a stamped revenue paper, three high caste men with grand moustaches and penetrating gazes, who we appropriately discover from the title are the local Tahsildar, or tax collectors.

Tribal art is our link to the next work of art because the tribal art forms of Bihar and Gujarat inspired the vibrant painting of the Devi Mahatmya, made over a two-year period, when the artist Navneesh Ramessur was aged just 12 to 14 years. As a child, he loved Madhubani painting of the Mithila region in Bihar and Mata Ni Pachedi painting of Gujarat. In his dense work, the ten-armed Devi Durga on her red and white lion, battles the demon Raktabeej with the help of the seven Matrika goddesses at the left and the large form of Kali Chamunda at the right. Raktabeej's power was immense because each drop of his blood could generate armies of demons when it touched the ground. But Kali Chamunda, with her wild black hair, was called upon to suck up all the blood and thus enable the powerful alliance of goddesses to succeed against his evil. The bold colours and forms convey a complex but legible iconography. This simplicity of form belies the layered complexity of meaning. As the founder of Itihāsology, Eric Chopra, points out, the real psychoanalytic drama of Raktabeej lies in his ability to conjure demons from within himself, and to hold the seeds of self-destruction within his own blood. But Navneesh Ramessur's work seems to deal in more concrete certainties, as Raktabeej is contained in a great red bubble that is being sucked into Kali Chamunda's mouth.

The works of Prem Jadhav focus on Sringaar, that is, forms of ornamental adornment to celebrate the beauty of the female body. These are eloquent little drawings that portray women not from the gaze of the voyeur, but from a more empathetic position of feminine pleasure. Laya Matthew, meanwhile draws on multiple traditions of Indian painting in her suggestive paintings of the Tales of Gaia. But I close with the series of digital prints by Tej Parwani, which according to the artist add an 'element of pop' to Mughal miniatures 'to connect with the millennial generation'. The title, 'Be(gum)-e-Bubble', meaning 'lady of the bubble' uses brackets to create a fun play on the words 'bubble-gum'. These digitally remade miniatures are based mostly on codified portraits of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan popularised in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It fascinates me that the meaning of the bubble is unstable from image to image, and this generates intuitive humour. In the images of women pictured in three-quarter profile gazing directly at the viewer, the bubble somehow asserts female independence, especially since the iconic portrait of Mumtaz (the first image in the series) is detached from its usual context as part of a pendant set with Shah Jahan. Turn the woman in profile, and the bubble seems to become more about nonchalance, while in the images of lovers, the bubble over their mouths functions as a kind of 'keep out' sign to the viewer. It deftly celebrates the long Indian history of the erotic sentiment (*sringara rasa*) while also capturing the more prudish cultural attitudes faced by many young lovers in modern India and the subcontinent.

At the start, I said that I hoped to comment in a way that allows the images to breathe, and so now over to you, to look, to think, to enjoy and to interpret. This is just the beginning of that process.

Dr. Ursula Weekes
Associate Lecturer, Courtauld Institute of Art



From Left to Right:
(Top) Navneesh Sharma Ramessur, Anupam Saha, Kandula Pradeep Kumar, Swarali Abhay Jape
(Bottom) Tej Meghraj Parwani, Amina Jameel, Layoushi, Dr. Seema Bhalla, Prem Jadhav

'Genesis'

Artist: Swarali Abhay Jape

Medium: Mixed media - seeds, tea stains and watercolour - on handmade paper

Indians have held a vivid conception of the spiritual and material dimensions of humanity since the earliest times. History provides a fascinating insight into how humans have sought to understand the natural world. Fables and folktales from around the world talk of the sacred history of our planet. Ancient myths and epics, especially the Puranas and Vedas contain descriptions of creation and evolution. As per Rig Vedic hymns, it is the sole responsibility of man to protect and care for nature. Indian classical literature like Abhijnana Shakuntalam and Ritusamhara describe the 'sublime bond' between humans and nature. Stories from the Panchatantra endorse righteous conduct through the examples from nature. Female Figurines from early civilisations, often attributed cultic significance, present the probability that nature was worshipped or fondled. It can thus be said that stories from history bear the seeds of our existence. They remind us of our roots, who we are, and the deeds of our ancestors.

Through her paintings, the artist seeks to continue this tradition and pass on creation myths to future generations. 'Genesis' is an exploration of her personal experiences coupled with her reading of fables and myths.

'Genesis' highlights nature as the originator of humankind, using warm tones to denote the relationship between humans and the Earth. The delicate treatment of paper, soft tones of tea stains, and shades of earthy brown convey the aroma of soil. Material used here is typically natural/organic, often edible and produced by engaging with nature such as mud washes, handmade paper and seeds. A circular form pressed and pasted with seeds depicts the story of life on Earth. The seeds hold metaphorical meaning, and are used here to portray the vitality of healing, mending, growth, and rebirth. In today's industrial and technological age, the artist seeks to preserve the essence of the natural world.

Artist Ruchi Ruuh has remarked that Swarali's artwork creates an extraordinary impact on its viewers. The execution is tremendous and the idea's very fresh!

(i) Tales of Gaia: Predators

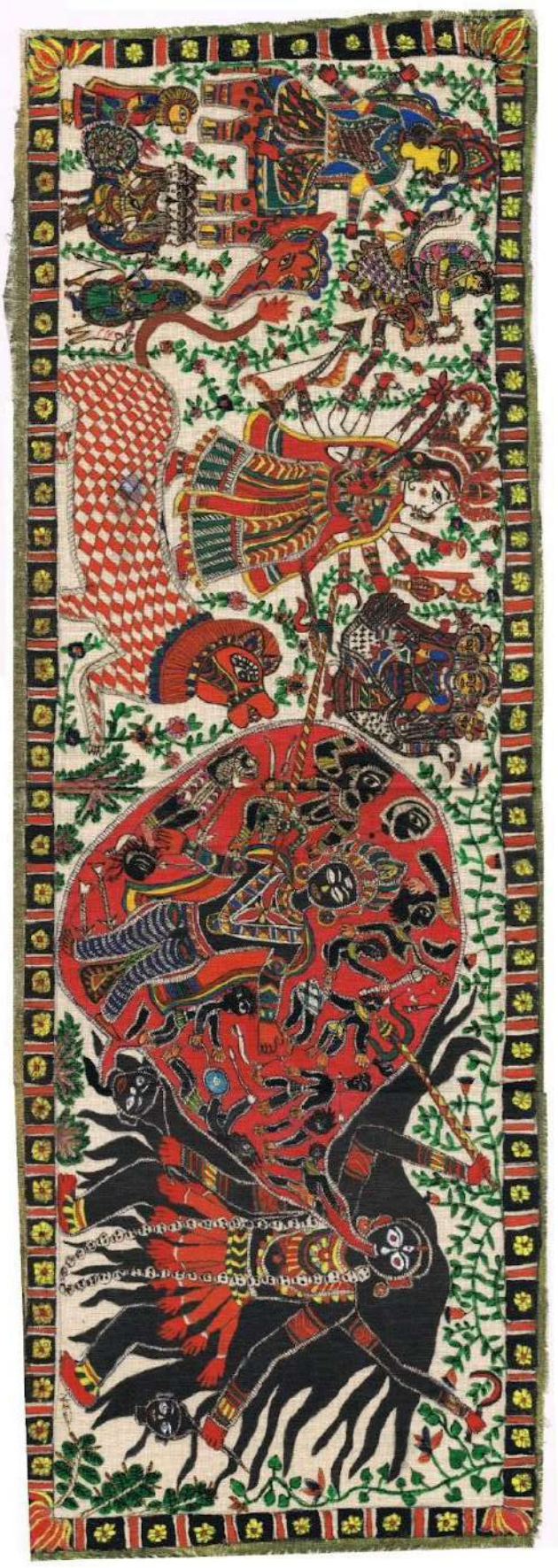
(ii) Tales of Gaia: Predators II Chaos

'The Predators'

Artist: Layoushi

The Predators is a two-part series that explores the dark side of humanity and each predator's limits. The artist, Layoushi, portrays the limitlessness of the natural world. She holds that limits do not exist in nature - instead, one sets limits for oneself by choice, or is forced to do so by society, or by religious or moral beliefs. The Tales of Gaia illustrations are heavily influenced by philosophy, religion, history, and mythology. They crossbreed elements of tradition with modernity.

The composition style is inspired by elements of Mughal India in specific and the Orient in general. The contemporary works are small in size and are inspired by miniature Mughal paintings. The narratives and framings of the illustrations are constructed for the observer to understand themselves more deeply and explore their limitations - what are they and why do they confine us?



'Raktabeej Vadh – Annihilation of Raktabeej'

Artist: Navneesh Sharma Ramessur

Medium: Acrylic paint with ink on cotton ecru cloth, 22x65cm

The artist's inspiration for this scroll came from the Devi Mahatmyam ('Glory of the Goddess'). It is part of the Markandeya Purana, whose composition dates back to the 5th - 6th century CE. He was also inspired by Madhubani painting from Mithila region in North Bihar and Mata Ni Pachedi ritual painting from regions of Gujarat.

Mithila is considered as the birthplace of Sita, where she is much loved and for her wedding, her father Raja Janak tells his subjects to paint their walls with auspicious, colourful figures. Derived from this story, the Mithila painting tradition is believed to have started. By the 20th century, it had begun to be transcribed onto cloth and paper. On the other hand, Mata Ni Pachedi ('Behind the Mother Goddess') is a form of art rendered on cloth, which becomes a temple for the Goddess depicted. It has traditionally been painted by the Vaghari community of Gujarat, a nomadic people who were not allowed to enter the temples and thus devised their own 'portable temples' in the form of sacred painted cloth.

The artwork narrates an encounter with demon Raktabeej, who became extremely powerful after receiving a boon whereby each drop of his blood could generate armies of demons upon touching the ground. His name, in fact, comprises Blood ('Rakta') and Seed ('Beej'). In this encounter, Devi Durga battles an army of demons, accompanied by seven other goddesses called the Matrikas. In Bhojpuri, these goddesses are collectively called 'Satto Maiya' or 'Satto Behen' - literally meaning 'seven mothers' and 'seven sisters' respectively. Their role as protective goddesses is particularly highlighted here, as they are
shown hurling and attacking an army of demons.

When they are fighting the army of demons, the Matrikas encounter Raktabeej and soon understand the workings of his boon. They are overwhelmed and wounded by Raktabeej. Upon seeing this, Durga calls upon Chamunda whom she requests to drink away all of Raktabeej's blood before it touches the ground. Devi Chamunda completely dries off the demons' bodies, including Raktabeej.

Then the Matrikas, along with Durga, defeat the demons, whereupon they rejoice. In the scene Durga is standing on her lion with ten hands wielding the sword, spear, bow arrow, sickle, conch, lotus, wheel, axe, mace, and goad. The Matrikas from the left are Indrani seated on an elephant, wielding thunderbolts and a goad. To her right is Vaishnavi who rides on Garuda, the celestial eagle and she holds Sudarshana Chakra wheel and a spear. On the bottom left corner is Narsinghi, the half-woman, half-lioness who bears a trident. She is followed by Kaumari who has six faces, holds the Vel spear, a holy pot and prayer beads while being seated on a peacock.

The bluish figure is Shiva, seated on a bull and armed with the Trishul spear. Hovering above the central Durga is Brahmani, seated on a swan with priestly attributes. The last and the other main figure is Kali-Chamunda who is fighting with her Trishul and sickle. She wears a skull garland with 52 heads, symbolising the 52 alphabets of the Devanagari script.

'Pala Period Sculpture'
Artist: Anupam Saha
Medium: Pencil on paper

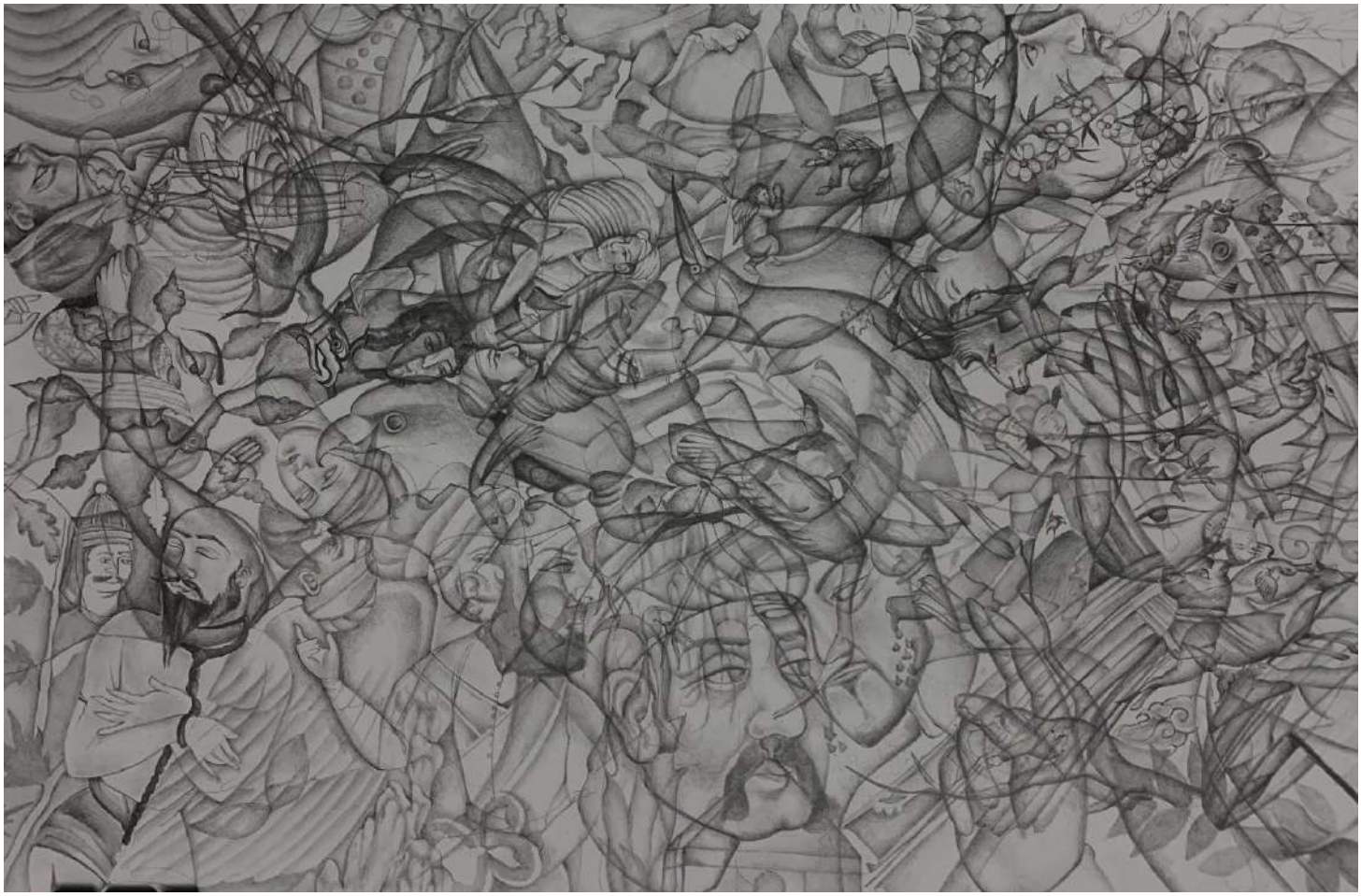
During the years of Pala rule (8th - 12th century CE), many centres of sculptural art flourished simultaneously in different regions of Bengal and Bihar.

