

**Social History of Barua Buddhist Community in
Uttar Pradesh: With Specific Reference
to Lucknow (1947-2000)**

THESIS

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BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY
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Doctor of Philosophy
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HISTORY

Submitted By

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Enrollment No. 454/15

Under the Supervision of

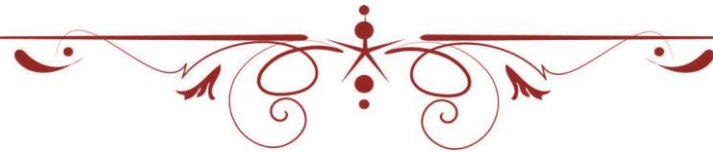
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2021



*DEDICATED TO
MY BELOVED PARENTS*



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Social History of Barua Buddhist Community in Uttar Pradesh: With Specific Reference to Lucknow (1947-2000)**” submitted by **Mr. Rakesh Kumar** is an original research work and has not been previously submitted in part or full for the award of any other degree or diploma to this or any other university.

The thesis submitted to Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow satisfies all the requirements as stipulated in the *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) regulations-1999 as amended in 2008/2010/2013* and it is fit for submission and evaluation for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University.

Date 18.2.2021

Place Lucknow


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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis titled “**Social History of Barua Buddhist Community in Uttar Pradesh: With Specific Reference to Lucknow (1947-2000)**” submitted for the award of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** is an authentic record of original research work carried out by me under the guidance and supervision of **Prof. Shura Darapuri**, Department of History, School for Ambedkar Studies, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (A Central University), Vidya Vihar, Raebareli Road, Lucknow-226025.

I further declare that this research work has not been submitted before for the award of any other degree or diploma to any University or Institution. In keeping with the ethical practice in reporting research information, due acknowledgments have been made whenever the findings of others have been cited. This is also declared that the thesis is essentially free from all kinds of plagiarism.

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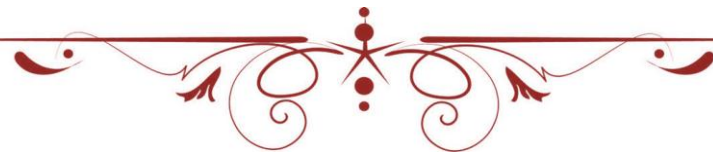
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CHAPTER-1
INTRODUCTION



CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historical background of Barua Buddhists

Barua community's entire history is still to be published. Among Bangladeshi academics, there is a general discussion about the roots of the group. Nevertheless, one aspect is certain; the culture maintains a very distinct social identity. The Barua community is made up of 250 families, and resides mostly in the country's larger district of Chittagong. The greater Chittagong Hill tracts area also has thousands of Baruas. The Baruas in the areas of Rajaon, Rangunia, Fatkchari, Harzari, Boalkhali, Pariya, Banskhali, Chakaria, Ramu, Ukiya, Teknaf and Cox's Bazaar in the greater Chittagong district are quite distinctive.

Two Arakanese words, *Bo*, meaning chief of the army and *Yoya* meaning locality or village, formed the word Barua. Literally Barua implies "the position where an army chief resides." Since the natives of Bengal could not pronounce the Burmese or Arakanese terms, the term *Boyoyoya* might have been substituted by the word Barua. In the past, the Barua Buddhists probably didn't use the word Barua. It is very hard to trace, though, since when they have embraced the Barua word. Perhaps they began using this term more during the last quarter of the 18th century to hide their social identity in order to avoid persecution and social discrimination by the King Bodoipaya of Burma, who ruined the kingdom of Arakan in 1785. But, at the same period they have sought to draw links with the royal blood origins or the great Aryan race.

The Baruas are said to be descendants of a Buddhist tribe that migrated from Magadha to Chittagong ruled by Arakanese after they suffered persecution at the

hands of Muslims Rulers in their region. Some settled in Tripura, adopting the Hindu faith. The Baruas support this theory and claim their predecessors were Magadha rulers who had settled in Arakan, establishing a new kingdom there. Thus, the Chittagong and Tripura Baruas seem to belong to the same stock as the Arakan kings. The curious truth here is that the Baruas consider themselves as a distinct group among the people of modern Bangladesh, given their relatively recent immigration into Southern Bengal. The Baruas understand their heritage in India, but see their close ties to Southeast Asia as well.

The kind of Buddhism that the Baruas practiced in the Chittagong region previous to their settlement is known of the Mahayana and Tantric types. But Bechert (1977) indicates that they had been converted to the Theravada Buddhism before they settled in Arakanese Chittagong. The Baruas are also known as Baruas Maghs. According to Hall (1955, 411), the question remains unresolved amid much debate over the etymology of this term. Nevertheless, since the word Magh was synonymous with the Portuguese's piratical practices in the sixteenth century, the phrase is seldom used nowadays. Another hypothesis of the Barua's roots is that they are the descendants of Arakanese people who settled in Bengal during this region's Arakanese rule, and married local women. That seems to be a theory, however, that would be difficult to prove. Most of the Baruas live in villages on the plains of Chittagong and all of them speak Bengali. Some of the Baruas migrated to Calcutta in the nineteenth century, and can still be found in the city. A smaller band of Baruas known as "Sinha Baruas" live in the Comilla area.

Currently, Buddhism is the most widely spread faith in Asia, but it is a minority religion in India, the country of its birth. But Buddhism remained the religion of a large section of people in Bengal and its presence is observable even today in the

ever-changing social, economic and political situation. Since Buddhism stood against the rigidity of the Brahminical system, in recent times many of the so-called lower castes at the instance of Dr Ambedkar converted to Buddhism. But the Bengali Buddhists in Northern Bengal are no such converts. They are mostly Baruas with a tribal identity of Mog / Magh, and therefore, more specifically known as Magh-Barua.¹ The community migrated from Bangladesh's Chittagong region. It is said that during the time of Brahmanical revival in India some of their ancestors had moved to Chittagong and settled there from the present Bihar state and other parts of Northern India.² They are usually thought of as having a mixed origin with blood of different groups and religions. However, a section of the Baruas reject that view and claim to be of Kshatriya origin and trace their descent from the ruling Bihar race.³ A good number of these Buddhists migrated to India after the partition of India in 1947, and settled mainly in West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, and neighbouring provinces. But the present generation of Northern Bengali Buddhists migrated here during the 1971 Bangladesh War of Liberation and even afterwards.

The Barua today maintain their distinct culture and traditions within their villages. At the same time, their distinctive physiognomy is fairly different from the mainstream population of Bangladesh. Traditionally the Barua's believe that their ancestors had taken shelter in the hills and forest areas of Chittagong district to protect themselves from the oppression and persecution of several successive rulers of the Indian subcontinent. The Barua community practices the Theravada tradition of Buddhism which is similar to that of Burma, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Laos. Although the Barua community practices Buddhism, their socio-cultural and political identity is in

¹ Risley, H.H. (1891). *Tribes and castes of Bengal*. Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Press.p.29

² Chaudhuri, Sukomol. (1982). *Contemporary Buddhism in Bangladesh*. Calcutta, Atisha Memorial Publishing House.p.432

³ Mutsuddi, Umesh Chandra. (1959). *Barua Jati*. Chattagram, Maynamati Press.PP.5-10

ambiguity within the political context of Bangladesh. The Barua community is also known as Magh in the greater Bengal area of Indian subcontinent. Usually, the name Magh is applied to the Baruas by both the Hindu and Muslim population of Bangladesh in a derogatory manner. In fact, when this title is specified to them, it refers to the name of the Barua locality and their livelihood and profession. The Barua Maghs are typically believed to be of mixed origin with the blood of different ethnic groups and religions such as Hindus, Muslims, Arakanese, Burmese.

1.2 Position of Minorities

The issue of minorities is an ancient as well as contemporary issue in terms of both their dignity and rights. There have been serious debates, beginning at the state, national and international levels about the position and role of minorities in their respective cultures and nations. The United Nations has also been influenced by this dialogue on minorities to introduce international instruments such as the "Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities" adapted by the General Assembly Resolution of 18th December 1992. Through this Declaration, the General Assembly not only reiterated the integrity and importance of every individual being, human rights and fundamental equality of all, but also called upon the State to safeguard the life of minorities racial, geographical, cultural, religious and linguistic identities and to pass suitable laws to achieve this purpose.⁴

At the existential level, it has been recognized that in every culture and politics where the dominant group has superiority and supremacy, minorities are exposed to deprivation, bigotry and marginalisation. Minority prejudice is not just in terms of percentages, but they are generally referred to as 'minorities.' Although the minority

⁴ This is revised and enlarged version of the paper published in Mainstream, 17/1/2004 under the same title "Ensuring the Dignity of the Minorities"

groups themselves are the non-dominant communities most frequently, there is enough potential for polarisation to be opened up.

Instead of improving their lot, Akhtar Majeed is of the opinion that the government co-opts certain minority leaders. They favour a system of organized patronage and personal obedience and a clique of power holders is formed within the elite of the minority. They carefully demonstrate to the minority group that minorities would have been physically wiped out, spiritually liquidated and religiously oppressed, except for the benevolent umbrella of this government and its political party.⁵

1.3 History of Minority in India

Minority presence has been identified as a permanent and undisputed reality in almost every part of the globe. Not only do they prefer to live as a distinct group, they also try to preserve their distinctive character. The countries have rarely been successful in homogenizing religion, language and culture, even with set borders and stable composition of the population. Mazzini's idealistic view of a nation-state that is culturally homogeneous does not exist in the world.⁶

It was agreed and argued that minorities should not be discriminated against on the basis of religion, race, language or ethnicity. They should be allowed to develop and enjoy their special and peculiar characteristics without hindrance. However, contrary to this, we find that those in power are trying to impose on those in a position of non-dominance their ideas of religion and culture or politics. Many issues have culminated in the persecution of minorities and attempts to assimilate them into the dominant culture or ethos of the majority. Minority discrimination and victimization have in the past resulted in bloody wars. The emergence of xenophobic nationalism and counter-

⁵ Akhtar Majeed. "*Minorities and Nation State*," *India's plural society and its constituents*. Kanishka Publishers, 2002, p.9

⁶ Iqbal A. Ansari (ed.) *Readings on Minorities Perspectives and Documents*, Vol. I Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi, 1996, p. XI.

ethnic nationalism has created serious tensions in different parts of the contemporary world, which reminds us of the cautionary note of Jawaharlal Nehru that there can be no peaceful equilibrium in any country as long as an attempt is made to suppress or compel a minority to conform to the ways of the majority.⁷

The minority issue in India takes on special importance as every possible form of minority can be found here. Minorities based on culture, language, ethnicity, faith, caste, clan, tribe, ideology, etc. have shown determination to protect their distinct identity. Any attempt at assimilation in this highly fragmented community has created dangerous consequences. The minority issue in India also deserves special consideration because this issue's mishandling resulted in the bloody partition in August 1947, causing untold misery to the people of this subcontinent. Also, today, the minority issue is one of Indian politics and society's most complex and confusing issues.

India is a country where there are people of different faiths. Religious diversity and acceptance of religion are both defined by law and custom in the country. A huge majority of Indians are associated with a religion. According to the 2001 census, 80.5 percent of India's population followed Hinduism, Islam 13.4%, Christianity 2.3% and Sikhism 1.9% are the other major religions practiced by the Indian people. India's Constitution prohibits any form of discrimination based solely on religion, ethnicity, caste, sex or place of birth. While India was not conceived as a land of communities, for special treatment, it defined group categories to help them match up with others. This offered room for religious minority groups to set up their own educational institutions, as well as some other privileges that would enable them to preserve their distinct identity. The "depressed classes" were referred to as a minority during the

⁷ Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Note on Minorities' in S. Gopal (ed.), *Nehru: Selected Works*, Vol. IV, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund and Sangam Books, New Delhi, 1976, p. 259.

colonial period, but after independence they are no longer identified as such. Partition in 1947 played a crucial role in defining the debate on the issue of the minority. Therefore, the distinction between the majority and the minority has been associated with religion over the years. Minorities in the world make up approximately 18.4% of the country's total population.

Following table shows the population of people of religious communities over the period from 1961 to 2001.