On stone blades, various stories from the Sanskrit epics were depicted. Stones were carved with images of local people and scenes from daily life. Soldiers, sages, and women performing rituals were also beautifully portrayed in stone. Sculptures of gods and goddesses, specially Ganesha, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva were found in abundance.

Of the important collections from this era, the Bangladesh National Museum houses the idol of Vishnu of Khiyarmohammadpur district and the Vishnu of Kakdwip. The way the idols were created appeared like they are depicting the features of human beings. The ornaments of the idol were not so decorative in their design. Of the stone idols famous during from this period, one has to mention the Vishnu idol of Dinajpur district housed in the Ashutosh Museum.

In these sketches created by Anupan, he celebrates the allure of Pala sculptures.

(i) 20x30in

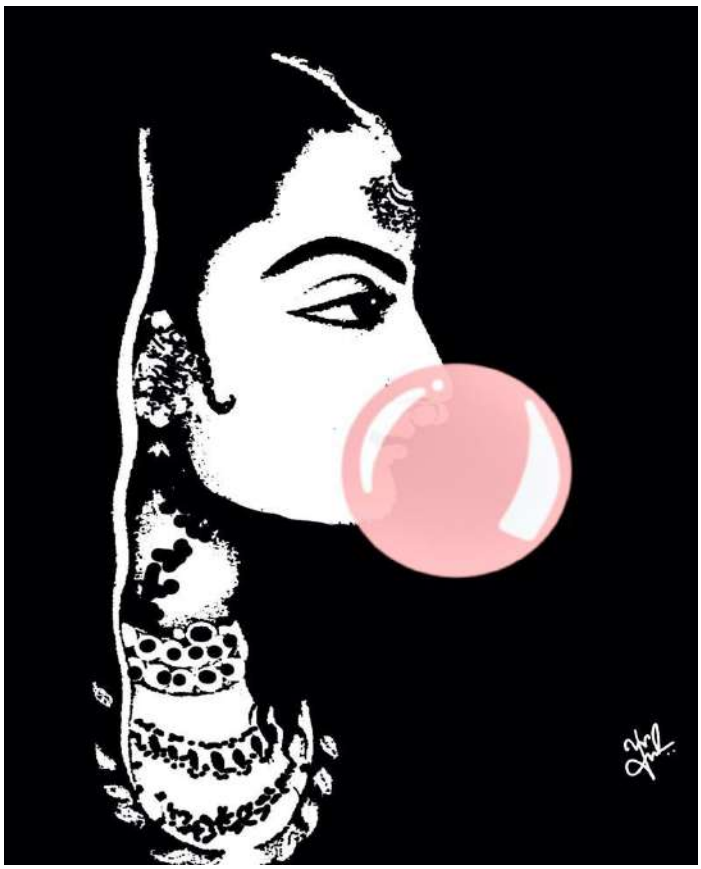


(ii) 20x15in

Artist: Amina Jameel
Medium: Graphite on paper

Inspired by early Mughal miniatures and the influence of Persian miniatures therein, the first piece plays with visuals to depict something that would not necessarily have been commissioned during the period in question. A headless Emperor is held in the hands of an angel, surrounded by nonchalant figures. This highlights the modern idea of free speech by re-imagining figures from a time when nothing was painted that the Emperor did not approve of.

The second artwork was prompted by the artist's urge to practice the pencil technique of Mughal Miniature. Amalgamated from a multitude of images, it displays the perspective from which artists viewed the people of the Indian subcontinent. It being her first brush with Mughal miniatures, the artist was pleasantly surprised to see that the art being produced in the Indian subcontinent was devoid of western influence. The diverse visual language and allegory employed in Mughal miniatures requires close observation, but is out of physical reach, since most are now held by European museums. This piece secondarily also exhibits how Mughal art has been reduced to a jumble of images for the modern viewer, leading to a naïve understanding of our own history.



'Be(gum)-e-Bubble'

Artist: Tej Meghraj Parwani

These artworks are part of an ongoing series of digitally remade miniature paintings with an element of pop - in an attempt to connect Mughal art with the millennial generation. The bubble here is a metaphoric representation of the new generation. When combined with miniature painting, the bubble brings together the past and the present with the aim to build a composite future for Indian art.

(i) Nautch Girls - Trichinopoly Company School (24x22in)

(ii) Nautch Girls - Delhi Company School (24x22in)

'Nautch Girls'

Courtesy: 7 traditional miniature painting artists c/o Dr. Seema Bhalla

Medium: Gouache with natural pigment, pure gold and silver on wasli

India's riches allured many from lands far away, since the times of antiquity. By the beginning of the 17 th century, the Dutch, French and British established formal trade links through their East India Companies. Exotic India – her people, her architecture, her land and her culture fascinated these Europeans. They wanted to take the images back home to show and keep them as memories. Since photography was still not invented, these Europeans commissioned the local artists who were trained in their traditional art, to paint them. Indian artists were inspired to introduce a sense of realism in the paintings that were commissioned by these patrons. Indian artists adjusted their style to the aesthetics of the new patrons and started painting in an Indo-European style. Later, in the scholarly domain, these paintings earned the nomenclature – Company paintings.

The visuals of these paintings have been taken from the lithographs, aquatints, textiles and textiles labels, which are dispersed in various international museums. The paintings have been rendered in the traditional technique of Indian miniature paintings to re-contextualise a narrative that is based on academic research. Each frame has a main painting, two supporting water colours and textiles designs in the Borders, thus co-relating history within the spatial limits.

Nautch Girls (Dancing Girls) Nautch Girls have remained an important part of Indian society. These women and their troupes had class distinction and would cater to various strata of society. These dancers fascinated the Europeans and were painted during the Company period. These paintings are essentially a documentation of this custom. Through these paintings, it is fascinating to understand the societal values, fashion as also a glimpse into their personal lives.

Nautch Girl Group from Trichinopoly, depicts a group of dancing girls of c. 1820s. While a young nautch or dancing girl is performing in the front, there are three dancers who are standing behind the male accompanists who outnumber the women in the group. The male dominance is evident in the depiction. It is clear that though these girls are the attraction and money earners, it is the men who are in control of finances and the girls.

Nautch Girls in Delhi Company School, c. 1820s, depicts a group that is set in a luxurious and wealthy environment. The canopy above and the expensive carpet below imply the patron to be of importance, both financially as well as socially. The women of the group are richly adorned. Their ornaments and drapes are expensive and a-la-mode. Interestingly, this group depicts the control of women who are in centre stage and men are mere accompanists, taking their place at the back.

Both the Nautch Girls troupes are from the same period though different areas of India. However, they reveal different classes and positions of these women within their troupe.

'Shringaar'

Artist: Prem Jadhav

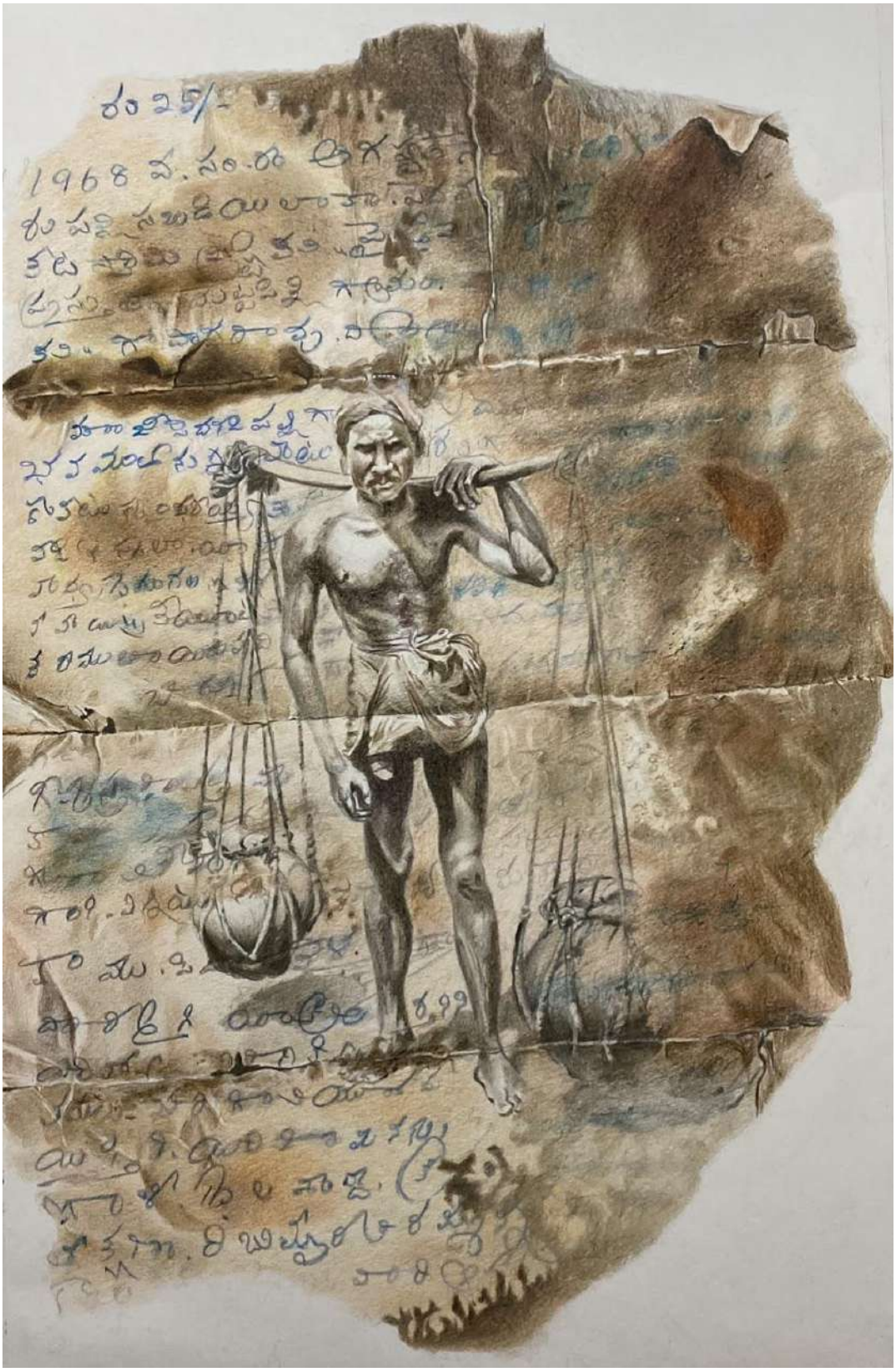
Medium: Handmade paper, 6x6in

These artworks are a contemporary adaptation of Indian miniature paintings. The series depicts Shringaar, a form of ornamental adornment to celebrate the beauty of the female body. The series began with a keen interest in the role of beautification in Indian history. Shringaar has long been a part of Indian history and Hindu mythology, popularly remembered as 'Solah Shringaar' ('16 Shringaar').

The vast cultural land of India has diversified the form of Shringaar and the two women different from each other are seen practising Shringaar, the Santhal Girl originally created by Jamini Roy is reimagined as a tribal form of Shringaar - the subject employs the water stream as a mirror to place flowers in her hair crown. The second piece depicts a north Indian adaptation of using fragrance oils created from flowers and using the mirror to adorn herself.

The series is an imaginative reinterpretation of the Shringaar and does not mirror any form of direct historical reference.

(i) Tasheeladr (40x60cm)



(ii)

Artist: Kandula Pradeep Kumar
Medium: Colour pencils on paper

The artist's work is inspired from his childhood, which was spent in a village in northern Andhra Pradesh. He grew up imbibing local movies, folk songs, and rituals from tribal cultures, all of which have formed an important part of his memory and fascination with his hometown.

He approaches his work much like an archaeologist, gathering and collecting materials found locally, often also reproducing them entirely through art. All of his works bear intrinsic connections to his culture, and he remains motivated by the need for these connections to be preserved and protected.

Both drawings here are created to reveal the fragility of tribal cultures while simultaneously exploring notions of memory, history and time.

Expulsion of Reason During Bengal Renaissance: Examining the Controversial Dismissal of Henry Louis Vivian Derozio

Gaurav Krishna Banerjee

The meeting amongst the Managers of the prestigious Hindoo College, Calcutta held in April 1831, decided on ousting the 'East Indian' poet and educator, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio on the charge of 'destroying the moral character of the students and peace of the society'[1]. Since the majority of those who voted in favour of his dismissal constituted the landed Hindu conservative class, including Ram Comul Sen and Radha Canto Deb, the debate attracted 'a conservative Hindu identity versus the western modernity' understanding, wherein the stalwarts of Hindu elites intended to uphold and protect 'a set of moralities driving the Hindus' which the 'embodiment of Western reason and modernity' Derozio, attempted to break. Rather than focusing on this simpler and incomplete binaries of a contentious terrain between the Hindu conservatism and the Western modernity or the notion of coloniser and colonised, I attempt to probe into deeper reasons, tracing the 'cosmopolitan' intellectual origins of Derozio and his deep emotive relationship which he shared with his students, until his dismissal from the college. To trace the identity of a personality like Derozio, it is important to carefully dissect the structures through which Derozio operates, especially the homosocial bonds of friendships, syncretic literary imaginations, aesthetic tastes and his political behaviour, and contextualise it in the Bengal Renaissance, incepting in the early years of colonial Bengal. This 'messy' period, of an Indo-Islamic remnant and a colonial anticipation, will serve as the base over which such 'operative' superstructures will allow us

to investigate the deeper connotations associated with the dismissal of Derozio from the Hindoo College.