Table 1.1 Population trends for major religious groups (1961-2001)⁸

Religious group	Population % 1951	Population % 1961	Population % 1971	Population % 1981	Population % 1991	Population % 2001
Hindu	84.1	83.45	82.73	82.30	81.53	80.46
Muslim	9.8	10.69	11.21	11.57	12.61	13.43
Christian	2.3	2.44	2.60	2.44	2.32	2.34
Sikh	1.89	1.79	1.89	1.92	1.94	1.87
Buddhist	0.74	0.74	0.70	0.70	0.77	0.77
Animist, others	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.42	0.44	0.72
Jain	0.46	0.46	0.48	0.47	0.40	0.41

Analysis of census data shows that the Hindus population decreased by 3.0 percent from 1961 to 2001, whereas the Muslim population rose by about the same proportion. Throughout 1971, the Christian population increased but slowly decreased in the years that followed. Although the population of Sikh showed gradual growth

⁸ Census Report, 2001.

from 1961 to 1991, it subsequently declined. The Buddhist population grew from 1961 to 1991, but after 1991 it did not show growth. The number of Parsis is less than 0.2%. According to the 2001 Census, in India there are 69,601 Parsis, consisting of 33,949 males and 35,652 females. Where other groups numbers have increased significantly, the population of Parsis has decreased. Most states have accepted Jains as minorities. Nevertheless, the population of Jains increased in the first decade, with modest growth in the 2001 census.

India's Constitution acknowledges two categories of minorities, i.e., religious and linguistic, mainly. A number of unilingual states were established in the wake of the linguistic reorganization of the states in 1956. Even though the states were founded on a more or less linguistic basis, the linguistic minorities came to each of the states. There were also many minor language groups with languages different from the dominant language in each state where there is one dominant language group. Such a small group of people in the state have a different mother tongue from that of the majority known as linguistic minorities.

National Minority Commission has recognized as minorities Sikh, Buddhist, Parsis, Muslim, Christians. There are two groups, i.e., Sikhs and Buddhist have originated from India and have flourished.

1.3.1 Islam: Origin and growth in India

Trade relations have existed since ancient times between Arabia and the Indian Sub-Continent. Even in the pre-Islamic period, Arab traders used to visit the area of Malabar, which linked them to parts of South East Asia. Newly Islamized Arabs were the first contact between Islam and India. The first ship carrying Muslim travellers was seen on the Indian coast as early as 630 AD, according to historians. It is believed that in the last part of the 7th century AD, first Arab Muslims arrived on the Indian

Coast. It was with the advent of Islam that Arabs became a dominant cultural force in the world. The Arab merchants and traders were carriers of the new religion, and wherever they went they propagated it. In 629 AD, it was in Kodumgallur, Kerala, the first mosque was built. In Malabar, as they were similar to Arabs, the Mappilas was the first tribe to convert to Islam.

Islam was founded in Saudi Arabia. But most of the spreaders of Islam in India came from non-Arab countries. Islam's first spreaders in India were individuals who saw a sacred principle in spreading Islam. From the 11th century, they began to come to India. Through Bukhara, Turkey, Iran, Yemen and Afghanistan, they arrived in India. Khawaja Chishti, who came from Iran and his religion is called Sufism, was the most prominent preacher of Islam in India.

The process of converting Indians to Islam started in the 8th century, when the Arabs began to conquer northern India and Pakistan today. Other Muslims also entered India after the Arabs. Such Muslim invasions in India have not been continuous and not all Muslim invaders have been Islamic fanatics. One of the Mogul emperors, Akbar, was very egalitarian and even created a new religion, Din Elahi, which included beliefs in various religions. There are visible icons of different religions in some of the monuments built by Akbar. His great grandson, Aurangzeb, was a devout Muslim in comparison to Akbar and worked ardently during his reign to spread Islam.

1.3.2 Christians

Of nearly 24 million adherents, Christianity is the third largest faith, making up 2.3 percent of India's population. Christianity came from Israel. The first Christians were Jews and were seen as a Jewish cult at the beginning of Christianity. Most of the Apostles had their missionary mission limited to Europe. It was St. Thomas, the Apostle who arrived in India in the first century. St. Thomas, one of the twelve

apostles of Jesus Christ who founded Christianity in India in the 1st century. Christianity is India's first foreign religion to be introduced to locals after initially being brought to the Kerala Jewish Diasporas. Throughout India, Christianity has had different branches, such as *Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Lutheran*. In India there are about 30 million Christians. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Manipur and Mizoram are the main centres of Christianity in India. There's also a large Christian community in Mumbai.

1.3.3. Sikhs and Origin of Sikhism

Sikhism originated in Punjab (northern India). This is where today, living in towns and villages, the largest number of Sikhs can be found. Punjab has many holy Gurdwaras (temples) that see many people coming together from the city to pray every day. All of these Gurdwaras have significance and are associated with the ten gurus.

The founder of Sikhism was Guru Nanak (1469-1539). Approximately 2% of the population of India are Sikhs. Even so, the Sikhs also stand for India due to their unique appearance. The men keep their hair usually and don't shave their beard or moustache. In a turban, they catch their head hair.

Throughout India, Sikhism is fairly a new religion. Guru Nanak founded this religion. Nanak was born in the Punjab region in a Hindu family in 1469. He enjoyed traveling, studying, and preaching morality since childhood. Those who taught and preached were called Guru meaning teacher in those days, his disciples became known as 'learners' meaning Sikhs. And so, Guru Nanak developed a new religion and it also contained practices from the Punjab region's two dominant religions, Hinduism and Islam. Many say that Guru Nanak tried to develop a new religion and included the positive values of these two religions in it. The belief in the presence of an invisible

God, as in Islam. Like in Hinduism, your belief in Karma and reincarnation will decide your fate in the next rebirth, meaning your actions in this life. Sikhism's founders tried to abolish some of the Indian traditions like the Caste System and Sati. As per the teachings of Guru Nanak everyone in Sikhism has equal rights irrespective of caste, ethnicity, colour, age, sex or religion. Sikhism opposes such practices as prayer, fasting, superstitions and so on. Sikhism has no priest hierarchy because it sees this as a path to corruption. Sikhs believe there's only one god. They believe that God exists in our daily lives, even if He may not be visible; He is with us in spirit wherever we go ('Ik Om Kar').

1.3.4 Buddhism: Origin and Growth

Buddhism is a world religion which originated in India and spread across the sub-continent with the rule of the Buddhist Mauryan Emperor Asoka. Buddhism has spread beyond India through two major traditions; Theravada, which spread south and east and has now spread widely across Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, Mahayana, which spread first west, then north and later east through East Asia. Since then, both beliefs have spread across the globe, particularly in North America and Europe. Around the 13th century, the practice of Buddhism as a distinct and organized religion declined from the land of its origin, but not without significant impact. Buddhist practice is common in Himalayan areas such as Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, and since the last century, Buddhism has re-emerged in India due to the adoption by many Indian intellectuals, the migration of Buddhist Tibetan exiles, and the mass conversion of hundreds of thousands of Hindu Dalits under the leadership of Dr Ambedkar. On the visit to Bodh Gaya in 1891, Sri Lankan Buddhist leader Anagarika Dharmapala was surprised to find the temple in the hands of a Saivite priest, the Buddha image changed into a Hindu icon, and the Buddhist image was

barred from admiration. Then, the Buddhist revival started in India when he founded the Maha Bodhi Society. The organization's initially aim was to revive Buddhism in India and restore Bodh Gaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar's ancient Buddhist shrines.

Buddhist Population in India⁹

State	Population	Percentage
Jammu and Kashmir	1,13,787	1.1
Himachal Pradesh	75,859	1.2
Punjab	41,487	0.2
Chandigarh	1,332	0.1
Uttaranchal	12,434	0.1
Haryana	7,140	0.0
Delhi	23,705	0.2
Rajasthan	10,335	0.0
Uttar Pradesh	3,02,031	0.2
Bihar	18,818	0.0
Sikkim	1,52,042	28.1
Arunachal Pradesh	1,43,028	13.0
Nagaland	1,356	0.1
Manipur	1,928	0.1
Mizoram	70,494	7.9
Meghalaya	4,703	0.2
Tripura	98,922	3.1
Assam	51,029	0.2
West Bengal	2,43,384	0.3

⁹ Census Report, 2001.

Jharkhand	5,040	0.0
Orissa	9,863	0.0
Chhattisgarh	65,267	0.3
Madhya Pradesh	2,09,322	0.3
Gujarat	17,829	0.0
Daman and Diu	128	0.1
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	457	0.2
Karnataka	3,93,300	0.7
Goa	649	0.0
Kerala	2,027	0.0
Tamil Nadu	5,393	0.0
Pondicherry 73 0.0	73	0.0
Andaman and Nicobar	421	0.1
Maharashtra	5,838,710	6.0
Andhra Pradesh	32,037	0.0
Lakshadweep	1	0.0

1.3.4 Parsis

Zoroastrianism had become the Persian Empire's official religion, but Zoroastrianism collapsed in Persia after the Muslims' conquest in 637 AD. This invasion's survivors were found only in remote villages in Iran, which later pursued freedom of religion in India. Zoroastrianism is the smallest religious community in India. Its followers are called Parsis since it is from Persia that the faith has made its inroads into India. This religion was founded in the 6th or 7th century BC by Zarathustra. In the 7th century

AD, the adherents of this faith experienced expulsion from Iran because of the Islamic onslaughts. They arrived in India's Gujarat region.

1.3.5 Jains

Jainism is one of India's oldest religious traditions; throughout its long history it has existed side by side with Hinduism. Despite less than 5 million followers, Jainism has shown extraordinary tenacity and stamina and continues to exert influence far beyond its small numbers, representing less than 1% of the Indian population. The term Jainism derives from a Sanskrit word meaning "Jina or conqueror follower" and was founded in the sixth century B.C by Mahavira. In addition, in a list of 24 such teachers who brought Jainism into the world, Mahavira is considered the latest. Also known as "Tirthankara's," these teachers taught a path to religious salvation centered around the tradition of strict religious abstinence to renounce the universe. A monastic community of nuns and monks was founded by Mahavira. This community is the world's oldest monastic community that continues to exist. Jains believe the universe is infinite, and all in it. It never produced anything that remains today, nor will it be lost. There are three worlds in the universe: the heavens, the mortal world, and the hells.

India is defined in the Preamble to the Constitution as a "Sovereign, Socialist, Secular and Democratic Republic." Secular terms allow all religions to be treated equally and inclusive. India has no official religion at all. It enshrines the right to practice, preach and propagate any religion. According to India's Constitution, the right to religious freedom is fundamental right. Many religious minorities are regulated by their rules of their own. Communities have the right to set up and manage their choice of educational institutions. No religious guidance can be given in schools supported by the government.

So, we find that today's minorities and the so-called majority in India are the result of a long historical cycle that started in ancient times a long time ago. The history and growth of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism in India and the arrival from outside of other religious communities continued to maintain the cycle of formation of minorities. The intense contact between the adherents of different persuasions led to a large-scale religious conversion to Islam and Christianity, resulting in the creation of a hybrid Indian culture. Minority-majority relationships in ancient and medieval times never became a serious problem. But it acquired the status of a major Indian society concern with the implementation of representative government by the British rulers. We also found that, combined with communalism, the minority question contributed to a deep division of Indian society. Even before British arrived, it was already separated horizontally and vertically. But as kingship and landlordism existed, during those days these differences did not affect the politics and state. With the British Parliament's usurpation of authority, the cycle of massifying politics began. The reforms introduced by the British government, based on their religion and caste, recognized different groups in India. To maintain the British rule in India, it was important that the different groups remained segregated and claimed accordingly. Maybe that's why the mighty British Empire didn't try to bulldoze the parochial, patriotism, but welcomed and promoted them. Therefore, under the circumstances, the minority consciousness naturally developed, received government patronage. This degenerated into communalism, however, early. We consider that during British rule, communalism was detrimental to Indian nationalism. It was responsible for the political impasse that delayed India's freedom, and it was at the cost of a bloody and painful country partition when the country became independent. It was the result of the failure of the nationalist movement's major political actors to find an acceptable

solution in a united and undivided India to the problem of the majority-minority. The Party was approved with the expectation that the communal issue in India would be solved. But the events of post-independence have shown beyond doubt that partition is not always a feasible and sustainable solution to the problem of race or culture. It is through the acceptance of pluralism and the alleviation of minorities ' legitimate apprehensions through the institutionalization of their rights by appropriate formal structures that people belonging to different persuasions will live together.¹⁰

The present study revolves around Barua Buddhists who, as indigenous inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts before 1947, constituted almost 100 Percent of the population. Yet they are now forced to live as a minority group not only in their own nations, but also in the lands of their host countries, leading to the diaspora of their lot to other parts of the world. Without recognizing the past of Bengal and its surrounding regions, the history of Barua Buddhists cannot be understood since both are closely related.