Establishment of a 'liberal' institution and arrival of Henry Derozio

Prior to investigating the untimely dismissal of Henry Derozio from the Hindoo College, it is essential to understand the structures of education and the establishment of Hindoo College, as a fountainhead of western-liberal education in early nineteenth century Bengal. Since the later part of the eighteenth century and early years of the nineteenth century, a growing initiative towards westernised education was evident by the joint efforts of Eurasians, Missionaries and the Native elite classes. The growing interest of the elites toward a westernised education could be viewed from two perspectives. First, the idea of gaining employment at government institutions with increased salary, seemed an attractive opportunity, and more importantly, the hegemonic grip of the elite sections over education and culture, in order to maintain social and economic power was another objective to engage in an English education. However, with the establishment of Missionaries and Eurasian schools and an increasing threat of conversion, the Hindu elite feared a restructuring of social and economic hierarchy and hence, the establishment of elite natively-organised, andro-centric institutions were undertaken, as a reaction to the Missionary educational institutes. The first project undertaken by the *bhadraloks* was the establishment of Hindoo College in Calcutta, established under the joint initiatives of David Hare, Raja Rammohan Roy and Baidyanath Mukherjee, supported by the Chief Justice, Sir Hyde East. The idea of such a liberal-western educational institution was born in a meeting at Raja Rammohan Roy's residence in early 1816,

where David Hare expressed his interest towards imparting a more scientific and rational education to the natives through an organised educational institution. However, even before the first general body meeting, which was held on 14 May 1816, the body of Hindu gentlemen rejected the idea of Roy having any affiliation with the institution, due to his staunch criticism of idolatry and orthodox Hindu traditions and customs. Even though Rammohan Roy retracted his name from the organisation for the noble scheme, a strong abhorrence towards reason and free thinking is evident even before the establishment of this 'liberal-western' institution. In the subsequent general body meetings, the composition of the Managerial Board and the code of conduct for the college were structured. Once the structure and curriculum were decided, upper-caste Hindu landed elites moved forward with their initiative of imparting education to the 'sons of respectable Hindoos in the English and Indian languages; and in the Literature and Science of Europe and Asia.'(Kochhar, 301) The important connotation and the term of focus here is 'sons of respectable Hindoos' which nonchalantly argues for an elite, andro-centric education and significantly marginalises women, untouchables and other non-Hindu communities from their agenda. With the establishment of the Hindoo College on 20 January 1817, a steep rise in the admissions was evident, as within three months of functioning, the number of pupils increased from a mere twenty to sixty nine, and by 1828, it crossed the four hundred mark. Amidst this surge of student intake and an institutionalisation of 'modern' education, our protagonist Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, a young adolescent of seventeen years, joined the Hindoo College campus as the 'master of English Literature and History' in 1828.[2] Born as a 'creole'[3] to a Portuguese father and

English mother, Henry Derozio attended the 'Durromtollah Academy', run by the prominent Scottish educator David Drummond, where the 'naturally imaginative, impulsive and powerful mind' of Derozio was highly influenced by the 'clear, incisive and logical guidance' of Drummond.(Edwards, 6) At Drummond, he freely mingled with 'Europeans, Eurasians and native lads' which Rosinka Chaudhuri speculates to be the reason for identifying himself as an 'East Indian', declaring his pride to be noted as a native of this country. The academically gifted Derozio, soon acquainted himself with English philosophy and literature, and forged a strong admirable bond with David Drummond. Both the aspects, his intellectual interests and the congenial bond between master and pupil, were to be inculcated in his pedagogy at Hindoo College. Ending his school life at the age of 14, he visited Bhaugulpore (present day Bhagalpur) where his intellectual imaginations found new influences in the form of the Ganges, boats of fishermen and traders and the Fakeer-habited rocks of Jungeerah. His poetic musings and romantic influences derived from the western romantic poets and the magnanimous cultural shifts witnessed in the fluid nineteenth century Bengal, enabled him to produce literary works, including, '*The Fakeer of Jungeerah*', '*Ruins of the Rajmahal*' and the '*Enchantress of Cave*'. With the publication of his first volume of poems at the bare age of eighteen, his intellectual calibre and literary aesthetics were recognised in intellectual circles of Bengal and acquainted him with men like David Hare, Meredith Parker and D.L. Richardson. Due to dearth of evidence on his selection procedure at the Hindoo College, I can only speculate that his close acquaintance with influential men like David Hare, who 'admired his genius' and was associated with the Hindoo College, helped

him in getting hired. The experiences he drew from Durromtollah Academy, Bhaugalpore and the India Gazette (where he worked briefly), could be located in his literary imaginations and pedagogy which he employed in his limited years at Hindoo College.

Derozio's literary contributions and his pedagogy at Hindoo College (1828-31)

The onset of 'modernity' which has been associated with Henry Derozio and others writing in English, is a misconstructed rhetoric. Milinda Banerjee argues that the ideas of modernity are not necessarily a colonial phenomenon, rather the tumultuous years witnessing rebellion, against the exploitative Mughal rule[4], undertaken by the Sikhs, Satnamis, Sannyasis and Fakirs overtly displayed modern ideas of egalitarian relations and overthrowing the elites. The ideas of modernity are not a compartmentalised phenomena dependent on spatial and temporal restrictions, rather modernity transcends the stringent periodisation and demonstrates freedom from perceived knowledge and studies newer channels of knowledge formation. Derozio was a product of this assertion of varied 'modernities', who not only imbibed western ideologies but was also attracted to Indian social and cultural structures. This fascination could be traced through his most influential work, '*The Fakeer of Jungeerah*' (1828), which traces the tale of Nuleeni, a widow from an upper caste Hindu family, and her lover, a Fakeer robber, who saves her from performing sati and takes her away to the rocks of Jungeerah, where they spend their 'honeymoon' period. However, her happiness was temporary, as on hearing the plea of Nuleeni's father, Shoojah Shah challenged the Fakir which resulted in the latter's death on the battlefield and subsequently, Nuleeni's

death alongside her lover. Unlike literary reviewers and critics who are proficient in critiquing the poem's 'incoherence' or 'unmoving' nature (Paranjape, 554), I attempt to extract certain themes and elaborate on his discourses with the socio-political and cultural settings, under the veil of a literary work.'*The Fakeer of Jungeerah*' is a poem historically situated during the Fakeer rebellion in the form of 'Pagolpanthi Bidroho' which united the pirs, Hindus and Muslims against the zamindars and the colonial state in Eastern Bengal. (Banerjee, 71) The much lauded preface to this long poem, 'To India - My Native Land', bears the weight of introducing the wretched political conditions of Derozio's 'native land', where Derozio deeply laments the fall of 'a beauteous halo' which 'circled around thy brow' and the chaining down of the 'eagle pinion' (by the English EIC). As noted by Makrand Paranjape, Derozio was not only influenced by the Orientalist notions of a golden past but demonstrates the same glorification of India before colonialism, as portrayed in Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Vande Mataram. However, the transcendence of sectarian lines in Derozio's poem is absent in the rigid constricted binaries of coloniser and colonised or Hindu and Muslims of Bankim, who is writing in a cosmos dominated with the notions of class, nation state and religion. Even though the title, 'To India - My Native Land' was a later ascription by the editor, a strong love for his region is conspicuous throughout the poem. His love is evident through the usage of 'East Indian' in several of his works, in order to demonstrate his pride and patriotism for his native land. Why did he use the title 'East Indian' and not simply 'Indian'? That is simply because the idea of India or the concept of nation state as a consolidated identity, did not exist in the early half of the nineteenth century and was a

fragmented set of identities scattered vaguely. Since he was from the region dominated by the East India Company, he identified himself in the secular cosmopolitan term, East Indian rather than the racial counterpart, Eurasian.[5] The cosmopolitan secular identity of Derozio is reflected in the theme wherein, Nuleeni, a 'Hindu' widow, was about to perform sati before her 'Muslim' lover rescued her. As noted by Paranjape, neither the poem deals explicitly with sati nor does it take an anti-caste stance, rather it portrays it as an exotic episode within the Brahmanical culture. However, noteworthy was the scope Derozio provides for a Fakeer, who is known for his dissent against fundamentalism, to achieve the 'forbidden' love of a woman, from an orthodox Hindu family. The identities and their fluid social intercourse is a theme which could be found in the cosmos Derozio functioned, which could be due to his interactions with diverse people during his school days. Connected with the theme of his portrayal of sati, Derozio in his notes had initially supported the practice of sati stating that the conditions of Hindu widows were worse and the authoritarian implication of a law would not result in its following. However, once the law against sati was implemented, Derozio was among the first to write a laudatory poem 'On the Abolition of Suttee', praising William Bentick. Thus, the evolutionary and self-correcting nature of Derozio was an inert quality which he attempted to pass onto his students too. The idea that Derozio was only influenced by the rebellious heterodox Sufi sect is an incomplete version of his deeper understanding of Indian philosophies. His familiarity with the Tantric cosmology embedded in the narrative of King Vikramaditya and Beital in the '*Baital Pachisi*', offers us to probe into the ideas of radical liberty, heterodoxy, equality and brotherhood

which are preached by the Tantric philosophy. (Banerjee, 69) In the 'Notes : Canto Second' to '*The Fakeer of Jungheera*', Derozio states that 'A student of that excellent institution, the Hindu College, once brought me a translation of the Betal Puncheesa ...strictly Indian'. The granting of Betal Puncheesa by 'a student of Hindu College' to Derozio is important as it implies two things- the Tantric philosophy was a theme of discussion in the classes of Derozio or the discussion preceded Derozio's arrival at the college. Either way, the discussion of such heterodox themes of Sufis and Tantrism issued great importance in urging the 'Hindoo students from respectable families' to think critically about the ideas of orthodox organised religions, in a non-hierarchised environment of brotherhood. His other literary works, like '*The Enchantress of the Cave*' and '*Ruins of the Rajmahal*' echoes his familiarity with the socio-political cosmos of Bengal. Even though we can trace proto-communal sentiments indicating his adoption of Orientalist ideas of a glorified 'Hindu past' in both the works, '*The Ruins of Rajmahal*' quickly moves away towards the dilapidated condition of the Rajmahal, the demise of a Muslim culture of chanting verses from the Quran and the romantic theme of nature commemorating 'the lost glories'. Rosinka Chaudhuri notes that even though Derozio's poem had an Orientalist sentiment, the poet does not identify the land as 'Hindu' or 'Muslim', but rather laments on the conditions of his 'native land'. Similarly, in '*The Enchantress of the Cave*', the poem opens with an anticipated battle between the Hindus and the Muslims, however it soon shifted its focus onto the discourses between Nazim, who is worried about his wife's welfare, and the Witch of the Cave, who narrates Eastern legends including, about Israfil, the angel of music, Chuhulmenar, Jemshid's gem and so on. The

works of Derozio thus, cannot be studied through singular binaries of religion or war, but rather through a syncretic idea of India and Indianness which was more 'systematic and structurally hybridised'. (Paranjape, 561) The fusion of western romantic and liberalism with the distinct local cultural framework devised a new form of literary genre which makes Derozio unique and the first Indian national poet. The close intellectual influence of heterodox communities marinated with western philosophy and thought was not only conspicuous in his literature, but penetrated into his pedagogy and relationship with his students, at the Hindoo College between 1828-1831. The Calcutta and Bihar of the nineteenth century, which were entrenched by the ideas of heterodoxy, hybridity, and egalitarian ideas of sufi-fakir brotherhood, steeped into the Derozian idea of rationality and bonds, as nowhere in the western philosophy do we encounter such intense interpersonal bonds of friendship, love and brotherhood shared between the master and the pupils. The space of rational discourses and exchange of ideas as provided by him, enabled the students to juxtapose between various ideas and thoughts and churn out knowledge hitherto unknown to the society. Such a radical restructuring of imparting education by Derozio, compels us to examine the processes and the social circumstances, eventually leading to his dismissal from the College in 1831. A coherent narrative of Derozio's years at Hindoo College could be traced from the account of his biographer, Thomas Edwards and one of his students, Ramtanu Lahiri, who attended his classes along with men like Krishnamohan Banerji, Dakhinaranjan Mukerji and Ram Gopal Ghosh, all of whom became prominent members of the Young Bengal. Lahiri notes that the lessons of Derozio were not limited to the school hours, but crept into his

residence which was a 'favourite resort of many among them'(Shastri, 66). The discussions and discourses which germinated from such gatherings between a young adult master and adolescent students, would not only pertain to intellectual attitudes but shift into an informal gathering where 'guidance and counsels for private concerns' of the students were addressed by Derozio. (Shastri, 80) What Derozio attempted to do was nothing different from what a 'good' teacher must practice, i.e to encourage a student and be receptive to his intellectual and personal thoughts. The informal meetings soon converged into a formal body, called the Academic Association in 1828, wherein the students along with themes of philosophy and poetry, familiarised themselves with the 'facility of expressing their thoughts in words and the power of ready reply and arguments'. (Edwards, 31) Ramtanu Lahiri, who was a member of the Academic Association, informs that moral and social questions prevalent of those times were discussed fearlessly and the ideas of free thought were much encouraged. Apart from students of Hindoo College, contemporary influential men including, David Hare, Colonel Benson and Dr. Mills were regular participants in the meetings and keenly observed the unfolding of discourses. As the discussions evolved, the students introspected their own socio-cultural surroundings and heavily criticised the hitherto dominance of the prejudiced and elitist Hindus. Hara Mohan Chatterjee, a member of Academic Association, notes that such discussions on rationality strongly criticised Hindu customs and traditions for its idolatry, superstitions and hierarchy. The tide of free enquiry and influence of Derozio was so intense, that Brahmin students denounced their sacred thread and instead of reciting sacred chants, they decided to quote notable passages from the *Iliad*. Along with

the questioning of Hindu customs and traditions, the dietary restrictions instilled upon Hindus was under scrutiny too. A heavy indulgence in eating forbidden meat of cow, pig and chicken and drinking alcohol was evident. Although the influence of breaking dietary restrictions was not solely Derozio's influence[6], the revolutionary attitude towards religious dogmatism alarmed the elite stalwarts of the Hindu community. Contemporary with such adolescent insurrections, the influence of Raja Rammohan Roy and Alexander Duff, kept the charcoal of a social revolution burning. In 1830, Rammohan Roy established the Brahmo Samaj which stringently opposed idolatry, caste practises and the orthodox superstitions adhered by the Hindus. Simultaneously, Alexander Duff, a Scottish missionary announced the opening of an English educational institution for Hindu elites with the purpose of familiarising the natives with the true meaning of the Gospel. Roy, who advocated English education for the natives, supported him in his venture by providing him a space for teaching and six students. The demand for learning the language of the ruling class by the Hindu men was evident as within four days, two hundred students enrolled. These events further alarmed the orthodox Managers of Hindoo College, as the students who already were dissenting against Hinduism (rather, Brahmanism), were indulging in the meetings of Brahmo Samaj and attending lectures on Christian doctrine.

Dismissal of Derozio

The increasing pressure thrusted upon the Managers of Hindoo College by the 'good Hindu families' from which the students hailed, resulted in prohibiting the students from participating in organisations where 'political and religious discussions' were being held. (Edwards, 70) As the students of

Derozio continued their associations, Ram Comul Sen convened a meeting in April 1831, wherein the objective was to check the growing evils due to the misconduct of a 'certain' teacher who 'injured the moral character and peace of the society' requiring proper 'remedies' to be installed immediately. (Edwards, 74) The teacher in question is our protagonist, Henry Derozio, who in subsequent deliberations is openly called out as the 'root of all evil and cause of public alarm' and a demand for his dismissal was motioned. (Edwards, 75) With six members voting in favour and two against his expulsion, Derozio, like Socrates, was victim to the majoritarian belief of him 'corrupting the morality' which thus ended his brief but illustrious career as an educator. In his 'resignation' letter sent to the Managing Committee on 25th April 1831, Derozio questions the manner of his dismissal which was unethical and incongruous with justice, as neither any charge was brought against him nor was he informed about such a meeting. Moreover, no evidence on the charges of 'corrupting the morality of the youth' was submitted and he was dismissed without even a 'mockery of a trial'. (Edwards, 79-80) Even if the formal letter demonstrates a questioning and logical Derozio, the private letter, which he sent to H.H. Wilson, expressed his views on imparting education and on the charge of propagating atheism, which was his first and last attempt for vindication. As discussed earlier, Derozio would provide his students with an idea and it was the student's duty to mould it into his understanding, which was evident in their discussions of Tom Paine's '*Age of Reason*' or David Hume's scepticism and Reid's and Stewart's argument for theism, wherein he would encourage the students to argue, but not compromise pragmatism. Hence, Derozio claims that, as a teacher, his primary duty was to inculcate the ideas of

reason, scepticism and critical analysis, and could not have allowed students to have a linear dogmatic understanding of theology. He concludes by pointing that, if he was penalised for spreading Atheism, he must be credited for discussing Theism too. (Edwards, 83-84) The emphasis on pure reason bereft of any biases and consequences is noteworthy and it was this focus on pure reason without acknowledging the consequences, which assured his dismissal. After his expulsion from the college, Derozio founded and edited the newspaper, '*The East Indian*' and also made significant interventions for the cause of the East Indian community in the meeting held for drafting the 'second petition'[7] which was to be sent to the Houses of Parliament in Britain, before his untimely death by cholera in December 1831.

Legacy and Conclusion

The spark of critical reasoning and democratic spaces ignited by Derozio at Hindoo College was not extinguished by his students and contemporaries. The dismissal of their favourite teacher and the growing social presence of Brahmo Samaj, led to the formation of a radical students' organisation called the Young Bengal, which challenged the Hindu orthodoxy and subscribed to progressive thoughts of their master, Henry Derozio. The open space of dialogues and discussions through fluid channels of communication between friends was the chief proponent of the Young Bengal. The homosocial bonds of intellectual discourses amongst the Derozians is important to study as these non-hierarchised, independent informal structures or 'adda' would serve as an essential space for political and social discussions, throughout the history of nineteenth and twentieth century Bengal. Adda, as the quintessential Bengali

democratic space for metaphysical discussions, could be traced back to the model adopted by Derozio and the later Derozians in order to disseminate rationalised understanding of perceived wisdom. Even though historians like Sumit Sarkar indicate the failure of Young Bengal to organise 'a real campaign on any social reform', (Banerjee, 82) it is important to note that the organisation did not function through set ideologies or linear structures, but rather dwelled in the fluidity of social processes with reason as a constant entity. The Derozian model of rationality and independent thinking deeply penetrated into the urban spaces of sociality in the form of Brahmo circles and samitis formed during the Swadeshi Movement to the contemporary 'coffee house addas' amongst the likes of Satyajit Ray and Amartya Sen: all these channels of independent thought and processes of social movements followed the same Derozian principles of non-hegemonic free discourses. To summarise, the formation of Hindoo College was entrenched with orthodoxy and Hindu hegemony, evident from the non-inclusion of Raja Rammohan Roy in the Managerial Board and imparting education only to 'sons from good Hindoo families'. The sole motive of this kind of education was to facilitate familiarisation with a functioning knowledge of western thought in English language, in order to gain government employment and maintain their dominant social class amongst the natives. However, Henry Derozio did not subscribe with this form of 'transactional education', rather believed in 'opening the minds'[8] of his students through a syncretic hybridised curriculum, which focused not in a Positivist understanding of absolute truth, but rather on the dialectical argumentative traditions inherent in the western and Indian philosophies. As Derozio 'opened up' their minds, the students reacted by questioning

the religious dogmatism which the Managers did not anticipate, leading to the dismissal of Derozio. Even though I agree that the Hindoo College was structured on orthodoxy and elitism, it would be unfitting to view Derozio's dismissal as solely an ideological warfare between conservatism and western modernity. As suggested through his writings, Derozio functioned on the thresholds of various philosophical and argumentative traditions which allowed him to develop a reason, bereft of structures and affiliations. Furthermore, it is essential to locate the physical body and cultural identity of Derozio, a young 'creole' adult, functioning in a college administered by the conservative class. The absence of a strong cultural identity, unlike Rammohan Roy who hailed from a landed class or Alexander Duff who was a Scottish missionary, and the simultaneous marginalisation of the Eurasians by the colonial authorities as well as the natives, made him a weaker obstacle against the Managers of Hindu College who were both, older and culturally legitimised than Derozio, and wanted to set an example for the dissenting students. Thus, the monocausal binaries of his dismissal do not hold ground once the dissection of the Derozian operation is complete. What we find is a complex intertwining of literary imaginations, diverse philosophical influences and pure bonds of love and friendships situated in a tragic tussle between myriad modernities.

Notes

1. Even though the statement does not explicitly call out Derozio, it mentions the behaviour of 'a certain Teacher' who is destroying the 'moral character of the students and peace of the society'. See Thomas Edwards pg. 74 for the full memorandum.

2. There was a confusion of Derozio's year of employment as Prof. Rudrangshu Mukherjee, in a video seminar for Karwaan: The Heritage Exploration Initiative (available on Youtube), cited 1826. However, Sivanath Sastri and Thomas Edwards cited it to be 1828 and I have employed the same in my paper.

3. Creole is a person of pure European descent but born outside Europe. To read more on creole community and their role in forming a creole nationalism in the Americas, read chapter 4 : Creole Pioneers in Benedict Anderson's Imagined Community (*Second Edition*, 2006)

4. Irfan Habib argued that Mughal decline and the consequent political unrest was due to the high rate of land revenue demanded by the state, leading to a rural exploitation and arming up of peasants against the exploitative state. Refer to page 4 of Seema Alavi (ed.) "The Eighteenth Century in India" (OUP, 2002)

5. For a deeper understanding of Derozio's association with 'East Indian', view "Prof Rosinka Chaudhuri's Interaction at Visva-Bharati on Derozio's Poetry and Young Bengal" available on Youtube (published on 13 January, 2021)

6. Even before Derozio, Raja Rammohan Roy made a great influence on the young minds to drink wine, like the English *sahibs*. He was a great connoisseur of wine and recommended it for drinking

and cooking, however as Shastri notes that he did not realise the filthy habit he is leaving behind for students to adapt. See, pages 67 and 68 from Sivanath Sastri, "Ramtanu Lahiri, Brahmin and Reformer : A History of The Renaissance in Bengal" (SWAN SONNENSCHEIN & Co. Ltd, 1907)

7. The East Indians or Eurasians sent petitions to the British Parliament, in 1831 to seek equal rights like their British counterparts. The press on equal rights was essential, as the East Indians desired legitimacy and found themselves religiously closest to the Christian British. John William Rickett was sent as an East Indian agent to the British Parliament to submit the first petition. However, Derozio believed that it was imperative to send in a second petition as the House of Commons witnessed some changes in the ministry and that multiple petitions must be sent until equal rights of East Indians are granted. To read more on the Eurasian movement and Derozio's role in it, refer Rosinka Chaudhuri, "*The Politics of Naming: Derozio in Two Formative Moments of Literary and Political Discourse, Calcutta, 1825–31*" (Modern Asian Studies) and Thomas Edwards, "*Henry Derozio, The Eurasian, Poet, Teacher and Journalist*" pp. 141-160.

8. The phrase could be located in his work, *Sonnet : To My Pupils*, wherein he compares the opening of the minds of young students with that of petals. See Edwards, page 121.

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Sītā and Draupadī: Constructing the Self as Polyphonic through Utterances

Nishitha Mandava

The narrative of *Rāmayaṇa* is divided into seven books or *kāṇḍas*. It follows the story of Rāma, the eldest son of King Daśaratha of Kośala. Rāma is married to Sītā the princess of Mithila. Based on Rāma's stepmother Kaikeyī's demands, Daśaratha sends Rāma on a fourteen-year exile accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. During their exile, Sītā is abducted by Rāvaṇa. Eventually, Rāma succeeds in finding Sītā and killing Rāvaṇa. Rāma's coronation follows their return to Ayodhyā, the capital of Kośala. However, when Sītā's chastity is questioned, he banishes his pregnant wife to the forest. Though Rāma, later on, reunites with his sons, Sītā is swallowed by the earth. The other story that of the Mahābhārata tells the tale of the Pāṇḍavas engulfed in a political struggle against their cousins Kauravas for the throne of Hāstinapura. Spanning over eighteen books or *parvans*, the narrative includes the polyandrous marriage of the Pāṇḍavas with Draupadī, the princess of Pañcāla and a thirteen-year exile of the Pāṇḍavas after they gamble away everything to the Kauravas. Their rivalries climax into the Kurukṣetra war. Antoinette Burton notes that 'Insistence upon feminism rather than feminisms reduces the protagonists' multiple and often conflicting identities to the same flatness and inaccuracy as does the term 'woman', which denies racial, ethnic, national, sexual, age and class differences among women' (30). The present paper explores how Sītā and Draupadī, through their utterances, construct themselves as vehicles of multiple identities and gender ideologies. Both Sītā and Draupadī are some of the most prominent

female characters in their respective epics and take up several roles throughout the narrative due to which they appear as idealised *pativratās* and, at times, as aggressive. However, to refrain from labelling their personalities as inconsistent, the paper stresses on context specificity as suggested by A.K Ramanujan (Ramanujan, "Indian Way"). Here, by context, I mean firstly the general situation in which the utterance occurred. Secondly, the additional meaning that the utterance itself carries. Due to the richness of any natural language, utterances carry varying degrees of unintended context (Skinner 110) like social hierarchies, inner conflicts and familial relations. Sītā and Draupadī deliberately or unconsciously provide additional context and meaning through their utterances. Thus the paper turns to context specificity to focus on the act of constructing multi-voiced selves rather than on any particular emotion or trait of the heroines.

The concept of the multi-voiced self draws heavily from Mikhail Bakhtin's work. Bakhtin has suggested that Dostoevsky's novels involve plural voices that stand unmerged from the authorial voice (6). He further argues that the characters do not 'serve as a vehicle for the author's own ideological position' and instead have their own stream of consciousness (Bakhtin 7). These ideas become relevant when analysing Sītā and Draupadī's characters as they take determinate positions in various situations in relation to *dharma*, *varṇa*, family hierarchy and so on. Often, their worldviews are relatively autonomous from those of other characters. The paper does not aim to present a single unified theory of understanding the heroines and neither reconcile diverse positions. It is simply interested in asking what can Sītā and Draupadī tell us about themselves? The subsequent sections will illustrate the interpretive potential that their

utterances carry by using Ramanujan and Bakhtin's works as theoretical frameworks.

Sītā and Draupadī's conduct towards their husbands

Both *Rāmayaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* have a meta-story, and several subplots are encased within this meta-story. It is not just the main narrative that provides context for these subplots. The subplots simultaneously illuminate the main narrative - behaving as the 'microcosmic replica for the whole text' (Ramanujan, "Indian Way" 48-49). The subplots provide a context to explore various characters in greater detail without affecting the main narrative. This section will explore a subplot from *Rāmayaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* each where Sītā and Draupadī explain their conduct towards their husbands. In the *Mahābhārata* during the period of the exile of the Pāṇḍavas, a dialogue takes place between Kṛṣṇa's wife, Satyabhāmā and Draupadī. Satyabhāmā asks Draupadī how she conducts herself with the Pāṇḍavas and manages to keep them under her control. Draupadī attributes it to her abilities in pleasing her husbands, running the household and serving her in-laws. Draupadī proceeds to say: *I always control myself and never complain about my mother-in-law. O fortunate one! Through constant attention in daily pursuits and through servitude to the superiors, my husbands remain under my control. I always serve Kunti, the mother of brave ones and one who is always true in her words, myself—in her bathing, dressing and eating. I never cross her in issues of garments, ornaments or food. Pritha is the equal of the earth itself, and I never complain about her.* (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 3.222). As a part of the *pativratā dharma*, her husband's relatives and kin are to be conceived as forms of the husband himself (Dhand 174-175). Concern for them is a significant priority of the wife, and Draupadī illustrates the same through her utterance.

Additionally, when Draupadī says that she always controls herself from complaining about her mother-in-law and does not outshine her, it becomes evident that Draupadī is conscious of her family's power structure. Through the above-described actions towards Kuntī, she ensures the harmony in her household is not disturbed. Note how Draupadī constructs her multiple selves. Firstly, as a *pativratā* who cares for her husbands' family and secondly as a woman attentive to the familial hierarchy. By establishing her position in the familial hierarchy, she provides further context since one's obligations are tied to their position in the family. Classical Hinduism included a systemisation of relationships where one's authority and obligation were determined according to their place in their family, which further contextualised one's duty (Dhand 30). Later on, Draupadī says: *When Yudhishthira lived in Indraprastha, he possessed one hundred thousand horses and one hundred thousand elephants. Such were the king's instructions when he ruled the earth. I listened to them and laid down the number and tasks for all the servants and everything that was done in the inner quarters. I knew everything about the cowherds and the shepherds, what they did and did not do. I knew everything about the king's revenue and expenditure.* (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 3.222). By mentioning her involvement in administrative matters, she calls attention to her household functions that go beyond serving her family. Moreover, it points to her aristocratic or *kṣatriya* status, which makes her well-versed in imperial matters. Draupadī's indication of her aristocratic identity also introduces her position within the hierarchy of women. This connection between class structure and women is critical since regulations and prescribed conduct for women varied depending on their *varṇa*. In Classical Hinduism, one's gender, *varṇa* and

familial relations form crucial points of reference for determining one's duty. This entire episode with Satyabhāmā illustrates how Draupadī weaves these points of reference into her utterances to contextualise her household duties further. During the fourteen-year exile in the *Rāmayaṇa*, Sītā has a dialogue with the female ascetic Anasūyā. At the beginning of this dialogue, Anasūyā praises Sītā for accompanying her husband during the exile. She proceeds to elaborate on the duties of a devoted wife '*For a noble woman, the husband is the supreme divinity, even if he is evil in conduct, addicted to desire and bereft of riches. O Vaidehi! When I think about it, I do not see a relative who is superior to an appropriate husband.*' (Debroy, *Ramayana* 2.109). Sītā, in her reply, mentions: *Even if my husband is without a means of subsistence, I should show no hesitation in obeying him. What more can one say for someone who is praised for his qualities, compassion, conquest of the senses, firmness in devotion and for one who has dharma in his soul, following his mother and loved by his father? Whatever conduct the immensely strong Rāma exhibits towards Kousalya is identical to the conduct he exhibits towards all the other women of the king. He knows about dharma and is devoid of false pride.* (Debroy, *Ramayana* 2.110). Sītā focuses predominantly on the qualities of her husband. She praises his righteousness but provides little information about herself. Moreover, what seems important here is what she does not say through her utterances rather than what she says. Her remarks do not contest Anasūyā's comments on the duties of a wife and instead are in parallel with them. It would be reasonable to infer that Sītā agrees with Anasūyā. This creates an impression of Sītā being a devotional wife. Sītā provides little information on her functions in her household. She seems more concerned in explaining the strong sense of *dharma* that Rāma possesses. In contrast, in the context

that we have been discussing so far, Draupadī, who is in a similar situation of explaining her conduct towards her husbands, constructs herself as more than a complacent wife. Throughout her dialogue with Satyabhāmā, multiple voices of Draupadī coexist in her utterances since she takes on a variety of duties, from obeying her mother-in-law to handling imperial matters.