1.4 Journey of Bengal till the emergence of Bangladesh

Bengal, at times an autonomous regional kingdom, was a leading power with vast trading networks in South Asia and later the Islamic East. Her kingdoms were known in ancient times as seafaring countries. Bengal, famous for its mighty military strength, was known to the Greeks as Gangaridai. It was mentioned by Greek historians that Alexander the Great retreated from India in expectation of a counterattack from Gangaridai's alliance. Later writers noted relations between Bengal and Roman Egypt in merchant shipping. The last great Buddhist imperial force in the subcontinent was the Bengali Pala Empire, founded in 750 and becoming

¹⁰ Neera Chandhoke, *Beyond Secularism: The Rights of Religious Minorities*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, p.3.

the ruling power in the northern Indian subcontinent in the 9th century,¹¹ before being succeeded in the 12th century by the Hindu Sena dynasty.

The Maratha invasions of Bengal are said to have severely damaged Bengal's economy, and the Maratha bargis are believed to have killed 400,000 Bengalis, and the genocide has been considered one of the worst massacres in Indian history. During the Maratha expeditions in Bengal, Bargis was engaged in large-scale plundering of the countryside of western Bengal for about ten years.¹²

The area was eventually captured after the Battle of Plassey in 1757 by the British East India Company and became the British Raj's Bengal Presidency. Bengal, Bihar, parts of Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Assam were interested in the Bengal Presidency. With a population of 78.5 million, it was the largest province in British India. It was the largest province in British India, with a population of 78.5 million. British settlement began in 1760, when Chittagong was ceded to the East India Company by the Nawab of Bengal. Chittagong was a headquarters for Allied Forces participating in the Burma Campaign during World War II. During the 1940s, particularly after the Partition of British India, the port city began to develop and industrialize. Chittagong was the location of the country's declaration of independence during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

1.5 Baruas in Bangladesh

Bangladesh was governed and dominated by the government of Pakistan from the month of August 1947 to December 1971, much like the British colonial rulers. Educational policies did not satisfy any socio-cultural expectations or met the economic demands of the people over the long 25 years of Pakistani rule.

¹¹ R. C. Majumdar (1977). *Ancient India*. Motilal Banarsidass. pp. 268-. ISBN 978-81-208-0436-4.

¹² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bargi>

In order to foster their political agenda and accelerated economic growth, successive governments have sought to formulate their education policies through the mechanism of constitutional law and regulation.

In 1954, through the Village Agriculture and Industrial Development, an integrated non-formal education programme started to accomplish this aim. Subsequently, in 1963, under the Directorate of Education, the government also created an Adult Education Division to improve agricultural modernization in the region.

While Pakistan gained independence on the basis of the 'Pakistani nationalism' concept, educational policies focused on Islamic principles were encouraged. With the declaration of Islam as the state religion under the constitution of Pakistan in 1956, certain Islamic beliefs and ideals were safeguarded. Consequently, in the school curriculum, Islamic language and culture were incorporated in order to assimilate people into Islamic culture and politics. Minority cultural and political interests were relegated.

As a consequence, in 1952, the Bangladeshi people lost their lives for their linguistic rights. Eventually, the language revolution inspired the people to start the emancipation movement to regain their ethnic, social, political and economic rights. Indeed, in the hope of creating a secular state in order to encourage democratic education through the Bengali language and the cultural awareness of the people, the liberation movement was started in 1971.¹³ Through the initiation of the Bengali identity, this movement was also organized among the citizens to create cultural homogeneity within state politics. While Bangladesh emerged from a 1971 liberation war founded on secularism, Bengali identity and the principle of a socialist economy

¹³ Western Education and Modernization in a Buddhist Village-A Case Study of the Barua Community in Bangladesh, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Bijoy P Barua, 2009, UK. pp-80

as an autonomous nation state, it could not resist adhering within its political climate to an Islamic cultural ideology and the policy of the global corporate economy.

The change in policy and political climate also transformed socio-cultural and religious diversity downwards within the educational system of the world.¹⁴ While Bangladesh initially attempted to reform the colonial education system, owing to the perceived cultural alienation and isolation of minorities within its political background, its ideological stance was discontinued.¹⁵ In the background of Bangladesh, through many decades, the Barua culture has gone through ethnic isolation from their own roots and history. Due to the diffusion of Brahmanism, their ethnic isolation has largely occurred. Despite this, by incorporating some of the Hindu traditions into their society through Tantrism, the Buddhists of the Indian subcontinent have tried to preserve their culture and lives. The Buddhists have often followed these Hindu practices simply to discourage injustice and social inequality within the Indian subcontinent. In the nineteenth century, however, the Buddhists of Bangladesh, along with the help of Arakanese Buddhist educators, opposed this systemic assimilation. This socio-cultural problem has taken the form of opposition to tradition. While this movement was mobilized in 1864 in Bangladesh by the revival of Theravada Buddhism, during the rise of a colonial culture, it somehow lost its dynamism. Due to the influence of Western education in the early twentieth century, this colonial mindset evolved within the Barua culture.

The Baruas of Bangladesh gradually assimilated into the Indian subcontinent with the Hindu upper class of Bengal. In order to find their position within the socio-cultural and political background of greater Bengal, this may be defined more as a behavioural

¹⁴ Western Education and Modernization in a Buddhist Village-A Case Study of the Barua Community in Bangladesh, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Bijoy P Barua, 2009, UK. Pp-80.

¹⁵ Western Education and Modernization in a Buddhist Village-A Case Study of the Barua Community in Bangladesh, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Bijoy P Barua, 2009, UK. pp-80

assimilation (Gordon, 1971) of the Barua population. Perhaps the Barua community created this behavioural assimilation in order to escape social inequality within the Hindu-dominated Bengali culture. The Varna structure was so rigid that it could quickly displace them from greater India's politics. The Baruas never introduced themselves as aboriginal or a tribal community because of this intrinsic inequality, as they would be regarded as a lower class or as inferior to the Hindus of the upper class. Rather, Barua's have often presented themselves as Bengali in order to escape the Indian society's negative climate. The reality remains that Bangladesh's Barua culture distinctly holds a different socio-cultural identity. Specifically, the Barua community's eating patterns and social and cultural traditions vary very substantially from Bangladesh's Muslim and Hindu populations. Their traditional traditions are similar to the Arakanese people of Burma in most instances. In view of this, the Baruas can easily be viewed as the Indian subcontinent's ancestral ethnic group or even Burma's Arakanese. To develop their socio-political and cultural rights in Bangladesh, their socio-cultural and political uniqueness must be established.¹⁶

1.6 Barua population in India

It was because of the political demands, as mentioned earlier, and Baruas had to transfer to India and other regions. Most of the Baruas are treated as a minority group in India. Most of them remain engaged in retail business, auto mechanics and some of them serve government duties in group C and group D post and are lower middle class. Unfortunately, Barua's group has not even created a single ICS (Indian Civil Service), MP or head of any PSUs/Banks/Corporate from North East India after migration from East Pakistan or British India, save one or two from West Bengal and

¹⁶ Ethnic identity is a socio-political construction. Most social analysts or social scientists will agree that the Barua community maintains a distinct identity in Bangladesh

Northern Belt. It is miserable and the state has not taken the fact into account. It also means that Barua's social and economic roles are at a precarious level.

The Government of West Bengal has recognised and acknowledged Baruas in the mentioned Indian Constitution as a particular ethnic group belonging to the Scheduled Tribe of Mug. Unfortunately, they are not yet separately mentioned in the Constitution by the word 'Barua'. On the Magh tribal line in West Bengal, the Magh Barua Buddhists of Assam requested tribal status for the tribe. The group should be re-enlisted as "Magh" Barua tribe in the Tribe Schedule list of Assam as in Tripura and West Bengal as per the Schedule Tribe Order (1950) Section I regulations and other arrangements under the Constitution at the eighth biennial conference of the Federation of Mogh Barua Buddhist Welfare Association of Assam, said. Unfortunately, in other states, in this region, Baruas are in a muted mood and some of them are opposed to the Indian Constitution's advantage. Baruas are from higher tribes, according to them, and should not be classified as an ethnic tribe.¹⁷

1.7 Methodology

In this study both historical and qualitative methods were used for the study. A descriptive study aimed at empirical examination and analysis of the stated problem has been employed which uses two methods. In addition, a survey of a selected sample across different ages, occupation and place of residence was undertaken to understand their view. A systematic examination of official records, reports, past surveys was analysed.

Methodology applied in this is a qualitative, historical and interdisciplinary approach. The study also involved data collection from Gazetteers, reports, newspapers. The collection of secondary data consists of the reviews of relevant literatures, books,

¹⁷ <http://baruaism.blogspot.com/2014/02/barua-buddhist-community.html>

journals and magazines, newspapers, research papers and published and unpublished articles and thesis, and government records as well as the internet sources.

In order to systemize the data for this study, the recorded interviews were reviewed several times.

Methods of Data Collection

- a) Questionnaire Method.
- b) Interviews recorded on a digital recorder have been used to supplement the questionnaires. This method is beneficial in obtaining information from elderly people.
- c) Content or Document analysis has also been used as a source.

1.8 Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the history of Buddhism in Lucknow.
2. To trace out the historical background of Barua Buddhists in Uttar Pradesh.
3. To examine the socio-economic status of Barua Buddhist Community of Lucknow.
4. To explore the religious beliefs and practices among the Barua Buddhists in Lucknow.
5. To document the responses of the minority Barua Buddhist community within the socio-economic environment of the country.

1.4 Hypothesis

- The philosophy of Barua Buddhist is general and Barua Buddhists intellectuals in particular have solid Buddhist ideas.
- From the beginning first attempt was made by Barua Buddhist to suggest egalitarian social, moral and culture or democratization of nature.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study will discuss the Barua community's cultural heritage and the construction of if social identity in light of colonial education, the revival of Theravada Buddhism, and the community's representation and participation in national politics. The result of present research work will support to understand the society as a whole in the past conditions of their socio-cultural, political-economic, and religious status in the past. The study presents a demographic profile of the Barua community in Lucknow as well as their standard of living. The cultural heritage of the Barua community has yet to be explored in light of the cultural imposition and domination of the neoliberal agenda and this study brings in to light the distinct identity of a community and its tradition, customs and practices.

1.10 Literature Review

Barua Bijoy (2007) in his article "Colonialism, Education and Rural Buddhist Communities in Bangladesh" From a Buddhist point of view, Bangladesh's post-independence nation state has not changed colonial policies and regulations. The post-independence state's agendas and policies have continued along the path of assimilation and homogenization and are biased towards the dominant Muslim majority. The political context of Bangladesh today has been limited to Bengali nationalism, Bangladeshi nationalism, Hindu Bangladeshi / Islamic nationalism and the market economy agenda. None of these policies is intended to promote cultural diversity and cooperative living in the country. This program of nationalism has divided or oppressed Buddhist groups. Historically, the British colonial form of education was designed to disempower rural Buddhist communities in Bangladesh. As colonial education has continued to create an image of progress through industrial

society, people in Buddhist villages have also been engaged in decolonization processes through non-violent means.

Barua, D.P in his paper *“Marriage Ceremony of Barua Buddhist in Bangladesh”* has focussed mainly on the popular rites and rituals of the marriage ceremony of the Barua community. The various aspects of Barua's Buddhist marriage rituals were strongly influenced by the dominant national culture. These popular rituals play a very important role in their marriage ceremony and the marriage rituals of the Hindu community had a very strong influence on the Barua communities' practices. The author has pointed out the Barua marriage rituals are a mixture of various popular beliefs and practices.

Barua, D.P in another paper *“Paritta Ritual in Bangladesh- A Study on the Understanding and Consciousness of the Barua Community”* mentions that there are various ethnic groups among the Buddhist community of Bangladesh which include Barua, Chakma, Marma who belong to different cultures, speak different languages and reside in different regions. The Paritta practice occupies an important place in the socio-religious life of the Buddhists of Bangladesh. It is one of the most important and common rituals performed for various purposes, both secular and religious.