Anger, grief and resentment during crisis

Both Sītā and Draupadī face a series of injustices committed against them in numerous sections of the epics. These series of injustices make Sītā and Draupadī display suffering and embody voices of subversion. In the case of Draupadī, she is utterly humiliated by Duryodhana in the *Sabhāparvan* after she is put to wage in a game of dice by Yudhiṣṭhira. This episode of humiliation makes Draupadī channel her anger towards Duryodhana for revenge and her husbands due to their failure to defend her. Draupadī's anger is not limited to criticising her husbands privately. Instead, she critiques them publicly. One such instance takes place in Kṛṣṇa's court. Kṛṣṇa, who is an incarnation of Viṣṇu and the maternal cousin of the Pāṇḍavas, plays a significant role in the *Mahābhārata* especially when he provides cloth to Draupadī when the Kauravas attempt to disrobe her. He does not directly participate in the tensions that arise between Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas but often provides advice to the Pāṇḍavas. Draupadī in Kṛṣṇa's court questions '*I am a wife to the Parthas. I am your friend. I am Dhrishtadyumna's sister. How could someone like me be dragged to the sabha?*' (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 2.13). Draupadī here affirms her social status by mentioning her relations with the Pāṇḍavas, Kṛṣṇa and Dhṛṣṭadyumna. The status of the characters seems quite unfixed: they sometimes tend to act as individuals or as representing classes or values (Ramanujan, "Repetition in the

Mahābhārata" 181). Similarly, Draupadī here alludes to her identity as a *kṣatriya* rather than a woman as a basis to question the actions of the Kauravas. In terms of gender relations, Draupadī and the male relatives would be in a vertical relationship where she ranks lower, but in terms of social relations, it is horizontal since they belong to the *kṣatriya varṇa*. Her speech serves not only to put forward her ideological position but also defines and negotiates her social position. Similar to her utterances from the previous section here, she shows awareness of hierarchies; however, here, she mainly refers to a hierarchy based on *varṇa* rather than familial hierarchy. Additionally, there is no implication that the relevant context for an utterance is an immediate one (Skinner 116). Meaning Draupadī, through her remarks, could be responding to something from the past. Her utterance could be seen as being in conversation with previous events. Though the utterance is delivered to Kṛṣṇa and his court, she is simultaneously responding to the *adharmic* acts committed against her by the Kauravas and the inability of her husbands to protect her in the past. Draupadī goes on to remark, '*Shame on Bhimasena's strength! Shame on Partha's Gandiva! Both of them allowed me to be oppressed by insignificant ones. The eternal path of dharma is always followed by the righteous ones. The husband, however weak he may be, must protect his wife*.' (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 2.13). Here she openly complains to Kṛṣṇa about her husbands' failure to protect her from humiliation and questions their valour. According to her, they failed to discharge their duties as husbands as they could not stand in her defence. Even though this is not the first instance of Draupadī questioning her husbands, here, she openly critiques them in Kṛṣṇa's court in front of everyone present. Lastly, she says, '*O Madhusudana! I have no husbands. I have no sons. I do not have a brother*

or a father. Nor do I have any relatives. When I was oppressed by inferior ones, you ignored me, unmoved by sorrow.' (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 2.13). Note how Draupadī here impulsively mentions her male relatives in particular and how she wants to cut herself off from them. This reflects her intense desire to do away with patriarchal power relations that made her humiliation possible. The male relatives represent the nexus between patriarchy and *varṇa* that failed to protect her honour. Thus she wishes to escape from the duties and responsibilities she owes them. Draupadī hints at feelings of isolation and estrangement in this patriarchal society and patrilocal family (Shah, "Articulation, Dissent" 81-82). She displays a strong realisation of victimisation, and she responds to it by outspoken attacks on her husbands, considering herself to be *nāthavatīanāthavat*, meaning 'one with husbands and yet an orphan' (Shah, "Articulation, Dissent" 81).

Sītā goes through a fair number of ordeals like Draupadī. Among these ordeals, her abduction by Rāvaṇa is one of the prominent ones. In the Laṅkā where Rāvaṇa traps her, she expresses anger and grief in the form of a monologue. She says: *I am unable to see my husband and am under the control of the rakshasis. I am indeed suffering because of my sorrow, like a bank deluged by the water. His eyes are like lotus petals and his brave stride is like that of a lion. He is grateful and pleasant in speech. Those who are able to see my lord are fortunate.* (Debroy, *Ramayana* 5.23). Here Sītā laments for Rāma, and unlike Draupadī, she does not criticise her husband and only wonders why he has not rescued her yet. While Draupadī questions her husbands' abilities due to their failure to protect her, Sītā instead praises her husband's nature and does not doubt his abilities. A probable reason for such a stark difference is because Draupadī was not responsible for her humiliation. Instead, it

was Yudhiṣṭhira who waged her in the game of dice. In Sītā's case, Rāma does not play such a direct role in causing her abduction, and Sītā probably considers herself as partly responsible for her abduction since she was the one who sent Rāma in search of the golden deer which gave Rāvaṇa the opportunity to abduct her. Sītā's vehement demand for the golden deer is far from the ideal behaviour, and instead, she was consumed by greed (Sutherland 76). In her view, this transgression of ideal behaviour led to her abduction, thus making her turn inwards and be aggressive to herself. She expresses intense feelings of guilt and shame in the proceeding lines. Sītā laments*: Earlier, what kind of great sin have I committed in a different life? That is the reason I have obtained this extremely terrible and dreadful misery. Surrounded by this great sorrow, I wish to give up my life. When I am protected by these rakshasis, I cannot reach Rama. Indeed, shame on being a human. Shame on being under someone else's control. I am incapable of giving up this uneasy life.* (Debroy, *Ramayana* 5.23). In the previous excerpt, sorrow was a dominant feature, but her sorrow turns into blame and rage as she advances through her monologue. In this second excerpt, she directs anger towards herself. She asks herself which sin of hers from her previous life might have led to this separation with her husband. She blames and resents herself for this separation (Sutherland 75-76). Even though Sītā seems to blame herself here, she cannot be understood as limited to directing rage internally. A dialogue takes place between Rāvaṇa and Sītā where he confesses his desire for her (Debroy, *Ramayana* 5.18). Sītā, in her response, includes an analogy where she says, '*You entered the lonely hermitage when the two lions among men weren't there. O inferior one! You abducted me when the two brothers had gone out. Like a dog smells out the scent and is incapable of remaining*

in a spot when there is a tiger present, you smelt out Rama and Lakshmana.' (Debroy, *Ramayana* 5.19). Here Sītā proves to be verbally tactical as she equates Rāvaṇa's actions of abducting her to a dog smelling out a scent which questions Rāvaṇa's valour. She proceeds to say that this dog is incapable of coexisting in a spot with the tiger, the tiger being Rāma. Sītā renders Rāvaṇa's actions as cowardly and fashions herself as outspoken through these lines. Overall the differences in Sītā and Draupadī in this section firstly is Sītā's rage that is directed internally towards herself which she laments through a monologue, whereas Draupadī directs her aggression externally towards her husbands and the Kauravas through a dialogue. Secondly, their methods to describe suffering also differ because the monologue was performed privately while the dialogue was publicised in Kṛṣṇa's court. In Sītā's monologue, her source of rage predominantly is the separation from her husband, while for Draupadī, her humiliation becomes a greater source of rage rather than the humiliation of her husbands. Lastly, both the heroines refer to feelings of estrangement and isolation in their dialogues. However, in the case of Sītā, she is suffering literal estrangement from her husband, while Draupadī's sense of isolation is symbolic. She feels isolated in a patriarchal society that failed to protect her honour. Even though both Sītā and Draupadī exhibit aggression and suffering, their approaches to displaying it through their utterances differ. By directing aggression towards herself, Sītā is assumed as a *pativratā* and Draupadī as socially deviant for holding her husbands accountable. However, the context-sensitive nature of their personalities resists such generalised labels. The following section will demonstrate the same.

Reasoning the *kṣatriya dharma*

The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* rightly notes, '*Dharma* and *adharma* do not go saying 'Here we are! Nor do the Gods, Gandharvas, or Ancestors tell us 'This is *dharma*,' 'This is *adharma*." (Fitzgerald 671). Similarly, despite *dharma* being a recurring theme in the epics, they do not explicitly define what *dharma* means. Thus owing to its wide semantic range, multiple conceptions of *dharmas* coexist in the epics giving rise to various dilemmas. 'Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth in the process of their dialogic interaction' (Bakhtin 110). Dialogic interactions are essential in the epics to portray how the characters are not present to enforce a singular notion of *dharma*. Instead, the audience is made aware of the multiple interpretations of *dharma* through these interactions. This section will look at how Draupadī and Sītā articulate their interpretations of *dharma* that are distinct from that of their husbands. Draupadī, during the exile, reasons with her husband Yudhiṣṭhira to take action against Duryodhana for the injustice and humiliation he has caused them. She says: *It is certain that there is no anger left in you. Despite seeing your brothers and me, your mind is not miserable. But the sacred texts say that there is no kshatriya in the world without anger. But in you, today, I see that which is contrary to kshatriyas. O Partha! A kshatriya who does not display his energy when the time is right is always despised by all beings.* (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 2.28). Here she not only questions Yudhiṣṭhira's inability to discharge his duties as a husband but also as a *kṣatriya*. Yudhiṣṭhira being a *kṣatriya* is traditionally expected to exhibit power, valour and bravery, but he does not seem to show a sign of any. By raising the issue of Yudhiṣṭhira not following the obligations laid out for *kṣatriya*, she refers to him not following his *svadharma*. For *kṣatriya*, the essence of the *svadharma* includes

using violence in defending good against evil (Thapar 1832). Draupadī further uses Prahlāda and Bali's story as an analogy to explain the need for knowing when to show forgiveness and when to seek revenge (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 2.29). This story nested within her utterance provides more meaning to her ideological position regarding *dharma*. Instead of proceeding with the description of her ideological position, she uses the story as an analogy that is presentational rather than discursive in nature. The interpretation of *dharma* contained within Prahlāda's story is meant to mirror Draupadī's interpretation of *dharma*. What is contained mirrors the container (Ramanujan, "Indian Way" 51). Yudhiṣṭhira replies, '*He who always restrains his anger obtains prosperity. O beautiful one! But he who never controls his anger, never obtains prosperity. The terrible anger contributes to his downfall.*' (Debroy, *Mahabharata* 2.30). This debate between Draupadī and Yudhiṣṭhira is not because one of their interpretation of *dharma* is incorrect. Instead, they have particularised and interpreted it differently. Yudhiṣṭhira looks at aggressiveness as an undesirable emotion as he seems to stand for Brahmanical values, while Draupadī conceptualised aggression as an instrument for *kṣatriya* to eradicate injustice. It has been argued that this conflict arises between them because of the imbalance in their relationship (Malinar 80). Their happiness depends on maintaining this harmony, but Yudhiṣṭhira is no more the royal husband that Draupadī once married. This loss of royal status causes Draupadī to complain and demand revenge (Malinar 80-82). Her arguments point to the disruption of social and caste ideals that have been caused due to their exile. Similarly, Sītā engages herself in a debate with her husband during the exile regarding the *kṣatriya dharma*. During their time in the Daṇḍaka forest, *rakshasas* often attacked the hermits that

cohabited the forest. The sages approached Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa for help. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa took a pledge to protect the hermits. Sītā tells Rāma that she is against the killing of *rakshasas*. She says*: You should never permit the act of picking up the bow and turn your mind towards causing enmity and slaying the rakshasas who have found a refuge in Dandaka. O brave one! In this world, it is not desirable to kill someone who has committed no crime. For kshatriyas and brave ones who have turned their minds to dwelling in the forest, the bow must only be taken up to protect those who are afflicted.* (Debroy, *Ramayana* 3.8). Sītā's objection to violence here has been seen as revealing her quality of tenderness (Bhattacharji 34). Alternatively, it could be understood as her sense of *kṣatriya dharma* clashing with that of her husband. She argues that being a *kṣatriya* does not legitimise unnecessary use of violence. For her, the forest was a natural abode of the *rakshasa*; thus, indulging in their killings was not an act of valour and rather unjust (Shah, "Articulation, Dissent" 82). Dhand has suggested that violence is spatially confined in the *Mahābhārata* (47). Random expression of violence is not permitted and is 'limited to particular uses, particular people, at particular places, during particular times' (Dhand 46). A similar logic runs through Sītā's arguments. For her, the forest was meant for *tapaḥ* (meditation) rather than for violence; thus, it was against the *deśadharma* (Shah, "Articulation, Dissent" 82). She further says, '*Artha flows from dharma. Happiness results from dharma. Everything is obtained through dharma. Dharma is the essence of this universe.*' (Debroy, *Ramayana* 3.8). These lines show that she is arguing for the case of *rakshasas*, not because of her tenderness and instead to uphold *dharma*. Rāma replies that he has already vowed to help the sages by killing the *rakshasas*, and thus, he does not consider Sītā's advice (Debroy, *Ramayana* 3.9). In order for

Rāma to enforce his sense of *dharma*, he would be required to contend Sītā's interpretation in an equal or greater force, but that is not the case here. Neither there is any uniform consensus formed between them by the end of this dialogue regarding *dharma*. Sītā, in her argument, was alluding to *deśadharma* while Rāma seems to be referring to *svadharma* where for being a *kṣatriya* he is expected to adhere to his vow. In both Draupadī and Yudhiṣṭhira's dialogue and Sītā and Rāma's dialogue, none of their interpretations of *dharma* proves to be incorrect. Rāma and Yudhiṣṭhira are foremost concerned with righteousness and have well-defined moral compasses. However, the above episodes inform us that this does not stop their respective wives from contradicting their interpretations of *dharma*. Further, in these instances, it becomes apparent that an authorial voice does not bound Draupadī and Sītā. Their voices remain unmerged and distinctive from their husbands. This presents how the world appears to Draupadī and Sītā.

Conclusion

The previous sections have illustrated how multiple selves coexist in Sītā and Draupadī and how these selves find a voice depending on the circumstances. These multiple often contradicting voices exist within them without merging into a dogmatic unity, thus facilitating multiple interpretations of their personalities. However, as noted previously, this does not mean their personalities lack consistency or coherence. They simply operate on a different logic- context sensitivity. Thus their personalities resist generalised labels (i.e. subordinate, deviant). The paper has also focused on the external elements that Sītā and Draupadī internalised in their utterances like *varṇa*, familial relations and *dharma* since they act as a layer of context for their utterances. Several concentric nests of contexts that

surround their utterances contend the assumption that Sītā and Draupadī have a static identity or embody a universal gender ideology. Each addition is a subtraction from the universal (Ramanujan, "Indian Way" 48). Thus the paper has not focused on a particular trait of Sītā and Draupadī and has instead chosen to focus on the act of them constructing their selves to explore the multiplicity of gender ideologies that they embody. Taking up diverse contexts like Sītā and Draupadī discussing their conduct towards their husbands, them lamenting or expressing grief over their ordeals, and lastly, the debates they engage with their husbands regarding *dharma* provide an opportunity to observe how they interact and negotiate with their various identities related to gender, *varṇa*, and family. More importantly, understanding them through their own utterances ensures the complex selves they construct are not subsumed into monolithic labels like subordinate or subversive. The paper has attempted to create a space for discussing the multiple gender ideologies embedded within Sītā and Draupadī's utterances. It has done so by arguing that Sītā and Draupadī exhibit their own line of consciousness that stands apart from the authorial consciousness. Their self-consciousness is represented through their utterances rather than merely describing it (Bakhtin 51). The heroines illuminate their world through their own consciousness (Bakhtin 49). Throughout these epics, there are several instances where female characters embed their worldviews into their utterances that have rich interpretive potential to understand the multiple gender ideologies that operate in the epics. This could provide fresh insights into how the female literary characters' construct and define their distinctive multi-voiced selves despite their limited presence in the epics.

Notes

1. Śūrpaṇakhā was a rakshasa and the sister of Rāvaṇa. Her advances were rejected both by Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. The humiliation caused by this makes her attack Sītā, and in this context, Lakṣmaṇa mutilates her nose.

2. When Sītā was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa went in search of her. In this process, they meet Ayomukhī, a rakshasa who approaches Lakṣmaṇa. Lakṣmaṇa, in anger, disfigures her face.

3. A pativratā is considered to be the ideal woman who is devoted to her husband. She is expected to place her husband before her.

4. The narratives of Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa exist in various traditions within and beyond South Asia. They are a part of numerous literary, oral and performative traditions. However, these various tellings or versions of the epics need not be titled as Rāmāyaṇa or Mahābhārata. For instance, Hikayat Perang Pandawa Jaya translating to 'The Tale of the war of the victorious Pandava' is one of the Malay versions of the Mahābhārata. Similarly, the Rāmcaritamānas, meaning 'The Lake of the Acts of Rāma' is a telling of Rāmāyaṇa in the Awadhi language composed by the Bhakti poet Tulsidas.

5. The theory of dialogical self draws heavily from Bakhtin's work. Laurie Patton has used this concept of dialogical self to illustrate how the self is constructed multiple in the Mahābhārata.

6. Anasūyā is sage Atri's wife. When Rāma and Sītā visit her hermitage during the exile, she is known to have provided Sītā with an ointment that gives her eternal beauty. She is well known for her pativratā ideals in the Rāmāyaṇa however; in the Mahābhārata, a different image of her is presented. She is mentioned to have left her husband to ensure she was never dominated by him. See (Shah, "On Gender, Wives and "Pativratās"" 80-81).

7. One needs to be cautioned against generalising Sītā's character as confirming with the pativratā ideals based on her dialogue with Anasūyā. Before the exile, when Rāma does not consent to Sītā accompanying him, she makes several remarks that make it evident that her

construction of self is highly context-sensitive. She says, '*What will my father, the lord of Videha and Mithila think of himself? O Rama! He has obtained a son-in-law who is a woman in the guise of a man. In their ignorance, the people utter a falsehood about Rama's strength scorching like the rays of the sun. There is no great energy in you.*' (Debroy, Ramayana 2.27). Here by questioning Rāma's masculinity, she transgresses the pativratā ideals and constructs herself as outspoken. What is striking is her desire to ensure Rāma does not desert her in the palace since she would be left unprotected.

8. Prahlāda was the son of the rakshasa Hiraṇyakaśipu. He was also the devotee of Viṣṇu. Bali, Prahlāda's grandson, was a devotee of Viṣṇu too. A dialogue takes place between them when Bali asks Prahlāda whether forgiveness or revenge is better. Here Prahlāda advises to 'learn the nature of both so that there is no scope for doubt.' (Debroy, Mahabharata 3.29).

9. See (Ramanujan, "Repetition in the Mahābhārata" 180-183) for further discussion on Yudhiṣṭhira aligning with Brahmanical values.

10. Dharma that is specific to different regions.

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A Rendezvous Between Languages: A Look at the Convergence of Sanskrit and Persian in Early Modern North India

Anoushka Deb

Historians, for a long time, have overlooked the existence of languages other than Persian at the Mughal court (Alam and Asher and Talbot). This is a deliberate attempt to maintain the dichotomy between 'Hindus' and 'Muslims'. The concept was brought in by Orientalist scholars to South Asian history, during the colonial era. However, the history of South Asia, especially the Early Modern period cannot be studied keeping 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' as two separate, divided identities. Their convergence is especially crucial to understanding the socio-cultural ethos of the era. Sanskrit intelligentsia, Brahmins, Jain merchants often undertook the patronage of Mughal rulers to flourish in their respective occupations. The favour was vital for the ruler's image in public.[1] These diverse cultural trends often also manifested in the personal taste of the emperors. For instance, Akbar's library had a vast section of literature in Sanskrit. The Mahabharata and Ramayana were translated into Persian under his command. These examples supplement the point that I make about the inclusivity of the Mughal imperial court. Building on Audrey Truschke's argument, the paper will demonstrate that the Mughal court did contain space for diverse languages to enter, meet, interact and flourish and enabled the Mughal patrons of music from outside the Subcontinent to become a true connoisseur of Hindustani classical music. I will also review the development of *khayal,* a genre immensely important to Hindustani classical music and show how it surfaced only during the 17th century. Music was a very important tradition in the Mughal dynasty and not just during

festivals and occasions, but even amidst regular functioning of the court and harem. Tansen, a name today almost synonymous with Hindustani classical music, was one of Akbar's nine jewels. However, the tradition came to a halt, when the sixth Mughal ruler, Aurangzeb (1658-1707), post 1668 banned music in the imperial court.[2] Historians view this as one of his many steps towards becoming an orthodox, conservative, Sunni Muslim sovereign. However, recent research provides a different angle to the emperor's decision; a debate which will be taken up at a later stage.

The Interaction Between Sanskrit and Persian

Babur established his kingdom in the heartland of North India in 1526 CE. He observed the diverse range of cultural traditions which inhabitants of the land followed. Over the years, the Mughals too came to adopt several Indian cultures and practises. This is how Sanskrit and Persian came to meet and form connections through people from diverse backgrounds. These interactions further spilled over to other regional kingdoms as well. The Sanskrit intellectuals never learned Persian, but the Hindu nobles of the court such as Todar Mal or Chandar Bhan Brahman became extremely efficient in it, the latter even writing poetry in Persian (Truschke *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court,* 8). Katherine Butler Schofield (*nee* Brown) in her studies has demonstrated exchanges between Sanskrit and Persian musical theories. These musical exchanges between South Asia and West and Central Asia led to the birth of two modern Hindustani classical instruments- the sitar and sarod. The influence is also evident in the very naming of some of the *ragas* such as Kafi, Hijaj, and Alamgiri, to name a few. Faqirullah even claims that certain *ragas* are created from

maqams, but there is lack of any constructive evidence to support this.[3] A major source on Hindustani classical music in the 17th century are the works of the Persian authors who migrated to the Subcontinent and wrote about the music of both lands. *Abu al-Nigam* by Abu al-Ra'uf gives a detailed explanation of the *ragas*, including the seven *surs*, *tala*, *tana*, *varna* of the Hindustani classical music, along with Persian *maqams*. It cannot escape our notice that most of these treatises such as *Risalih-yi Musiqi* by Ahmad Monzavi, *Tuhfat al-Hind* by Mirza Han Ibn-i Fahr al-Din Muhammad, *Ma'rifah al-Nigam* by Qiysar among a few describe both Hindustani and Persian classical music in detail. This undoubtedly implies that the authors from Central Asia inculcated within them a vast plethora of knowledge of the former. Some of these works were carried under the patronage of either Mughal rulers or the Bahmani Sultans of the Deccan as the dedication shows.[4] The writers must have studied the *ragas* extensively, which clearly indicates that the Persian elements interacted with the Hindustani musicians at the imperial court. These Mughal patrons of Hindustani art, who traced their lineage from Central and West Asia championed ragas whose central theme was love, or more appropriately those which invoked the *shringara rasa*, or as they knew in Persian, *ishq* (love) (Schofield "Learning to Taste the Emotions: The Mughal Rasika" 419). Evoking a specific emotion or *rasa* is characteristic of both Persian and Hindustani classical music. Before moving on, let us understand the concept of *rasa*. Rasa, a sentiment or an emotion invoked by art, is a feature instrumental to any Hindustani classical art genre- music, dance, painting or poetry. There are nine rasas- *hasya* (comic), *karuna* (compassion), *raudra* (anger), *bhayanak* (fear), *adhbut* (wonder), *veer* (heroic), *shant* (tranquillity), *vibhasta* (disgust) and *shringara*

(desire or love). Known as the king of the *rasas,* the *shringara rasa* is said to arouse twice the emotion compared to the other *rasas.* Katherine Schofield demonstrates how an important requirement to become a true connoisseur (*rasika*) of music for a patron in the Mughal court coming from outside was to 'learn to taste the *rasas*' and not just intellectually study it, but experiment with it. This is a part of a larger process of examining whether possibilities exist that enable non-verbal experiences to travel from one culture to another. The first step is to observe a common ground for music in both cultures. The patrons were already illuminated about the role of music in Indian traditions owing to the several musical treatises sponsored by the court nobles, themselves included. Both traditions of music focused so much on the response of the audience, which became a critical factor to the Persian nobles in understanding Indian aesthetic traditions.[5]

The *rasa* theory was well known at the imperial court by the 16th century. There were Sanskrit and vernacular texts referred to as the *nayika-bheda*, categorising the distinction between a hero and a heroine in both prose and poetry, using traditional metaphors. These lyrics were exemplary of the *rasas.* The Mughals were not just well aware of these catalogues, but they even had them translated into the lingua franca of the court, Persian. The *nayika-bheda* poetic custom celebrated the *shringara rasa.* Both Indic, especially the *bhraj* (a language popularly spoken in the Gangetic belt of India), and Persian poetry had a vast corpus of compositions narrating the longing of the heroine (*nayika*) awaiting her beloved, or the grief of losing him. The particular taste of the female perspective in the story is similar to the sufis who in their songs lament the search of God, who is the true lover of their soul; soul taking the feminine pronoun. Agreeing with Schofield, it is this likeness

between the two emotions that links the Mughal connoisseur of music to the Indian *rasika*.[6] A classic example of the aesthetics of desire in poetry is Qutban Suhrawardi's *Mirigavati* (trans. *The Magic Doe*). Qutban, a sufi writes in the *Mirigavati* a tale of a royal prince and a mystical doe, metaphoric of a doe-woman. shadowing the story of Marica, the deer in the Ramayana, who was sent to lure Rama out of the hut into the forest. The prince, upon spotting the doe, is overwhelmed by desire, unable to think or do anything else. This piece is not just an example of the aesthetics of desire or the *shringara rasa* ornamenting the tale of the prince and the doe, but also of the intersection of non sufi traditions among sufi writings.[7] A prime example of a Mughal connoisseur who became a *rasika* is Saif Khan Faqirullah, a high ranking *mansabdar* (a strand of landed armed Mughal nobility) and the author of *Rag Darpan*, a 1666 musical treatise. According to him, music was a momentary experience, specifically of *ishq*. Other connoisseurs of music at the imperial court included al-Gazzali, Abu'l Fazl, Mirza Khan, Ras Baras Khan who also showed their extensive knowledge about the *rasas*. Neither of them explained in complete sense about it, but they did take painstaking efforts to study each *raga* and the *rasa* they were associated with, which displayed their high level of understanding of both the concept and Hindustani classical music.[8]

The Origin of Khayal

Numerous sufi and *qawwali* songs were also inspired and adapted from the *ragas*. Several *ghazals* (a genre of music) composed in Urdu, were highly inspired by the *khayal*. As a genre of Hindustani classical music, the latter's birth is a matter of debate, owing to religious controversies between 'Hindus' and 'Muslims'. Historians of the Nationalist school date its

origin to the period before the arrival of Islam to the Subcontinent.[9] Just the very notion of having to trace the roots of a genre of Hindustani classical music, to anything Middle eastern seems farcical to this group of scholars. However, the earliest written mention of the *khayal*, as evident from the essay "The Origin and Early Development of Khayal" is found in a Mughal text dated to 1637 (Schofield, 161). The creation of *khayal* cannot be attributed to either Amir Khusrau or Husain Shah Sharqi, as has been put forward by most studies pertaining to this topic (Wade and Jairazbhoy). For in all of Khusrau's works, nowhere has the mention of *khayal* been found. Yet, its seeds were laid by both Khusrau and Sharqi, undoubtedly (Schofield, 161). Khusrau's affinity for music led to the creation of Sufi devotional music- the *qawwali.* Dargah Quli Khan affirmed that the *qawwali* (a form of devotional music) was the most famed form of music during the reign of the Mughal ruler, Muhammad Shah. He particularly notes the eminent qawwal Taj Khan Qawwal, whose sons and successors were the *khayal* singers Jani and Ghulam Rasul, who founded the Lucknow *khayal* style. Ni'mat Khan, who occurs frequently in Quli Khan's memoirs is mentioned as a composer of *khayal* and a phenomenal qawwal. Most notable is the references of Ni'mat Khan often participating in the ceremony of *urs* (death day of a sufi) and conducting *sama* (a Sufi ritual). The relation between *khayal* and *qawwali* becomes even clearer in the 19th century, when Bade Muhammad Khan, founder of the Gwalior *gharana* (classical music or dance schools in South Asia), introduced the characteristic *tana* of the *khayal,* borrowing it from the *qawwali.* Thus, it is fairly certain that Khusrau cannot be credited with the origin of the *khayal*, which came to the fore much after his time.[10] Even the court of Husain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur,

the last Sharqi ruler, which has been often cited to be the birthplace of the *khayal, cannot* be held responsible for it. The earliest reference to Husain Shah Sharqi links him with a form of music, now completely out modelled, known as *cutkula*. The *Ain-i-Akbari* by Abu'l Fazl gives the earliest mention of the *cutkula,* while the earliest mention of the *khayal* is much later, in 1637, as noted above, in the *Padshahnama.* In his Ain-i-Akbari, Fazl mentions the *cutkula* being native to Jaunpur.[11] But scholars clarify that these references point to *khayal* and *cutkula* being distinguished from each other. The first time they appeared in a text together was the *Mirzanama* in the British Library, which differentiated the two genres with a very thin, blurred line. In c. 1700 CE, a musical treatise refers to the *khayal* and the *cutkula* as one and the same. Since then, the *cutkula* went amiss from Indo-Persian texts, mentioned seldom, in passing, synonymous to *khayal.*[12] Hence, Husain Shah Sharqi cannot be credited with the creation of *khayal*, but only with a very different form of music, which later became concurrent to the *khayal.* Sources support the sightings of *khayal* in Delhi by the late 16th, early 17th century. There is no doubt that khayal borrowed heavily from older genres such as *qaul* and *tarana.* Schofield finds descriptions in the *Ain-i-Akbari* stating that 16th century *qawwals* specialised in the style of Jaunpur, which has been taken to mean the *cutkula.*[13] Her proposition that the *khayal* grew with borrowings from both regional genres and Khusrau's talent seems to make the most sense in the formation of the genre. This would explain the similarities between the forms of music, however, the disappearance of *cutkula* still remains a mystery. Even if we assume that eventually *khayal's* popularity grew among *qawwal* circles that does not explain the total invisibility of *cutkula* from any source post 1700. We cannot ignore the fact that there

may be sources pertaining to the discourse which have not yet been unearthed and thus reaching a consensus about the mystery of the *cutkula*, in that light might be erroneous. The nexus formed between Delhi and Jaunpur must be crucial to the development of *khayal.* By the 17th century, Jaunpur had become an important Sufi centre and a pilgrimage site, connecting South Asia to the Middle East (Ibid). Pilgrimages became a way of transporting ideas and traditions from one region to another by the sufis. As a matter of fact, Shaikh Qutban, the author of Mirigavati , wrote the text while in exile in the court of Jaunpur. The *cutkula* could have taken a similar route of travel from Jaunpur to Delhi, where it met the *qawwali* and various other genres of music, which led to the emergence of *khayal*. One of the places they collided, must have been the Mughal imperial court, since the Mughal rulers and their family, have been noted as being both devout followers of sufi saints and patrons of music. For instance, Akbar regularly visited the tomb of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti in Ajmer and also commissioned the tomb of the saint's descendant, Salim Chishti.