Mundhe Rohidas (2016) in his paper *“Socio-political Status of Minority communities of Bangladesh: A Policy Analysis”* has mentioned that the majority and minority identities have always been used for political discourse or political interests. A new nation like Bangladesh has faced problems of national identity and nationalism due to different political perceptions and political discourse. Due to persistent institutional discrimination, the political and economic marginalization of minorities has led to confrontational politics and separatism problems in the region. Bangladesh itself is the result of ongoing poverty. Minority

security issues and issues are not limited to Hindu, Buddhist or Christian minorities in Bangladesh, but have become a national issue and pose a threat to nation building. Moderate Muslims, scholars and various parts of civil society are also under attack from extremists. Moderate Muslims, scholars and different parts of civil society are also under pressure from extremists. It posed a threat not only to territorial integrity and national sovereignty, but also to the peace and stability of the South Asian region. Continued migration from Bangladesh has had a major impact on Indo-Bangladesh relations. It has put financial, political, social and security pressures on India. The paper focuses on the socio-political status of Bangladesh's minority communities.

Barua B.P. (2010), in his chapter on “*Ethnic Minorities, Indigenous Knowledge, and Livelihoods: Struggle for Survival in South-eastern Bangladesh*” gives a critique of Western suppositions regarding development that drive native knowledge, culture, and livelihoods to the margins in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. This chapter critically explores the socio-cultural resistance movement of Chittagong Hill Tract ethnic minorities in the sense of indigenous awareness, history, growth and movement. The chapter also focuses specifically on issues related to ethnic minorities, colonial policies, forests and livelihoods, development initiatives, the role of development actors and minority struggles and resistance. For convenience of discussion, I will use the expressions “ethnic minorities,” “ethnic communities,” and “hill people” interchangeably.

Sen Debolina (2017) research paper “*Religious Institutions of the Magh Barua Community of Kolkata*” deals with the main religious institutions founded by the Barua Magh community in the Metropolitan City of Kolkata. The author points out that it is a migrant group and has migrated from Chittagong in Bangladesh to India through a number of waves of migration. He also had ties to Myanmar's Arakan. After

coming to Kolkata, the Barua Magh community has founded several socio-economic, cultural, educational and religious institutions in the city. Out of these institutions, the major religious institutions, their establishment and activities have been the main focus of the research paper to be identified by the researcher.

Gitanjali Surendran in her PhD dissertation on “*The Indian Discovery of Buddhism: Buddhist Revival in India, c. 1890 -1956*” focuses on the way in which ideas about Buddhism have been circulated from person to person, from forum to forum, within communities and between communities, and have been deployed, redeployed and transformed at many different junctures. Surrendering starts his history with the all-too-family story of the arrival of Anagarika Dharmapala in India and the founding of the Maha Bodhi Society in 1891.

Allen Charles (2016) in his influential work “*The Buddha and the Sahibs*” provides a vivid and entertaining story of the most experienced Orientalists and scholar-soldiers who explored India's abandoned or converted Buddhist spaces in the 18th and 19th centuries. From Brian Hodgson and Sir William Jones to James Prinsep, Alexander Cunningham and even the Viceroy, Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, Allen presents his piece-by-piece rebuilding of Indian Buddhist history in meticulous detail.

D.C Ahir in his book *Buddhism in India* provides a complete story of rediscovery, revival and development of Buddhism in India from different perspective. In this work each chapter deals with the particular aspect of movement or a particular person who made a major contribution to the Buddhist revival movement.

D.C Ahir in his work *India 50 years of independence “Buddhism”* begins with a brief look at the renaissance and revival of Buddhism in India during the period from 1891-1947. The author also discusses about the contribution of Buddhism to modern India,

contribution of Sri Lankan monks, monks from the Myanmar (Burma) and the Indian Bhikkhus and the contribution of Dr. B.R Ambedkar.

In his research *Buddhism in India*, **Gail Omvedt** explores the civilization influence of Buddhism, its connection with India's leading role in trade, its spread and success in South and South-East Asia, its role in promoting a diverse and open society as opposed to the authoritarian, village-bound, Brahmanic social system.

Nalinaksha Dutta's (1956) work *Development of Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh* has touched only the period from early Buddhism up to the reign of King Ashoka. The writer has hardly touched any aspect where he had mentioned about the development of Buddhism in modern period.

Philip C. Almond (1988) in his book *The British Discovery of Buddhism* examines the discovery of Buddhism during the Victorian period. It was only in the nineteenth century that Buddhism became, in the western mind, a religious tradition distinct from Hinduism. As a result, Buddha emerged from the world of myth and was presented with a historical figure. Almond's exploration of the British understanding of Buddhism—of its creator, its teachings, its principles, its social practices, its reality and its meaning—sheds more light on the various aspects of Buddhist culture. This sheds light on Victorian society's decisions.

Eleanor Zelliott's work *The Indian rediscovery of Buddhism, 1855-1956*, presents a well-balanced account of the Buddhist revival and Buddhist movement in India. Despite the attempts of scholars such as Coomaraswamy, Radhakrishnan and others to minimize the distinction between Buddhism, Hinduism, the awareness of Buddha's distinctive teaching is being increasingly recognised today. "A Hundred years of Scholarship" writes Zelliott, "of writing for the general public on Buddhism and the Buddha, of institutions of Buddhism out of profound personal conviction, of

developing the idea that those who were Buddhists once could be Buddhists again-in those hundred years the ground was prepared for an actual as well as intellectual rediscovery of Buddhism”.

Donald S. Lopez, *"Curators of the Buddha,"* is the first comprehensive analysis of the study of Buddhism in the West and the first work to bring to bear on this subject the perspectives of colonial and post-colonial cultural studies. After a description of the history of the Buddhist studies of the 19th century, the essay focuses on the important curators of the Buddha such as Aurel Stein, D.T. Suzuki and Carl Jung, who as they created and maintained the discipline, played an important role in spreading the knowledge of Buddhism in the west. The essay brings to life many of the important yet unconsidered social, political and cultural factors that have influenced the direction of Buddhist studies for more than a century and have often skewed the interpretation of a complex set of traditions.

E. Lamotte *"The History of Indian Buddhism"* This work contains a vivid, vigorous and fully detailed description of early Buddhism and its teachings, the material organizations of the community, the formation and further development of the Buddhist writings, the evolution of the Buddhist sculpture and architecture, the origins of the sects, the Buddhists dialects and the constitution of the legends and sets them in historical background in which Buddhist doctrines originated and expanded in India and in neighbouring countries. Using material evidence provided by Indian epigraphy and archaeological remains on the one hand and taking into account information supplied by western (Latin and Greek) and far eastern (Tibetan and Chinese) sources on the other, Lamotte has succeeded in producing a lucid and basic book that is unanimously considered as a classic of the contemporary Buddhist studies. After thirty years, the work has maintained its full value, but in order to meet

the criteria of the latest Buddhist scholarship, the book has been complemented by an expanded bibliography, an index of technical terms and updated geographical maps.

Lars Fogelin- *An archaeological history of Indian Buddhism* is a comprehensive survey of Indian Buddhism from its origin in the 6th century BCE, through its ascendance in the 1st millennium CE, and its eventual decline in the mainland South Asia by the 2nd millennium CE. Weaving together studies of archaeological remains, architecture, iconography, inscriptions and Buddhist historical sources, this book uncovers the quotidian concerns and the practices of Buddhist monks and nuns (the Sangha), and their lay adherents-concerns and practices often obscured in studies of Buddhism premised largely, if not exclusively, on Buddhist texts. At the heart of Indian Buddhism lies a persistent social contradiction between the desires for individual asceticism versus the need to maintain a coherent community of the Buddhists. Before the early 1st millennium CE, the sangha relied heavily on the patronage of kings, guilds and ordinary Buddhists to support themselves. During this period, the sangha emphasized the communal elements of Buddhism as they sought to establish themselves as the leaders of coherent religious order. By the mid-1st millennium CE, Buddhist monasteries had become powerful political and economic institutions with extensive landholdings and wealth. This new economic self-sufficiency allowed the sangha to limit their day to day interaction with the laity and begin to more fully satisfy their ascetic's desires for the first time. This withdrawal from regular interaction with the laity led to the collapse of Buddhism in India in the early to mid-2nd millennium CE. To contrast to the ever-changing religious practices of the Buddhist Sangha, the Buddhist laity were more conservative – maintaining their religious practices for almost two millennia, even as they normally shifted their allegiances to rival religious orders. This book also serves as an exemplar for the

archaeological study of long term religious change through the perspective of practice theory, materiality.

Hirakwa Akira (1993), *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Shakyamuni to early Mahayana* provides a comprehensive and detailed study of the first six centuries of Indian Buddhism presents the findings of a lifetime of work and reflection by one of Japan's most respected scholars of Buddhism. Using Pali and Sanskrit sources as well as archaeological site inscriptions and the Chinese translation of Indian texts, Hirakwa combines his study of early Buddhist doctrinal development with a wide-ranging examination of the historical background and the history of Buddhist institutions. The inclusion of bibliographies in Japanese and Western languages, together with a comprehensive bibliographic essay by the translator, would make this volume, in particular, an introduction to the great corpus of Japanese Buddhism scholarship, which is still not widely known in the West.

Edward Conze (1993) in his book “*A Short History of Buddhism*” Provides a concise overview of the history of beliefs, from the time of the Buddha to the 2nd century exile of the Dalai Lama. With ability, understanding and wisdom, Conze traces 2500 years of Buddhist history, offering a detailed description of the origins of Buddhism and its most fundamental doctrines. Covering all the Buddhist schools from Mahayana to Zen, this detailed, succinct tale is widely recognized as a classic introduction to the history of the Buddhist tradition, suitable for students and interested readers alike.

Trevor Ling (1980) *Buddhist Revival in India: Aspects of the Sociology of the Buddhism* is divided into two parts-first one explains about the Buddhism and Brahmanism. He clarified that Hinduism projects an impression of harmony, faith and solidarity in equal parts to the outside world, but a large section of India's Hindu

population continued to experience social injustice at the hands of their fellow Hindus, which is not a new phenomenon. But in India, Buddhism developed a system of thought that was more intelligible to modern minds than that of orthodox Brahmins. Buddhism means a type of culture with a variety of varieties. All of these is the result of contact between the cultural process in which Buddhism initially entered the area concerned and the indigenous culture of that region. After the 12th century, Buddhism changed its form and persisted in some new way, traditional Buddhism survived in the small pockets of the north-east. In the second part, anti-Brahmanism and neo-Buddhism starts with Ambedkar's criticism of Brahmanism and the characterization of Brahmanism as one and the only explanation for SC's backwardness. Throughout India, Buddhism recovered numerically after the adoption of Neo-Buddhism by Ambedkar.

Dipen Barua (2018) in his research paper "*A Normative Cross-Cultural Hindu-Buddhist Interaction in Bengal: Adaptations and Transformations Revisited*" mentions that Bengal was a vital cauldron in the modern reconstruction of Indian history. Historically, it has been known that Buddhism was a dominant religion in Bengal that progressed and grew parallel with other religious traditions all over the time. Political unrest and injustice led Buddhism to decline in Bengal from the 13th to the 17th century. The Buddhists accomplished their revival under the British Raj, the weight of the European scholarship that encourages the revivalists to accept the Theravada Buddhism that is practiced in Bangladesh and West Bengal today. The author further mentions that due to the revivalist movement of Buddhism in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Bengali Buddhists are willing to claim that they hold a separate religious and social identity, but under close scrutiny we see that the Bengali Buddhists still follow a type of socio-culture that has only modified its shape to a

Buddhist one. Many Buddhists in West Bengal are religiously and culturally influenced by established Hinduism, which could be an example of Hindu-Buddhist contact in the state. This kind of hybrid religious and cultural traditions in the Bangladesh and West Bengal areas point to the confluence and separation where the two cultures often synthesize each other and this silent aspect is an important part of Bengali cultural scholarship. The author also points out that during the reformation and rebirth of Buddhism; Buddhists like "Baruas," Chakma's," "Sinha's "were officially recognized as Buddhists, practicing a distinct Buddhist community.

Aparna Chatterjee (2015) in her paper "*From Bangladesh To India: A Study On Syncretism And Distinctiveness Through The Present Marriage System Of Theravadi Buddhists Of North Bengal.*" This paper is a modest attempt to expose both the essence of syncretism and its pattern of boundary preservation through the marriage customs ceremonies, traditions and partner preferences. The problem with North Bengal's Barua community is that they have no such fixed attitude pattern that can give them some distinctive identity in their daily lives. In these days, the common practice of marriage is to set one day for Ashwirbad, where both parties come together and give the bride-groom their gifts and blessings. The author points out that, they exchange rings and cut the engagement cake that is obviously an influence of Western culture, and this method is gaining popularity every day. The pattern of attitude towards marriage is not very set or linear because of the change from one position to another and the intermingling with other people. Most possibly that is why there is no incident of marriage between Theravadi (Bengali) and Mahayani (Non-Bengali) Buddhists in the case of inter-religious marriage. But the same among Bengali Hindus and Bengali Buddhists is not very rare.

1.11 Chapter Plan

The first chapter which is the introduction part of the study starts with tracing the historical background of Barua Buddhists in South East Asia most particularly in Bangladesh and India. The study traces about their ancestry and highlights how this tribe has made its inroads into the Indian soil most particularly in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. The chapter also throws its light on the historical background of various minority groups in India and depicts their demographic development right from 1951 census. Moreover, the chapter includes the hypotheses, objectives and literature review related to the study.

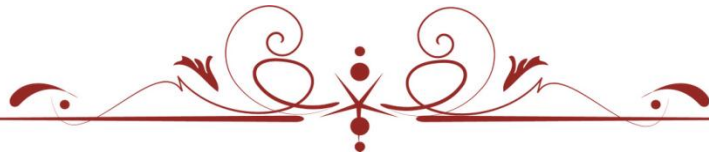
The chapter second of the study begins with introductory profile of the State of Uttar Pradesh. The chapter specially focuses on the population trends of Buddhist community in various provinces of Uttar Pradesh since 1951 till 2001. It has brought to light the variations in the population of the Buddhist community while comparing it with the demographic trends of other communities in the state. The chapter has provided the figures of Buddhist community in Lucknow right from 1951 taking the help from various government census reports. Origin of the Barua community and the meaning of the term Barua has been explained in this part. Moreover, this chapter has brought to light the migration of Barua community, including the causes of their migration in in India principally in West Bengal and Lucknow. At the end chapter highlights the role of Dr. Ambedkar in Buddhist revival moment (Neo-Buddhism) in India. The conversion call, provided by Ambedkar in 1956, greatly impressed Uttar Pradesh's outcasts, especially the Jatavs, the state's largest scheduled caste group.

The chapter third which is titled as Socio-economic status of Barua Buddhists is primarily based on the primary survey conducted in Lucknow city. All the

information related to the educational status, social status, occupational, income and expenditure status, health status is included in this chapter.

The chapter four of the study discusses about the religious beliefs and cultural practices of the Barua community. It gives a brief introduction of the Theravada Buddhism in South East Asia and India and also throws light on the difference between the Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. The main focus on the chapter is on the various religious practices, festivals and ceremonies performed by the Barua Buddhists across South East Asia and Lucknow in particular. It gives us a detailed description of these festivals and ceremonies, how are they performed and to which aspect are they related. All the rituals related to their marriage, funeral and religious are provided in detail.

The chapter five of the study titled as Buddhist monastic centres in Uttar Pradesh with special reference to Lucknow mentions about the various Vihar scattered over the various places in Uttar Pradesh. It discusses about their establishment, management and various activities performed at these places.



CHAPTER-2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BARUA BUDDHIST IN UTTAR PRADESH



CHAPTER-2

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UTTAR PRADESH

It was on the 1st of April 1937 that present Uttar Pradesh was created as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during the colonial period. It was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts, with the capital being Lucknow. It was on 9th of November 2000 that a new state Uttarakhand was carved out from the Himalayan region of the state.

Uttar Pradesh, is thought about as India's greatest vacationer goal. It flaunts 35 million local guests. The greater part of the outside voyagers visiting India consistently make visiting this Taj and Ganga expresses an objective. Agra itself, together with around twenty million local sightseers, gets around one million outside vacationers every year. Uttar Pradesh is studded with vacation spots goals over a wide scope important to individuals with differing interests. Uttar Pradesh, the world's seventh most populated state, can profess to be the most seasoned seat of the way of life and human progress of India.

Uttar Pradesh shares a universal limit with Nepal and is flanked by the Indian conditions of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Mariana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar. The state can be isolated into two unmistakable hypsographical (elevation) areas. The bigger Gangetic Plain district is in the north; it incorporates the Ganges-Yamuna Doab, the Ghaghra fields, the Ganges fields and the Terai. It has prolific alluvial soil and a level geography (with an incline of 2 m/km) broken by various lakes, lakes and waterways. The littler Vindhya Hills

and level area is in the south. It is portrayed by hard rock strata and a differed geology of slopes, fields, valleys and levels; constrained accessibility of water makes the locale generally bone-dry.

Uttar Pradesh is the most crowded state in India, with a populace of 199,581,477 million individuals starting at 1st March 2011. In the event that it were a different nation Uttar Pradesh would be the world's fifth-most-crowded country, trailing just China, India, the United States of America and Indonesia. As of the 2001 Indian evaluation around 80 percent of Uttar Pradesh populace is Hindu, while Muslims make up around 18.5 percent of the populace. The rest of Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians and Jains Uttar Pradesh are between scope 24°-31°N and longitude 77°-84°E. Territory shrewd, it is the fourth biggest province of India. The Gangetic Plain involves 75% of the state. The whole state, aside from the northern area, has a tropical storm atmosphere. In the fields, January temperatures extend from 12.5°C-17.5°C and May records 27.5°-32.5°C, with a limit of 45°C. Precipitation fluctuates from 1,000-2,000 mm in the east to 600-1,000 mm in the west.

Religious reform has also been a question of importance, tension and abuse in Indian politics. The change of religious ideologies has ignited numerous national debates. Changing one group's name removes or subtracts the amount of a society that is so essential in democracy.

The Scheduled castes (previously known as untouchables) class has historically become Uttar Pradesh's most deprived group in terms of social and economic conditions. The society had sometimes questioned the prevailing Hindu social order in the course of history to resolve this desperate condition. Kabir, Ravidas, Achhutanand etc. were for centuries examples of the voice of the oppressed. Throughout modern

India the culture was introduced with another hero- Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar who struggled legally, socially and politically for their privileges. The values and mission are of great importance for transforming emotionally marginalized, politically subjugated, historically devastated and economically oppressed societies. As is well known, one of Dr. Ambedkar's dreams was to inspire the oppressed castes and turn India into *Prabudha Bharat* (Enlightened India), where the Buddhist values of freedom, liberty, brotherhood and fairness will prevail. The 1956 conversion campaign to Buddhism was certainly a step toward that goal. Respect for Ambedkar's theory is very clear in increasing numbers of Buddhists. There seems to be no politics imaginable at U.P without having Dr. Ambedkar and Buddhism in the front line.

2.1 Demographic development of Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh

According to Uttar Pradesh's present boundary, the total Buddhist population in 1951 census was 2517. Uttar Pradesh's twelve districts then had no Buddhist community, thirteen districts had less than two digits, and a total of 46 districts were four digits none. Yet, there is a significant upsurge in each following survey.

Table 2.1. Composition of Uttar Pradesh Population

Census Year	Total Population	Buddhists
1951	60693755	2517
1961	70640045	10478
1971	84539184	35056
1981	106016301	47573
1991	132061753	208583
2001	166197921	302031

Source: Census of India data on Uttar Pradesh 1951-2001.

Table 2.2 Buddhist Population Growth 1951-2001 Area-wise

Area/Division	1951-1961	1961-1971	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001
Agra	4576	11343	17109	43044	60624
Allahabad	860	5130	4822	11915	23924
Banaras	553	580	1816	20358	34988
Faizabad	111	103	404	12594	23570
Gorakhpur	202	289	1302	37768	58724
Jhansi	188	1847	1919	12327	7568
Lucknow	350	1708	10139	37422	48512
Meerut	2464	11819	7365	17664	16448
Rohilkhand	1174	2327	2697	15491	27673
Total	10478	35146	47573	208583	302031

Sources: Census data on Uttar Pradesh 1951-2001.

As we realize there are few improvements to Uttar Pradesh's geographical boundaries. For example, Uttaranchal was sculpted in 2000, so that the population of that geographical area is deducted not only from 2000 onwards but since 1951 and only the existing geographical area that is presented and analyzed is taken into account. The available divisions are kept as a basis in 1951 and are subsequently amalgamated into them on the basis of created divisions. The detailed study of increasing numbers of Buddhists can be studied with a census wise.

2.1.1 Census 1961

Throughout ancient Indian times, Uttar Pradesh had been the birthplace of Buddhism. The faith of rulers and masses diminished from the land of their origin, and was limited in 1951 to just 2517 men (0.004 percent of the total state population). It had

become completely extinct in twelve of its influential districts before the revival of Buddhism in the 1950's.¹

Uttar Pradesh's eastern districts, once the main centres of Buddhism, lost their appeal owing to some adverse situations such as the abolition of political patronage since the sixth century¹² and Brahmanism's antagonism. The Buddhist art and culture were at its zenith in the period of Mauryas and Kanishkas, which was diminished to the lowest by the 20th century. Chinese historian Hiuen Tsang's records offer a compelling description of Buddhism during his 5th Century A.D stay. There were 30 monasteries and various stupas in Buddhist art and architecture according to him. Sarnath and Shravasti were very reverent sites not only for Uttar Pradesh's Buddhists but also for Buddhists around the world. The other Chinese pilgrim, Fa-hian, who in the 7th century A.D. visited Uttar Pradesh and Wu-Kung displays the Buddhist temples during their era in the eighth century A.D.² For the first time in the 1961 census, there was an upsurge in the Buddhist population, especially in the western part of Uttar Pradesh such as Agra, Meerut, Aligarh, Bareilly Bijnor and Pilibhit. Other important mass conversion sites are noted in the districts of Kanpur, Lucknow, and Mirzapur. Thereafter the Buddhist population is recorded in all parts of Uttar Pradesh with a great leap. In the later censuses, eight of its twelve districts, where there was no representation in 1951 census, also recorded large numbers of Buddhists population. This demonstrates that Buddhism's dynamism is not confined to any particular area, but its influence is everywhere.

¹ In the districts Gonda (Plus Balrampur), Sultanpur, Barabanki, Kheri, Sitapur, Unnao, Azamgarh, Basti (plus Siddharth Nagar and Sant Kabir Nagar), Mirzapur (plus Sonbhadra), Rampur, Pilibhit and Shahjahanpur is recorded no Buddhist population in 1951 census.

² N. Dutt and K. D. Bajpai, *Development of Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh*, (Lucknow: Publication Bureau, Government of Uttar Pradesh, 1956), pp 308-326.

2.1.2 Census 1971

The 1971 survey observed another great leap in Buddhism. In this decade the Buddhist population growth rate reported was 235.42 percent against the overall population growth rate of 19.64 percent only. The number of Buddhists increased to 35,056 over the 10,478 in the previous census. Another notable thing in the development of the census of Buddhism in 1971 is an increase in popularity and conversion to Buddhism in the western and central part of Uttar Pradesh instead of the eastern part which had traditionally been the center of the Buddhist teachings. The traditional prestigious center of Buddhism, like Banaras, Kushinagar and Shravasti, did not witness the revival wave in its splendid way, as it did in the western part of the state. The administrative districts in which the Buddhist populace miraculously leapt in the 1971 census were Agra (11343), Meerut (11739), Allahabad (5130), Rohilkhand (2327) Jhansi (1847) and Lucknow (1708), whereas the administrative divisions of eastern Uttar Pradesh such as Banaras (580), Gorakhpur (289) and Faizabad (103) were not even able to touch the thousand.

2.1.3 Census 1981

The 1981 census showed Buddhism's slowest growth rate (35.35 per cent) since its revival in the census of 1961. But its growth rate, even when compared to other religious communities, surpassed all other religious communities, Catholic (22.38%), Hindu (24.78%), Jain (12.76%), Muslim (29.28 %) and Sikh (19.00 %).

In this decade, a tremendous leap has been registered by the administrative divisions of eastern Uttar Pradesh where there was slow progress during previous censuses. Divisions like Banaras, Gorakhpur, Lucknow and Faizabad reached the new heights by touching respectively 1816, 1302, 10139 and 404. The decadal growth rate of the

districts Banaras, Gorakhpur, Lucknow and Faizabad is reported as 213.10%, 350.51%, 493.61% and 292.23% respectively. The western Uttar Pradesh division of Agra only maintained a comparatively better growth rate in western Uttar Pradesh at 50.83 percent compared to the 35.35 percent overall decadal Buddhist growth rate. Rohilkhand (15.90 percent) and Jhansi (3.89 percent) are the administrative divisions where Buddhism's growth was minimal. With -37.26 per cent and -6.00 per cent respectively, the negative growth rate was recorded in Meerut and Allahabad. Throughout Uttar Pradesh, Buddhism was seen taking new foot in the 1961 and 1971 survey. But the overall study of the 1981 census is very important in terms of the reasons of Buddhism's slow progress compared to previous censuses. During the 1981 survey, a particular approach was adopted. Religion statistics for 1961, 1971, 1991 and 2001 were focused on each individual's religion while the estimates reported in 1981 were centred on the household head religion. So, most likely, Buddhism's slow growth rate appears to have been reported because of this factor. The reasoning behind this is that the abolition of untouchables is seen mainly within a family of new educated youth, and not by a household head and their entire family.