Aurangzeb and Music

An interesting point is that the period during the development of *khayal* coincides majorly with Aurangzeb's reign. His period witnessed the writing of more musical treatises than since the inception of the empire (Schofield *Hindustani music in the time of Aurangzeb* 28). What is fascinating is the fact that a major portion of Hindustani classical music evolved during the rule of a sovereign whose image is set as a highly conservative Muslim who banned all forms of cultural enjoyment, including music. Recent studies of his reign open new arenas for research as they bring to light evidence that suggests a vastly different perspective on the emperor. During the start

of his rule, Aurangzeb continued with every custom and tradition followed by the Mughal sovereigns before him, which included playing music, giving gifts, keeping a court historian, being weighed against precious metals, and the royal *darshan* (appearance). The beginning of an austere atmosphere at the imperial court when Aurangzeb ceased to perform many of these customary rituals and banned music, musicians and the court historian, occurred almost a decade after the start of his reign (Truschke *Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's most Controversial King* 42). But how far is it alright to call it an attempt at removing all Hindu elements of the court? Studying evidence provided by revisionist historiography, I question whether Aurangzeb really banned music because Islam frowned upon it or whether it was a personal choice. In a letter written to his son, Aurangzeb states that music was a proper imperial custom, even though he never brought it back to the court (Ibid.). His children lent the greatest patronage to music. Ni'mat Khan's (the *khayal* composer and an eminent *qawwal*) first patron was Aurangzeb's favourite son Muhammad Azam Shah, who was dedicated the *Tuhfat al-Hind* written by Mirza Khan and was himself a renowned composer (Schofield *Hindustani music in the time of Aurangzeb* 107). The number of Mughal elites who offered patronage to music and musical treatises in Aurangzeb's court far exceeded that of any other Mughal ruler prior to him. N. P. Ahmad argues that the upsurge in the works on music, especially those connecting Persian and Hindustani genres was the artists' way of protesting against Aurangzeb's hostile policies. A revision of the texts suggests that none of the texts actually mention any restrictions on music and instead, include the current customs of 17th century music.[14] There exist sources; written texts, paintings and so on which demonstrate the continuation of

Persian musical performance in the Mughal court even in the 18th century. The *Mirzanama* in the British Library gives elaborate descriptions of the ideal *mehfil*. In fact, Faqirullah, the author of *Rag Darpan* was a favourite of both Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. By the time of his demise in 1684, he could be counted amongst Aurangzeb's top 200 *mansabdars*. His long-term relationship with the poet Miyan Shah Nasir Ali is speculated to perhaps even be celebrated. This instance offers a rather different perspective on Aurangzeb's conservative stance as a religious fundamentalist.[15] A commentary of Damodara's *Sangitadarpana, Shams al-Aswat* was written by Ras Baras Khan Kalawant, completed in 1698 and dedicated to Aurangzeb. The eulogy to the emperor in the preface points to the emperor being the patron of this work. Ras Baras Khan Kalawant was the heir to the most prominent musical lineage of the empire. Everybody from his family had exclusively served the ruler. Therefore, much after banning music from his court, Aurangzeb was still offering patronage to musicians. Jahanara, his sister, Zebunnissa, his favourite daughter and his Prime Minister (post the alleged ban in 1668), publicly provided musicians with employment.[16] There are still primary accounts, such as that written by Niccolao Manucci (an Italian traveller to the Mughal court during Aurangzeb's rule) that provides an elaborate description of Aurangzeb's ban, calling it 'the death of music'. Manucci even writes how a funeral procession was taken out for music, burying it and Aurangzeb suggesting everyone to pray for its soul. However, to what extent can the text be relied upon is a matter of consideration since Manucci's main aim was to write a political narrative of the Mughal court and not about its culture.[17] Moreover, as Schofield argues, if indeed what Manucci writes is true, which scholars do believe it is,

how does it explain the immense patronage to music given by Bahadur Shah, Aurangzeb's successor? Is it possible for music to revive itself so soon and so thoroughly after being diminished for almost 40 years? How can we account for the development of the *khayal* and the *ghazal* in the 17th and 18th centuries if Aurangzeb banned music? Even Manucci does note that despite having banned music, Aurangzeb continued to keep singers and dancers, for the entertainment of his harem. Contemporary to Manucci's text, was Khafi Khan's (historian in Mughal empire) version of Aurangzeb's ban on music. He looks at it from a completely secular perspective and does not give any details similar to Manucci.[18] Meanwhile, Schofield firmly states that even if we accept that music was banned, it must imply certain genres of music, or it was effective only for a short while. A complete ban on music, she argues, is unacceptable. Khafi Khan's text aids in reinterpreting the ban, making it seem to not be so severe as historians claim. The text suggests that the ban was meant only for *qawwals* and *kalawants*. This is echoed by two more contemporary texts- *Mir'at-i Alam* by Bakhtawar Khan and *Ma'asir-i Alamgiri* by Saqi Musta'idd Khan, which cites the former. The first text's publication was personally permitted by Aurangzeb. But the texts clearly mention how the musicians were well taken care of by the emperor, who sought to minimise any of their burden. Those who left playing music, had their *mansab* rank increased. Aurangzeb, in both the texts speaks of music as being permissible, neither good nor evil.[19] Scholars infer this to imply that the ban was a personal choice, and not coerced upon anybody else, which is evident from instances noted above. Furthermore, there exist no source mentioning about a major departure of *qawwals* and *kalawants* from Aurangzeb's court.

Conclusion

Narratives of oral cultural performances present several difficulties in their reconstruction (Orsini and Schofield). But, hidden between the lines of these narratives are glimpses of political and socio-economic histories and hence make these writings even more important. Persian influence in music points to a high degree of economic, political and personal relations with Iran, a fact depicted in matrimonial alliances between the kingdoms as well. The paper is written keeping in mind the difficulties in translations, the unreliable relationship between sources and passing time and many other shortcomings that have only increased owing to current circumstances. The dichotomy between 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' and the 'Sanskrit' and 'Persian' languages are quite modern, but they have become so prominent that it feels as old as time itself. I have raised questions on the legitimacy of this division during the Mughal Era to conclude that the Mughal court was a comprehensive space which welcomed languages, religions, customs, practises and traditions that were varied and severely different from the royal family's own personal beliefs. The Mughal court, the paper argues, was a hub for exchange of ideas and forming new networks which led to new inventions, the Hindustani classical music being an example. A cross between Persian *maqams* and the native Indian *raga-ragini-putra* system,[20] the North Indian classical music traces its roots back to both Persian and Sanskrit influence. What further aided this connection was the excessive significance derived from the aestheticization of all forms of arts in both cultures. Emotions such as those of love and desire, known as *rasas* in Sanskrit, have been central to music in both Persian and Sanskrit traditions and it is this similarity that has further enabled the cultural exchange. An

important form of Hindustani classical music is the *khayal*, which the paper shows, was created through a network of exchanges of languages, genres and regions in the 17th century. Most of its development happened during the reign of Aurangzeb. It takes up the confusing relationship the ruler had with music and attempts to simplify it. Aurangzeb did not ban music so definitely as history books show. Upon going through recent studies, Aurangzeb's ban on music appears to be more of a personal choice. There existed many, both nobles and family members who continued to enjoy music and publicly fund it, Aurangzeb himself included. Yet, his image has been carved in stone in a manner that uncovering new and contradictory evidence does not seem to do much to change the narrative surrounding him.

Notes

1. Audrey Truschke gives a detailed explanation on the significance of receiving and providing royal patronage in her Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court, 13.
2. Truschke has demonstrated the drastic shift that Aurangzeb brings from 1668 in the Mughal courtly culture in Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's Most Controversial King, 41-43.
3. See Katherine Butler Schofield's essay on the 'synthesis' of Indo-Persian musical customs in "Evidence of Indo-Persian Musical Synthesis? The Tanbur and Rudra Vina in Seventeenth-Century Indo-Persian Treatises", 1-3.
4. Mohsen Mohammadi gives a detailed account of 16th century Persian translations of Sanskrit texts on musical notes in his "Qand-i-Parsi: An Introduction to Twenty Persian Texts on Indo-Persian Music", 41-54.
5. See Schofield's "Learning to Taste the Emotions: The Mughal Rasika", where she studies possibilities of non-verbal experiences transcending cultural bounds, in *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India*, 407-409.
6. Schofield, 410-412.
7. See Aditya Behl and Wendy Doniger's translation of Shaikh Qutban Suhraward's *Mirigavati*, 9-20.
8. Ibid., 414-418.
9. Schofield provides a brief historiography in her introduction in the "Origins and Development of the Khayal", 160.
10. Ibid., 161-165.
11. Ibid., 166.

12. Ibid., 167-168.
13. Ibid., 166-172.
14. See Schofield's dissertation, wherein she outlines her arguments against N. P. Ahmad's scholarship, "Hindustani Music in the Time of Aurangzeb", 41-43.
15. Ibid., 39-52.
16. Ibid., 76-109.
17. Ibid., 82-84.
18. Ibid., 90-91.
19. Ibid., 108.
20. The classical ragas were originally classified under this *raga-ragini-putra* system literally translating to father-mother-child familial setup.

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Understanding '*Babu Culture*' through Kalighat Paintings

Ramyani Sengupta

Trigger Warning: this essay has mentions of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

The term '*Babu*' designated the *Bhadraloks,* the aristocratic Brahmin or Priest caste, as well as the middle-level merchant elite who dominated the nineteenth century during British rule. To facilitate the spread of this non-native cultural "species", the British sought to educate and indoctrinate willing colonial subjects who could then function as clerks in British East India Company offices in Calcutta, many merely imitating their idealised British superiors. 'These peons, known as English Babus (Native Indian Clerks), were upwardly mobile Bengalis, the so-called *Bhadraloks* (lit. "well-mannered persons"), and they were made wealthy by the East India Company, in comparison with, and in contrast to, the majority of exploited lower-class, lower-caste Bengali subaltern service workers, who did not benefit from British cultural imperialism'. (Sarma 30). *Babu* corresponded to "mister" and "sir" in a polite manner with due admiration as a gentleman's address. The rise of *Babus* had its causation in the process of British colonisation of India and naturally Calcutta became their centre. The amalgamation of copying the British and native culture gave fuel to their development and contributed to the spread of *"Babu Culture"*. A synthesis of English liberalism, European *fin de siècle* decadence, Mughal conservatism, and indigenous revivalism that instilled parts of socio-moral and political transformation is basically what we mean by the term "*Babu Culture*" (Sreemany 2). The

Zamindari system, the Dayabhaga System, the Hindu Joint Family System, the Mitakshara System, the Muslim Zenana System, the Protestant spirit of free commercial enterprise, the Mughal-inspired feudal system, and the Nautch - all helped in the development in this culture. They also aided the Bengal Renaissance, an awakening of contemporary liberal ideas in nineteenth-century Bengal. *Babus* thoroughly agreed with the British and European perceptions, corruption, and indecencies, optimistically succumbing to globalisation, to an obtrusive species that could eradicate native Indian standards (Sarma 30). The perfect 'conspicuous consumers' (Sarma 30) of the colonial culture were these *Babus*, notorious for their smoking and drinking and for maintaining courtesans and dancing girls who influenced and dominated them. Deepak Sarma exclaims how ridiculous is the fact that neither did the British masters respect the *Babus* nor did they see them as equals (Sarma 30). Despite ridiculing and treating the *Babus* negatively, they were, in fact, responsible for the emergence of the *Babus* to a significant extent. The prompt nature of the *Babus* to emulate their conquerors making them agents of change within Bengali culture was the endowment of the exposure to the European influence and their level of education. Nineteenth century literary works including *Nobo Babu Bilash* or *The Drolleries of the New Babu* by Bhabanicharan Bandyopadhyay and *Nobo Bibi Bilash* (*Bibi* meaning prostitute) or *The Drolleries of the New Bibi* , Motilal in *Alaler Ghorer Dulal* or *The Spoilt Child of Rich Parents* by Tekchand Thakur, and Nobo in *Ekei Ki Bole Sobhota?* or *Is this Civilization?*, emphasise more on the opportunities made accessible when the British arrived. It became a significant part, accountable for the foundation of 'nouveau riche families that created the babus' (Puckett 10). Sayanti Ganguly Puckett states

that 'the socioeconomic history of Bengal is replete with the names of "*Banadi*" [1] families that came to great riches as a result of their dealings with the British' (47). The Basaks and Seths are two such *Banadi* families (47). They were business families who inherited vast property from their ancestors and passed it down to their descendants - they lived in lavish houses and were regarded as no-less than zamindars. They are said to be the agents of the British merchants.