2.1.4 Census 1991

There was a splendid growth rate among Buddhist population in the 1991 census year. In the modern history of Buddhism's revival, the 1991 census recorded Buddhists ' highest growth rate at 338.44 percent, while Hindu population growth rate was found at another point at 17.03 percent compared to the 24.56 percent overall population growth rate. The growth rate recorded by the Buddhists among all divisions³ of U.P. was Faizabad 3017.32 percent, Gorakhpur 2800.76 percent, Benaras 1021.03 percent,

³ Though after 1951 census, there is much changing and creation of new administrative divisions but here for The purpose of easiness to study only the existing divisions of 1951 are taken as a base.

Jhansi 542.36 percent, Rohilkhand 474.37 percent, Lucknow 269.08 percent, Agra 151.58 percent, Allahabad 147.09 percent and Meerut 139.83 percent, respectively.

2.1.5 Census 2001

The average population growth of Uttar Pradesh was estimated at 25.84 percent during the last decade of the 20th century, while the Buddhist community recorded the growth rate of 44.80 percent, the maximum among all religious communities. It is accurate, however, that the Buddhist growth rate has not been observed as observed in the previous census but the amount has definitely increased and its significance has been identified in a splendid way. The other communities in the decade that failed to reach even the 25.84 percent average growth rate are Hindu 24.5%, Jain 22.9% and Christian 19.3%. The Allahabad division reported the highest Buddhist growth rate of 100.78 percent, while the Hindu population grew here only 24.5 percent. The other divisions including Faizabad, Rohilkhand and Gorakhpur reported a Buddhist growth rate of 87.15%, 78.63% and 55.48% respectively.

The divisions that registered Buddhist development with less than a percentage overall were Agra (40.84 percent), Lucknow (29.63 percent), and Meerut (6.88 percent). The Jhansi division reported the negative Buddhist growth rate of -36.80 percent. This was due to a 5447 decline in the population of the Buddhist district of Jalaun without any known reason till date. The district of Meerut witnessed a population drop of 5012. Leaving such drawbacks, it cannot be ignored that the upsurge in the Uttar Pradesh survey of the Buddhist community in 2001 has reached its current zenith.

According to the 2001 census, the number of Buddhist inhabitants in Uttar Pradesh recorded an unparalleled growth of 11899 per cent over the average of 2517 in 1951

as it increased to 302031. Around 1951-2001, the average growth rate of Buddhists found a whopping lead of 194.36 percent against the very low real population growth rate of 22.37 percent.⁴ Buddhists' average growth rate during these fifty years exceeded other religious communities with a large Hindus gap of 61.92%, Muslims 71.56%, Christians 48.31%, Jains 54.82% and Sikhs 77.79%. The trend of the growth rate of whopping shows that Buddhism is a matter of great public importance, and this phenomenon cannot be missed in democratic politics.

Demography of the Buddhists in Lucknow

According to the 1951 census the number of Buddhists in the district of Lucknow was 73, which in 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses exceeded 216, 322, 347, 2816, and 4327 respectively. Until Dr. Ambedkar's full-fledged agitation for Buddhism for ex-untouchables, the 73 Buddhists in the 1951 census were mostly the Bengali Barua Buddhist families who migrated here from Chittagong after the Bengal partition in 1905. These Bengali Buddhists worked as servants and cooks for the British, and also cared for their horses and stables. Currently, these Buddhists amount has exceeded 300-400 people. The biggest change in Buddhist population numbers were recorded in the 1991 and 2001 census. According to my interpretation, one of the most plausible explanations seems to be the introduction of a proliferation of literature on Ambedkar, Asoka and Buddha published mainly after 1990 by government employees and their active involvement in the dharma practices. For the first time in its history, the census office in India has announced that approximately 70 percent of the Buddhist population in Uttar Pradesh is from the tradition of the scheduled castes, and 30% from others. It means that there may be Buddhists from

⁴ The data is calculated according to present boundary of Uttar Pradesh from 1951-2001 derived from the various census reports of Uttar Pradesh

non-SC among' others.' Some of my interviews and experiences at Lucknow further strengthen the case. Several Buddhist advocates and all the interviewees have accepted upon the enquiry that backward castes are also becoming inclined towards Buddhism. Buddhists in Lucknow as a whole come mainly from various social groups (Barua Bengalis, Scheduled Castes, and Backward Castes).

2.2 Barua Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh

2.2.1 Who are Baruas?

The ethnic community of Barua Buddhist (Barua, Baruah) is Mongoloid Chagatai and is closely associated with the tribes of Chakmas, Tancangyas, Marmas, Chagtai, Mugal, and Mugh. All these tribes are followers of the Buddhist Religion Theravada. Some Baruas diaspora in India and abroad happened during the British Colonial Period from East Pakistan. Now they are highly concentrated in the districts of Chittagong and southern Bangladesh and some Baruas families reside in broad districts of Comilla and Noakhali. In India – Kolkata and its surrounds, Jalpaiguri District Siliguri, Koch Bihar, Durgapur etc. in West Bengal, Jamshedpur, Ranchi in Jharkhand, Lucknow in UP, Shillong in Meghalaya, Guwahati, Bongaigon, Tinsukia and its surroundings etc in Assam, the Sadar Subdivision of West Tripura District (also known as Agartala) the Udaipur Subdivision of South Tripura District and Delhi. Depending on the job, social and economic standing although some Barua Buddhists use titles such as ' Mutsuddi, ' ' Choudhuri, ' ' Talukdar, "Sikdar, ' ' Hajari, ' ' Sinha ' etc.

Bangladesh's Barua community is one of several communities that had long followed Buddhism in past Bangladesh's history. Other communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts include Tangcangyas, Chakmas, Marmas and several indigenous tribes; have distinct

languages and interesting culture. While some Buddhists use titles such as mutsuddi, choudhri, talukdar, sikdar, hajari, sinha, etc., all in fact are Baruas, depending on the educational, religious, and economic status.

According to the Bengali Buddhist Barua, the title Barua comes from two words, 'bara' meaning 'renowned'; and 'ua' meaning dictator. In ancient times, Chittagong's highest-ranking military ruler under Arakan's king was a man named 'Barua'. In Assamese "Barua": also written as Baruah, Barooah, Baroova, Borooah and Baroowa; is a common Assamese surname. In Assam, the title was originally conferred on most class of officers in the medieval Assam kingdom of Ahom. The Ahom appointed officers with different titles and the Baruah title means "3000 men's leader." Assam's Baruas / Baruahs / Barooahs are by faith Hindus and were a key contributor to the Assamese community's development, according to B.K. Gogoi's literature "Buddhism in Assam and its surrounding areas" stated that during the reign of Ashoka (3rd century B.C.) Buddhism was common in Kamrupa, Tezpur, Goalpara and nearby areas.

The Barua community undeniably retains a very distinct social and cultural identity within the villages that it inhabits. The population lives mostly in the country's greater district of Chittagong. The Chittagong Hill Tracts⁵ include several thousand Baruas. The presence is usually different from Bangladesh's mainstream population. They believe their ancestors in the ancient kingdom of Samatata were in power.⁶ Traditionally, the Baruas claim that their ancestors took shelter from the tyranny and persecution of several subsequent subcontinent rulers in the hills and forest areas of

⁵ This district was created by the British colonial administration in 1860 as a non-regulated tribal area with the goal to use the forests and natural resources.

⁶ Chaudhary (1977), op.cit.

the greater Chittagong region. It is also presumed that during the sixth and seventh centuries, the Baruas settled in the region.

The word Barua had its roots in the word *Boyoya*. The community members probably haven't used the title Barua in the past. Since the Bengali people were unable to pronounce Arkanese and Burmese words, the word Boyoya is assumed to have been replaced by the word Barua. It seems that, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, community members began using this title to obscure their social / ethnic identity in order to avoid political prosecution and social discrimination by King Bodoipaya of Burma, who destroyed the Kingdom of Arakan in 1785. They also tried to connect with the roots of royal blood, or the great Aryan race, while obscuring their ethnic identity.

Hunter (1876) further argued that the Baruas are typically thought to be of mixed origin, with the blood of various ethnic groups, such as the Aryans, Arakanese, Burmese, and Portuguese. He argued that as a result of marriage alliances between Arakanese men and women from the lower castes of Bengal, they might have originated.⁷ There were also many Hindu customs and rituals adopted by the Baruas, as well as Bengali.⁸ However some scholars from the Barua region denied this idea, arguing that the Barua Maghs are of Kshatriya heritage and attempting to link their descent with Bihar's governing caste. In this view, the term Barua derives from Vaisali's Vajji tribe, and comes from *batuk*, a Sanskrit word meaning superior. There is a common assumption that the Baruas are Bara-Aryan ancestors which means great Aryan. It is also argued that the Baruas of today's Bangladesh came from Magadha and were forced to leave their homeland owing to either the oppression of

⁷ Hunter, W. W. (1877). *A statistical account of Bengal* (Vol. VI). London: Trübner & Company.

⁸ Risley, H. H. (1892). *The tribes and castes of Bengal* (Vol. 1). Printed at the Bengal secretariat Press.

Brahmanism or the Mughal persecution. They came from Assam to take shelter in the Kingdom of Arakan, navigating hilly terrains and woods.⁹

2.2.2 The history of the origin of Barua's

The Barua Maghs faith, living in the southern and eastern portion of Chittagong is Buddhism—while they observe some religious practice in Hindu. We appear to be a part of the Rajbanshi culture and the Raj. As the origin of this they pretend to be the king of Arakan's descendants. Several kings emigrated from Magadh or present Bihar to Arakan. The term 'Magh' comes from the Baruas's initial dwelling place, and even the illiterate Maghs say to be Magadh Kashatriyas as well – as their ancestors came from the ruling Magadh Kashatriya family.¹⁰

Confusion and chaos began in 1638, after the death of Arakan's King Sri Sudama. The Maghas then migrated to Chittagong in search of a safe refuge and began living there. A king-named Narapati or Nagrapati minister usurped the throne and killed many members of the aristocracy and royal family. During the middle of this turmoil, according to the King Wang, Sri Sundama's son Nga Tun Khin left the city and concealed himself. Several leaders of the nobility and the royal family, on the other side, moved to a place named Kantha and began living there. Among Mychammy's one lakh soldier fifty thousand fled the capital with a priest named Nga Lut Reen and started to live under Nga Tun Khin in Kantha. The king of Kantha eventually came to be known as Marmagri. The Barua Maghs are their successors and they are even now called by the Arakanese as Marmagri or Great Maghs.¹¹

⁹ Khan, A. M. (1977). *The Buddhists in Bangladesh: A socio-cultural study. Unpublished M. Phil. Thesis. Dhaka, Bangladesh: The Jahangirnagar University.*

¹⁰ Choudhury, Sukomal, op.cit, Atish Memorial Publishing Society, Kolkata, 1987, p.47.

¹¹ Ibid.

Once Chittagong was conquered by the Moghal emperor in 1666 several Maghs migrated to Arakan and took shelter there.¹² Gradually the remaining portion of the Maghs were divided from the co-Buddhists, and many Hindu religious practices were adapted over time. After that it went several years. 40/50 years ago a prominent Arakan monk named Sangha Raj entered Chittagong on his way back from the Buddha Gaya tour. Thereafter he visited Chittagong three or four times in order to restore Buddhism. The Maghs abandoned Hindu beliefs and practices because of their efforts and adopted true Buddhism. A Barua Magh named Punyachari Dhammadhari continued the reformation which Sangha Raj started. He is also commonly referred to as Chandramohan Thakur. The Barua Maghs maintained their separate identity from the Bengalese some 125 years ago, according to the East Bengal District Gazetteer. The Gazetteer also notes that the Baruas language living in Chittagong is a regional language from the Burmese language. The Mouha kumar Barua Maghs of Cox's Chittagong Bazar talk in that language even now. Yet many of them were designated as speaking Bengali in the 1901 census. Many vocabulary of the Burmese language are used in the language common among the Baruas e.g. Phaung, Chheyains, Kyvang etc. Buddhism is the primary faith of the Maghs. It is also mentioned in the Gazetteer that in Cox's Bazar, Raozan, Rangunia and Patia is a very old colony of the Barua Maghs. The Maghs of Buddhism are split in two sections. One of them is the successor to migrating people from Arakan. They then went to Chittagong. The other one is Maghs of Barua. They claim themselves as Rajbanshis. Many of them are Arakanese and are the descendants of the children of Bengali father. Most of the Maghs in this region belong to the tribe of Barua Magh, and a very small section is the hilly Magh who cannot speak in Bengali.