Rise of Kalighat Painting

In the mid-nineteenth century, Kalighat painting emerged in the neighbourhood of the Kali temple in Kolkata. In this region is the famous temple devoted to the Hindu goddess Kali, the Kalighat Temple, situated on the Hooghly River's (Bhagirathi) banks. The river has shifted away from the temple, which is now on the banks of Adiganga, a tiny canal that links to the Hooghly River. The Adiganga Canal follows the river's original path. Being an eminent pilgrim site for the Hindus, activities like trade and commerce and religious activities such as idol making, grew around the temple and played an important role in the people's source of living. Kalighat can be considered to be the birthplace of Kalighat Paintings (Ghosh, Banerjee 73). The paintings were produced on machine-made paper, often depicted only one or two people with an unadorned background eradicating linear, narrative style with undesirable specificity. This created the key characteristics of the Kalighat genre. According to Keith Hale, Kalighat paintings were among the first to integrate secular subjects, as well as satirical representations of Kolkata's rising European influence (Hale). Around 1830, Khan affirms that the *pat* artists who lived on the periphery and rural Bengal especially Parganas and Midnapore, came to Kolkata and established Kalighat *Patachitra* as a

practised style of art by setting up stalls outside the Temple (9-10). They were known as *Patachitra* in rural Bengal because they painted lengthy narrative tales on handmade paper scrolls which expanded to nearly 20 feet in length. Each part was referred to as a *pat*, and the artists were dubbed *Patuas* as a result (Khan 10). Anuja Mukherjee associates the birth of this type of painting with the artists' physical relocation to Kalighat as a result of a stylistic transformation (2-3). The development of a commercial area surrounding the Kalighat temple impacted this shift economically. As mentioned above, Kalighat serves as a sacred land, the vendors of different businesses took their chance and installed their stalls around the nerve centre. One of the main reasons for the establishment of the *Patuas* in this region can be the 'British settlers in the southern parts of Kolkata from the mid-18th century onward' as argued by Ghosh and Banerjee (73). This market provided a new feeling of employment for these artists, who transformed the entire foundation of *Patachitra* from where they began. In fact, the only road that reached the temple was Kalighat road crossing the *Patua* Road (Ghosh, Banerjee 74). It's quite challenging to trace the origin of the Kalighat Paintings due to the absence of any constructive historical documents. Only certain material evidence must be relied on to determine the origins of this art form. The *Patua's* paper and colours which serve as the major material evidences, indicate the early part of the nineteenth century. Partha Sanyal suggests that the other way to determine the origin is to follow the dates of acquisition of these paintings by various European collectors, from which it can be concluded that Kalighat paintings began sometime after the establishment of the present-day Kalighat Temple, most likely between the first and second quarters of the nineteenth century

(1-2). These paintings have a striking connection to modern art due to their stark simplifications, powerful lines, vivid colours, and visual rhythm. Among the very first descriptions of Kalighat paintings, Ajit Ghose made a remark, 'The drawing is made with one long bold sweep of the brush in which not the faintest suspicion of even a momentary indecision, not the slightest tremor, can be detected . Often the line takes in the whole figure in such a way that it defies you to say where the artist's brush first touched the paper or where it finished its work...' (qtd. in Sanyal 1). A well-known art historian and Museologist, Jyotindra Jain, offers a different take on the artist behind the Kalighat murals. Apart from *Patuas*, he emphasised that traditional Bengali artists of the time, such as potters, carpenters, and stoneworkers, were also engaged in the creation of Kalighat paintings. 'There appear to be certain intrinsic correspondences between Kalighat Paintings and the traditions of creating and painting clay figures, or painting storytellers' scrolls by the *Patuas*, or between the *Sūtradhāra* (carpenters') drawings and wood carvings,' Jain concluded (qtd. in Sanyal 3). Kalighat paintings, like most other Indian art styles, began with a religious theme. Devoted artists portrayed Hindu gods and goddesses as well as their incarnations. Paintings like *Durga and Mahishasur*, Classic Kalighat Style *Ganesh, Goddess Kali* from the Kalighat Temple, *Shiva, Parvati*, and *Nandi, Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman*, and so forth. The *Patuas* carefully chalked down the societal issues and their own intuitions on them through their art on the paper (Khan 4). The evolution of painting from one's imagination to what one witness has been impacted by the western influence and creative revolution. These *Patuas* were masters of the brush and colour, as well as sharp observers of life with a dark sense of humour.

As Mukul Dey notes, in a series of Kalighat Paintings, the *Patuas* satirically portrayed the emergence of *'Babu Culture'* as posh wealthy gentlemen, a Mahant imprisoned for abducting girls, or a priest or Vaishnav "Guru" living with 'unchaste' women – these would not escape the searching eyes of these artists, and they would draw the caricatures in such a way that ordinary people would be repulsed by such activities. 'They provide good images for popular sayings and proverbs as well', mentions Dey (Dey).

Representation of '*Babu* Culture'

Typically recognised with neatly oiled hair, 'pleats of his dhoti in one hand and either chewing the betel or smoking a hookah in the other hand, flirting with courtesan', is the *Babu* (Sanyal 8). Dey notes that the *Patuas* drew the hideous activities of the rich zamindars and foppish *Babus* in such a way that regular people would be discouraged from participating in such activities. Mukherjee calls the nineteenth century as 'the amalgamation where the Orient meets the Occident. The *Patuas* were painting the Occident in the shape of *Babu*, not simply a Bengali western educated man' (Mukharjee 3). As a result, the *Patuas* defined the concept on paper. The *Patuas* focused on spreading the *Babu Culture* through their art into the society. Being from the "lower" orders of the then society, the *Patuas* got hold of a better understanding of societal issues than the rich and educated did. All the activities such as 'burning interest, social oddities and idiosyncrasies, follies and foibles of people, and hypocrisies and meanness' did not escape the eyes of the *Patuas* (qtd. in Sanyal 7). While the paintings showcased certain positive aspects of the culture, it also put forward the adversities in front of its audiences. It can be evidently established through the Kalighat Paintings that these *Babus* were keen patrons

of quality music. A painting of *A Babu playing sitar, Kalighat, Kolkata, ca. 1870-1885* proves the interest *Babus* had towards music. The *Babus* often enjoyed *mehfil* along with the courtesans. The palatial house of the *Babus* had a special area known as '*jalsaghar* which is the music and dance hall' (Puckett 10). They were inclined towards 'native musical instruments [were] superseded by European flutes, concertinas, and harmoniums, organs and piano-fortes' remarks S. C. Bose (qtd. in Puckett 175). The *Patuas* were conscious of their surroundings and the nature of their work and that was what made them incomparable. The spouses of these illustrated *Babus* are called *Bibis*. The inspiration of the *Patuas* to draw *Babus* and *Bibis* alongside Gods, Goddesses, and evils was a new attempt to contribute to this world of *Patachitra* paintings which were being predominated by the mythological illustrations. This sudden change took a havoc toll on the *Patuas*. They faced a major economic setback resulting in the *Patuas* taking up other professions. For the society to accept this transformation from Gods and Goddesses to the *Babu* and *Bibi*, a lot of criticism was on its way. According to Mukherjee, the potential of sighting the *'Babu'* figure as the representation of evil, and *'Bibi'* showcasing similarities with the *Kali* goddess, has been widely debated (Mukherjee 1). The *Patuas* tried to twist the expressions of the pre-British Indian painters by portraying their evils and goddesses through *Babu* and *Bibi*.

Representation of Women in '*Babu Culture*' through Kalighat Paintings

Kalighat Paintings took over the vibrancy seen during 19th century Calcutta. Representation of women in a patriarchal society through visual narratives was a theme. As initiated by Bannerji and Bagchi (Mukherjee 5), in Bengal throughout the

nineteenth century, women's education had taken up working space in the daily lives of individuals who were willing to empower elite women in the educational sphere. That might lead to the '*Mahila*' becoming the '*Bhadramahila*'. A flawless alteration of an ideal wife who satiates every wish of her husband. But then again, the paintings tended to showcase the *Bibis* as dedicated wives , who were also victims of domestic abuse and paintings like *'Drawing, domestic violence, by Nibaran Chandra Ghosh, Kalighat, Kolkata, ca. 1900'*, provides us with evidence. A religious housewife who is also a submissive individual restricted within the boundaries of household authority was a common character - an example would be of a painting of '*A woman crouching at her husband's feet, Kalighat, Kolkata, ca. 1890*. A thorough study of a painting in which a husband can be seen abusing his wife with a shoe (Kolkata, ca.1890), shows that *Bibis* were hale, hearty and rich but did also were victims of domestic violence. These paintings showcase the cruel realities of male dominance and patriarchal violence. There were also depictions of 'audacious' women, who were sexually dominant and often showcased with a *hookah* in one hand and giving instructions with the other - known as *'Baishya*' or the courtesan. She became an embodiment of temptation. The *Babus* used to fear and were 'submissive' towards them. Somok Roy argues that *Patuas* carefully worked on the attires of the *Bibis* and the courtesans respectively to put forward the statuses of women (Roy). In the painting of '*A courtesan playing the sitar, by Nibaran Chandra Ghosh, Kolkata, ca. 1900*', the opacity of the saree and clear visibility of the tracing of the bodyline through it, is the perfect description to put forward how the *Patuas* showcased courtesans. Another painting labelled *'Courtesan seated on a chair* of the year 1830, showcases a bedecked lady with flowing,

black hair, an exposed head, and naked, luscious breasts. '*Golap-shundoris*', which translates to 'rose-beauties' are the perfect example to show the amalgamation of Indian aesthetics and advent of modern art (Roy). A rare 1875 C.E. painting where *A barber attends to a sitting courtesan* from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, shows the courtesan embellished with heavy jewellery (painted in colloidal tin alloy), smoking a *hookah* sitting on a chair, while the barber pierces her ear before inserting an earring. One 20th century painting, also in the collection of V&A, by Kali Charan Ghosh, depicts the courtesan trampling her lover. Women in public life are also showcased through the image of a fisher-woman. She is depicted sitting, descaling and weighing a fish, and talking with a man buyer who seems interested. As a result, there is visual evidence that women engaged in the urban economy (Roy). A unique tale is built around the figure of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi, and the picture is reminiscent of an equestrian portrait. The Rani of Jhansi rose to prominence as a regional leader during the 1857 uprising, but she quickly rose to prominence as a pan-Indian war-hero(ine), renowned for her militaristic characteristics and patriotism, and immortalised in popular works of art, folk songs, proverbs, poetry, and dramas.[2] According to Mukherjee, the transition from drawing beasts to drawing humans that walk around us was undoubtedly influenced by Western culture, but there is a relatively unexplored arena when it comes to looking at major shifts in Indian art, and in this case Kalighat Paintings, that could be very much about an active tendency towards subversion. The *Patuas* themselves put forward the portrayal of the amalgamation of *Babu's* two private lives, which ultimately bared not only the *Babu's* indulgences but also the many sides of the potential one-dimensional Bengali

woman, her sexuality, her deplorable habits, her jealousy, and her control of the effeminate *Babu*. Afterall, *Babus* getting hit by the *Bibis* is not an uncommon subject (Mukherjee 6).

The Tarakeshwar Murder Case of 1873- Portraying the Most Drastic Societal Issue through the Paintings

An unexpected series of Kalighat Paintings was based on the Tarakeshwar Scandal or the Mahant-Elokeshi affair of 1873. This scandalous incident was showcased not only through Kalighat Paintings but also wood carving, literature, songs, theatre - making it a popular subject for the cultural productions of the time. The case revolves around Nobin Chandra, a government employee, his wife, Elokeshi, and the priest or *mahant* of the Tarakeshwar temple. The story goes that sixteen-year-old Elokeshi met a priest or Mahant, who was believed to cure infertility. But then the *mahant* is said to have drugged and raped Elokeshi, which sparked a major controversy. When Nobin learned about the incident through local talk and innuendo, he approached Elokeshi. Elokeshi confessed and sought Nobin's forgiveness, but Nobin refused and determined that the two of them would relocate to Calcutta. On their journey to Calcutta, the *mahant's* muscle-men assaulted them, which provoked Nobin, and he sliced his wife's neck with a *aansh-boti* (fish knife). Disgusted by the events of the day, he went to the local police station and confessed. Nobin was first acquitted by an Indian jury at the Hooghly Sessions Court in Serampore on the grounds of insanity, but the case was appealed to the Calcutta High Court, where he was sentenced to life in prison. However, in 1875, he was pardoned in response to a massive rise in public petitions begging pity for Nobin. The Bengali people thought there was nothing wrong with punishing an unchaste wife, even if it meant killing her. The *mahant* was

condemned to three years of solitary confinement and fined Rs. 3000. The Tarakeshwar murder case lived on in the cultural memory as various depictions of it are seen in the said paintings. The Kalighat series depicts the tale in episodes (each painting captures one incident), and the paintings were chronologically organised in an exhibition curated by the Victoria & Albert Museum. The paintings portray various moments from the series of incidents such as the meeting of Elokeshi and the *mahant*, Elokeshi embracing Nobin and asking his forgiveness; the three stages of the murder such as The Fatal/First Blow, a courtroom scenario of the mahant's trial, followed by the mahant in jail and so. *Patuas* put forward this scandalous incident to dissuade people, especially wives from participating in such activities (Paul, Nag 108). The incident had such an impact that it can still be heard in the series of incident as paintings are thriving in museums.[3] The *Patuas* carefully framed ethical features, contradictory fashion for different women, the patriarchal apprehensions with the onset of colonial modernity and also relations between law, morality, society and violence are evidently seen. The *Patuas* were not only acutely aware of the current tide of public opinions, they also used it for their own profits and even shaped those opinions through their paintings.

Incoming of German Oleographs

The introduction of the cheap, glossy oleographs in the market started to affect the popularity and the market strategy of the paintings. Dey remarked that cheap oleographs of various kinds from Germany and Bombay 'killed hand-painted art production as a business and with it the artistic instincts and creative faculty of the painters of Kalighat. Not being able to cope with the competition of machine-made

productions cheaper than hand-drawn and hand painted pictures selling at two or four pice each, their children have now taken to other professions'. (Dey) On finding about the growing popularity in India, they copied them and returned glossed and coloured lithographed duplicates that swamped the country and drowned the original hand-painted images. The old art has gone forever; the pictures are now finding their homes in museums and in the collections of a few art lovers' (Dey qtd. in Sanyal 4). W G Archer stated that the final phase of Kalighat paintings ceased to exist after about 1930 (qtd. in Sanyal 4).

Conclusion

The '*Babu Culture*' is tremendously portrayed and put forward by the *Patuas*. Both the culture as well as the paintings are intertwined with each other. Both of them need to co-exist else either of them won't have any significance or meaning. A work of art, like literature, is a window to the popular cultural activities of the time and hence, the interplay between the two has been one of interdependency. '*Babu Culture*' technically played the central part in the spread of Kalighat *Patachitra* and Paintings. Both '*Babu Culture*' and Kalighat Paintings stand as the pioneers of the contemporary art and culture of Bengal.

Images:

1. Painting
2. Elokeshi
3. Kali
4. Painting
5. Ganesha
6. Madhavchandra Giri (the Mahant)
7. Painting
8. Painting
9. Painting
10. Nabin and Elokeshi
11. Shiva, Parvati and Nandi
12. Elokeshi and Madhavchandra Giri (the Mahant)
13. Nabin and Elokeshi
14. Painting
15. Elokeshi and Madhavchandra Giri (the Mahant)
16. Madhavchandra Giri (The Mahant)
17. Madhavchandra Giri (the Mahant)
18. Painting
19. Drawing
20. Elokeshi and the Mahant
21. Painting

22. Painting
23. Painting
24. Painting
25. Painting
26. A Courtsan with a violin
27. Painting
28. Painting
29. Drawing
30. Print
31. Drawing
32. Nabin and Elokeshi
33. Painting
34. Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman
35. Sudeva and Malati
36. Painting
37. Drawing
38. Drawing

Notes

1. The word *'Banadi'* comes from "buniad" meaning foundation. For more, refer to '*Cultures of Corruption: British Libertinism and Its Colonial Manifestations*' by Sayanti Ganguly Puckett.
2. Victoria and Albert Museum has housed many Kalighat paintings inspired by these event

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