¹² Ibid.p.20.

Generally speaking, the children that arise from a mixed marriage follow the faith of the mother. This also occurs in the context of the Barua Maghs. They adopt Bengali culture in everything except religion.

Baruas aren't the Chittagong Maghs. The Gazetteer states, "Chittagong's Baruas have three sects, e.g. Jumia Magh, Raag or Magh Rakhain, and Rajbansi or Magh Barua. The ancestors of Bengali people and Burmese men are Rajbanshi or Barua Maghs. In many instances they are descendants of an Arakanese mother and father in Bengal.¹³ They are staying in the plain land and they have followed the language of the people living there. Many of them function as cooks in Kolkata as the culture of their faiths is like the Bengalese and their language is Bengali. In reality, excepting faith, they are Bengalese in every respect. The Mongolian dimension has decreased from their presence due to the inter-caste marriage of the Barua Maghs with the non-Aryan Bengali of Chittagong and Noakhali. Their teint is shiny black, their hair is curly and they're clean shaven. There is a sort of harshness in their actions and way of speaking – this is the complete opposite of their Mongolian forefathers' cool and accommodating nature. They look like West Bengal people of lower class. While associated with the terms Rajbanshi and Barua, the Magh cooks who work in Kolkata are more popular than Baruas.

CGH Allen ICS made the observation in his Final Report of the Chittagong District Survey and Settlement (1888-1898) that the Baruas are descendants of Magh. He noted, "The Baruas are mostly of two forms. Firstly, they are Arakanese ancestors, and now and then they came and lived in the southern part of Chittagong. The second type is the Barua Magh, descendants of Arakanese mother and father of Bengali. In all the Buddhist subdivisions of Cox's Bazar are predominantly Arakanese. After the

¹³ Risley, H.H., *op.cit*, Vol. I, Firma KLM Privet Ltd., Calcutta, 1998, p. 71.

Burmese victory over the empire of Arakan. Migration to Chittagong started at Barua Maghs. They were donated free of charge land nearly 21995 numbers of Buddhist people started living in Cox's Bazar town. Installing the Buddhist people in Chittagong, the East India Company took large-scale measures. The 39,620 Buddhists live in the Head Quarter, on the other side, are mostly Barua Maghs. Such details is taken from the 1891 census survey. It is clear that the Department of Statistics DG W.W. Hunter wrote a comparative analysis of Bengal, Vol, in the survey. VI, Hill Tract of Chittagong, and Chittagong in 1876. Throughout different census records the Baruas of Chittagong and Calcutta used to call themselves Maghs even before forty or fifty years. It is mentioned in Volume 5 Bengal Part I of the 1921 Census Report – All Chittagong Buddhists are Maghs, but the Maghs are far fewer in number than the Chakmas in the hilly Chittagong area. The Chittagong area's Rajbanshis and Baruas are Burmese descendents but they are not pure Burmese. They are descendants of Bengali women's offspring and Burmese males. We have accepted the Bengali language and Hindu religious practices. The Chittagong district report says that the numbers of Burmese Rajbanshis are 10852 and that of Barua Maghs are 381 according to the first reported census of India in 1872.¹⁴ According to Chittagong Hilly Area Director-General T.H. Lewin the Baruas are hilly Maghs. He stated in "The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and Dwelling in it"–Calcutta 1869, when writing on the Khyongtha tribes, that they are recognized to the Bengali of the plain as the Hilly Maghs, although his notion is totally erroneous. Col. Sir Arthur' Phayre correctly said, "The name of Khyongtha is associated with a community living in Chittagong district. They are called Maghs, or Rajbanshis."¹⁵ They're the descendants of Bengali women and Burmese men and their children. They are also identified as Magh cooks

¹⁴ Hunter, W.W., *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol.VI, Trubner and company, London, 1876, p.143.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*p.37.

in Calcutta. But the Calcutta Magh cooks are lacking in the Khyoungtha of the hilly areas ' manliness, uprightness, and other positive qualities. Sir A. Pheyre had listed the Baruas as Magh or Rajbanshis in his study. It is clear from this that Barua's surname was not recognized until 150 years.¹⁶

Writers and scholars such as Wilson have suggested Arakan's ancient dwellers as Maghs—particularly those who resided near the sea on the Bengal border are Chittagong's citizens. The term Magh represented a ruling class of Magadh or South Bihar that dominated for some decades, according to Sir Arthur Phayre. Arakan's kings are primarily members of this ruling class. Although it is not clearly mentioned in Arakan's past, in some popular stories we get details from the Varanasi rulers who reign in Arakan. In such a history we find mention of a princess's marriage to a Brahmin and the long reign of their descendants throughout Arakan province. The Baruas are collectively or jointly classified as Maghs to Jumias or Rakhaings. Evidently the Baruas are one of the separate branches of the Maghs, they are not the Maghs ' sub-tribes. Despite some people's attempts to remove the term Magh from the Barua Group name, the reasons for separate life do not hold water. Until now, Chittagong's old people regarded Buddhist Barua as Maghs over there.

The Baruas, as a Magh tribe or the Baruas are Magh, belong to the scheduled tribe's community—the Baruas had deceived history by denying this fact and they had to pay the price for that. The Indian government has accepted the Maghs in West Bengal and Tripura as scheduled tribes as provided for in the Constitution. The Baruas are listed in West Bengal as Maghs vide Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Amendment) Law 1976, and vide the Schedule tribe 1950 order, and in Tripura vide SL No. 12 – section XV. Yet undauntedly the young generation of the Baruas in West Bengal and

¹⁶ Choudhury, Sukomal, op.cit, Atish Memorial Publishing Society, Kolkata, 1987, p.46.

Tripura were unable to take advantage of this constitutional provision because of their lack of experience on the historical background of their birth.¹⁷ Whereas other groups appreciate the reservation privilege as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes—the Baruas' circumstances have not changed significantly. Many of the Baruas also raised the question whether it is possible to obtain the facilities of the scheduled tribes by adding the word 'Barua' and modifying the word 'Magh' in the Constitution. In answer to this, it may be claimed that this is not feasible because there is no tribal group in Magh, and under the Magh Tribe the word Barua Magh denotes a community. It may be noted here that if they were a subgroup of the Magh tribe, the Barua Magh would not have been included under the Magh scheduled tribes. The tribe 'Magh' or 'Mag' has been included in the guidelines covering the scheduled tribes and ensuing changes, and not any of its subgroups. The Barua Maghs were however included in the Maghs category along with the Jumia Maghs and Rakhain Maghs.¹⁸

The Advent of Theravada Buddhism in Bangladesh

During the 15th century, according to Dr. Heinz Bechert, one of the Royal Family members called "Keyakcu" of Cakaria went to Moulmein in Burma and was appointed there under the mentorship of Ven. Sharbu. He remained in Burma for 20 years to research the scriptures of Buddhism. He came to Chittagong and, for the propagation of Theravada Buddhism, founded Asramas in Sitakunda, Haidgaon named Cakrasala, Cendirpuni, Thegarpuni, Chittagong, Ramu etc. But in Bangladesh, he did not organize a traditional Buddhist Sangha. The people of Bangladesh were also deprived of Theravada Buddhism. "Dr. B. M. Barua writes, "In Eastern India, Buddhism that flourished during the 19th century comprising Chittagong proper, Chittagong hill tracts, Tipera, Laksham and Comilla was not a Theravadin. It was a

¹⁷ Riskey, H.H., op.cit, Vol. II, Firma KLM Privet Ltd., Calcutta, 1998, pp. 29.

¹⁸ Ibid.pp.29-36.

mixture of Tantric religion, Hinduism and various other mysterious religious communities. Tantrayana eventually split into three distinct sects in its later form: Kala-Chakrayana, Vajrayana and Sahajayana. The Sahajayana is related to Hindu communities, such as Saivite and Vaishnavite, which in turn gave birth to famous Nath cultures, Bauls, Avadutas, etc. As a consequence, Buddhist monks did not follow the laws of Patimokkha and the laity abandoned their Buddhist values too. Durga, Kali, Laksmi, Manasa, Saraswati, Kartika and many other gods and goddesses started their worship. They used to practice many practices and ceremonies that had little connection with the history of Buddhism.

Many attempts have been made to correct the unethical practices found by the Bangladesh Buddhists at the period. Ah, Ven. Chittagong visited Mrohang (Mijhan), the ancient capital of Arakan, Cainga Bhikkhu of Pahartali, and saw the majestic Mahamuni portrait installed in the temple. He immediately drew a reproduction of the image, including its height, circumstances, etc., in full detail. After returning home, with the aid of some Arakanese sculptors, he began constructing the Mahamuni portrait. He was also unable to organize a Buddhist sangha forming. Ah, Ven. Raozan's Pannasar Mahasthavir (Khetromohan) went to Burma and read the scriptures of Buddhism. He returned home and attempted, but in vain, to correct the crooked Bangladeshi monks. There, the people of Bangladesh were worried about Buddhism's future. Many people have been speaking about how to change this condition, such as Bhikkhu Chandramohan, at the precise time. On a pilgrimage, Saramedh Mahasthavir of Arakan came to visit India. He encountered a Barua Raoli priest called Radhu Mathe, on his way (Radharam Mahasthavir). In Arakanese, Sanskrit and Pali, Radharam Mahasthavir was well versed. He spoke with Ven. Sangharaj Saramedha

Mahasthvir. About the current condition in Buddhism in Bangladesh and gave him invitation as well.

He took with him a full chapter of educated monks in 1864, when Ven. Sangharaj Samedha came to Chittagong, in order to grant greater ordination to all those who gave their consent. He remained at Pahartali Mahamuni in Chittagong then. Many Buddhists gathered there during the annual "Mahamuni Fair" and he gave higher ordination to seven Chittagong monks in the Udaka-Ukkhepa on that auspicious day. Sima Hancoar-Ghona, near the village of Mahamuni. This was the first historic Upasampada ceremony that formally inaugurated Theravada Buddhism in Chittagong. A precedent of recognizing pre-eminent monks who had supported the causes of faith with markings and names of distinction was established by the ancient kings of Arakan. The British Government granted a high title to Ven. Samedha. This is why he was commonly recognised as "Sangharaj" and the organization of Theravada Buddhism, popularly known as "Sangharaj Nikaya" was founded by his disciples.¹⁹

2.3 Barua Buddhism in Bengal

The Bengal Buddhist Group also known as the Buddha Dharmankur Sabha was established in 1892 by Ven. Kripasharan Maha Thera. This group was very influential among the Barua Buddhists in India as well as in United Provinces. The name of the founder of Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha (The Bengal Buddhist Association) Karamyogi Kripasaran Mahasthvir (1865-1926) should be remembered with profound respect for his dedication, tenacity and determination in establishing this association which now boasts its international recognition.

¹⁹ <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhistworld/bangladesh-txt.htm>

It was a period of national consciousness-golden renaissance on Bengal in the later half of the nineteenth century, when Ven Kripasharan came to Calcutta totally alone and oblivious of the world beyond. He was ignored at that point in the cross tides of cultural and political developments that are taking place in this great Calcutta region.

As we talk of the Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha, Ven Kripasharan gradually but inevitably comes in like a coin with both hands, one for the Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha and the other for Kripasharan.

Though academically and financially impaired, Ven. Kripasharan was a man of intent integrity, faith, indomitable strength, and such other virtues together as may be seen in the characters of great people. Arrival period of Ven. Kripasharan to Calcutta can be seen as a lucky moment in the history of the Buddhist movement in Bengal and elsewhere in India.

The moment observed the Buddha's teaching and his theory of non-violence and love was in a weakening state and was on the brink of expansion from India. Kripashran's pitiful state in Christianity left him emotionally depressed before he found a way for his rebirth. He was born as a Bikkhu in his early age as a conservative Bengalese Buddhist hailing from a remote village of Uninepura in Chittagong district (now in Bangladesh). His tendency against Buddhist religious practices was unquestionable within a conservative religious culture.

A few of his district's Buddhist citizens who then lived in Calcutta's Bowbazar area had no such close connection with each other but were only involved in preserving their livelihood. He came to Calcutta and took shelter in the dilapidated room which was then renamed Mahanagar Vihara, but it was soon demolished. On his journey to

Bodh Gaya, Kripasharan took a vow in his mind standing in front of the holy Bodhi Tree to restore Buddhism's missing glory and put it on its former exalted level.

He addressed single Buddhist family and encouraged them for the sake of faiths to join their hands together with him. A small house was taken on rent in Bow Street near the present association structure, where he established Dharmankur Vihara and began religious discourse. This never left Kripsashran unnerved, but he stood firm on the Buddha's faith. His polite behavior and appearance inspired those who were fond of his company. In 1892, on the auspicious full moon day of Pravara (5th October 1892), an organization called Buddha Dharmankur Sabha (The Bengal Buddhist Organization) was established in Bengal with their own support and effort. Kripasaran himself was elected as President, Surendala Massudi.

He shifted from one corner to the other, from door to door, but with less returns and support for the upliftment of the group. He'd never lost confidence in himself. He had to devote six years teaching and following the Buddha's religious doctrine, while enduring wretched health. At that moment, the debate about the existence of the Buddha's original Parinirvana site was uncovered by the Government of India's Archaeological Department in Kushinagar, United Province. Kripasharan went to visit the holy place followed by his preceptor Mahavir Mahasthavir. He had been excited to see the site. With renewed vigour and enthusiasm he propagated the news of exploration among the Buddhists when returning Calcutta.

2.4 Barua Buddhism in Lucknow

The Buddha Dharmankur Sabha (Bengal Buddhist Association) was officially registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 on 6th December 1915. Even though, Buddha Dharmankur Sabha did a tremendous work for the sake of

propagation of Buddhism in India by establishing its branches in the different parts of India. For the propagation of Buddhism among the Bengali Barua families in Lucknow and United Province, the same association formed its one branch at Lucknow. Such Bengali Buddhists serve as their assistants as well as cooks for the British and also searched out their horses and stables. In 1908, the Lucknow branch was established. Kripasharan received a land gift of about 10 Kathas valuing Rs.16000 for the creation of a Vihara there on 17th January 1909 as the president of the organization from the United Province Government in the region at 69 Latouche Hill. By establishing intimate relationship with the then Secretary of Education in Government of India who was later named Governor of United Province. Kripasharan was able to manage the land for Buddha Vihar, and sailed through Lucknow to Akyab to raise funds for the same. Lucknow Vihara's building was under the direction of Bhikkhu Kalikumar, a Kripasharan follower, and when it was finally completed, the news of Vihara's establishment circulated throughout the United Province and played a vital role in the background of Buddhism's resurgence in the United Province and India. With the aid of Chandramani Mahathera and Barasambodhi Bhikkhu, the Maharaja of Balrampur in United Province obtained a large site for rest room.

Bhartiya Buddha Samiti

'The Bhartiya Buddha Samiti was established by Bhadant Bodhanand Mahasthvir' He acquired a piece of land in Lucknow's Risaldar Park area where he established a magnificent Buddha Vihara in 1925 with the aid of his radical well-wishers and endeavoured supporters. He created the Vihara Buddha as a base for propagating Buddhist philosophy and cultural values across Lucknow's neighbouring districts. This Buddhist Vihar also became a monastic sanctuary for Buddhist monks, disciples and Buddhist tourists from various countries who wanted to attend the Buddhist

pilgrimage. They usually got down at Lucknow and remained there to honor the portrait of the Buddha that was enshrined in it. So, this Vihar became a center of the movement of the Buddhist renaissance in United Province and very soon in North India it acquired reputation and popularity. It was the second Buddhist Vihar established in Lucknow, under Bhartiya Bauddha Samiti's administration.

2.4.1 Foundation of Buddhist Research Library

Under the control of Bhartiya Bauddha Samiti, Bhadant Bodhanand founded a Buddhist Research Library at the Budha Vihara. It is an extensive collection of slandered study books on various religious, metaphysical, geographical, geological and sociological topics in Pali, Sanskrit, English and Hindi. The main purpose of this library was to conduct research on Indian heritage, archaeology, and early travel accounts of foreign travellers in addition to the Indian Vedic and non-Vedic religion, art and civilisation, comparative and non-partisan study of Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Persians religious texts. With the creation of this Vihara and the library, Lucknow became a good center of Buddhism and over the years Bodhananda influenced many people to come to the Buddhist faith like Rahul Sankrityayan. Dr. Ambedkar, the founder of the Dalit movement visited the library on many occasions for consulting the Buddhist literature.²⁰

2.4.2 Lucknow as a centre of Buddhism

Bodhanand Mahasthvir (1874-1952) was born into a Bengali Brahmin family as Mukund Prakash. He was brought up by an aunt, who took him to Benares, while his

²⁰ According to Satnam Singh, during one of Ambedkar's visits to the Lucknow Vihāra in the 1940s, Ambedkar expressed his frustration at not being able to acquire a copy of Lakshmi Narasu's *The Essence of Buddhism*, the text that Ambedkar re-published with his own introduction in 1948. The text was apparently out of print and Bodhanand supplied him with his own copy. See, Singh, "Mūlanivāsī āndolan," printed in Bodhanand, *Mūl Bhāratvāsī aur ārya*, 183.

parents left him an orphan. Before returning to Benares in 1896, just at the time of famine, he took an early interest in religious matters which made him a wandering monk. He was deeply impressed by the relief work of the Christian missionaries and decided to convert to Christianity, but was opposed at that period by the Buddhist monks of Ceylon who attended a Theosophical Conference in Benares.²¹ He first stayed at a Hanuman temple when he made Lucknow his residence, then got in touch with the Barua Buddhists who had set up a vihara on Latouche Road in Lucknow in 1901. This was a branch of the Bauddha Dharmankur Vihara which was established in 1885 by Kripasharan Mahasthvir to serve the Bengal Barua Buddhists. Lucknow had quite a lot of them, and they were mainly hired by the British as chefs. There were also other Barua viharas founded in Hyderabad, Shillong, and Jamshedpur.²²In 1914, Mukund Prakash was ordained in Calcutta, in the presence of Kripasharan Mahasthvir, on a voyage on the Hooghly. Bodhanand saw himself as a Dalit(s) champion, and started to teach Buddhism in Lucknow. He created the Bharatiye Buddh Samiti in 1916, and established the Buddh Vihara in Risaldar Park in Lucknow in 1925. This tiny monastery was to become a study, conference and debate center. Within him he assembled a group of involved and trained backward-class men naming themselves the "Nau Ratnas" (nine jewels). They were Chandrika Prasad Jigyasu, Bahujan member Kalyan Prakashan and an early Dalit movement writer, Rai Bahadur Ram Charan, Shiv Dayal Singh Chaurasia, Gauri Shanker Pal, and Chedi Lal Sathi. The followers of Bodhanand rose to prominence in the Dalit cause, which they found including the Untouchables and the shudra castes.

²¹ Sathi, Chedi Lal (ed):*Badant Bodhanand Mahasthvir, Jivan aur Karye. Bodhanand, Life and Work.* Lucknow: Buddh Vihara, 1961, p. 37.

²² Das, Bhagwan: *Revival of Buddhism in India. Role of Dr Baba Sahib B.R.Ambedkar.* Lucknow: Dalit Today Prakashan, 1998.p.20.

Ideologically, it followed the same conclusion as Swami Achhutanand. To him, Shudras and Untouchables were India's original inhabitants, who had been stripped of their property and oppressed for being defenseless and caring for love. He expanded on that point in his book *Mula Bharatavasi Aur Arya* ('Original Inhabitants and Aryans'). In 1928 he established the *Mul Nivasi* or *Hindu Backward Classes League*, which acquired a distinct organizational structure owing to British colonial politics, which treated poor and backward classes as separate entities, much to the dismay of Bodhanand and his supporters, who succumbed to these organizational needs for tactical reasons.²³

Buddhism's propagation went hand in hand with the spread of self-respect and a conversion movement moulded in the sant culture, counteracting the Arya Samaj's shuddhi-move. Bodhanand wrote two important books together with Chandrika Prasad Jigyasu, the first on Buddhist rites called *Baudha Dvicharya* and the second on the life and instruction of the Buddha. Buddhism's adoption through and with Bodhanand's support occurred before Dr. Ambedkar announced that he was in search of a new religion fit for Dalit(s). The main tenets of that new religion were dignity, justice, non-violence and kindness, which appeared to be well tailored for shudras and Untouchables.

In the early years of the Samiti, the Bengali – Chittagong Buddhists obviously played a significant role and big Buddhist events, such as the Buddha Jayanti, were often conducted jointly at the Bodhisattva Vihāra.²⁴ Yet there were clear differences between the two organizations. While the Bodhisattva Vihāra was predominantly attended by the poor Barua group in Lucknow, the Samiti's main audience comprised

²³ Kshisagar, R. K.: *Dalit Movements in India and its Leaders*. New Delhi: M.D.Publ., 1994,p.403.

²⁴ See, letter from Ganga Charan Lal, the Secretary to the “Bharatiya Buddha Sangha,” published in the *MahaBodhi* Vol. 36/12 (1928), 464 – 65.

oilmen (telī), ropemakers (baraī), betelnut sellers (tambolī), shepherds (gaiiyā), porters (kahār), boatmen (mallāh) and potters (kumhār), all marginalized representatives of the lower caste and outcast communities that have moved in the last few decades to urban areas in North India.²⁵

2.5 Dr. Ambedkar and his Navayan

Navayan or ‘Neo-Buddhism’ as referred to by many scholars is a progressive Buddhist social revival movement led by B.R. Ambedkar. As a transformative Buddhist movement, ‘Neo-Buddhism’ began on October 14th, 1956, when Ambedkar, along with nearly 500,000 of his followers, converted to Buddhism. It was an initiative taken primarily for the social upliftment of the downtrodden class. Above and beyond that, it emerged also as a campaign for self-respect and justice across manmade barriers.

The movement headed by Dr. Ambedkar, is regarded as one of the most successful ‘peacefully’ launched social movements in modern India which brought ‘revolutionary’ change in the lives of the oppressed. The sole aim of this movement was to bring an end to the age-old strife that emerged due to the practice of untouchability and caste system. “Living a noble life was the birth right of any individual”, held Ambedkar. His slogan ‘Educate, Agitate and Organize’ emphasized on the importance of Education for the emancipation of Dalits. According to Dr Ambedkar “Education is like the milk of Tigress who will drink cannot stay without roaring.” He expected that the Dalits should get educated, gain consciousness and rise in unity to break the shackles of bondage and slavery. Ambedkar with regard to religion said in his 1950 essay *Buddha and the Future of his Religion*, “the new world

²⁵ See *MahaBodhi* Vol. 39/7 (1931), 323 – 24.

needs a religion far more than the old world did.” That is, the need of modernity is morality as religion. Harking back to his earlier distinction between rules and principles, Ambedkar said that “the new world was in dire need of a religion because law (the regime of rules as it were), in which we as moderns put too much faith, was an ineffective and unreliable instrument for the transformation of society”. To quote him again: [The law] is intended to keep the minority within the range of social discipline. The majority is left and has to be left to sustain its social life by the postulates and sanction of morality. Religion in the sense of morality, must therefore, remain the governing principle in every society. By conversion of Dalits to Buddhism, it not only provided the Dalits some amount of visibility but it helped Buddhism emerge as a religion in the true sense. It brought about significant changes in the lives of the Dalits especially the Mahars of Maharashtra and the Jatavs of Uttar Pradesh.



CHAPTER-3

*SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF
BARUA BUDDHISTS*



CHAPTER-3

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF BARUA BUDDHISTS

3.1 Social Economic Condition of the Household Barua Buddhist

The Socio-Economic conditions of Barua Buddhist Population in Lucknow city have been analysed by the use of descriptive statistics. We have collected data from 60 households. Sample technique used is simple random sampling technique. The area of study is Lucknow uttrapradesh Table 3.1 shows the areas from which samples are collected are Aliganj, 8.33 percent, Nishatganj, 33.3 percent, Alambagh, 5 percent, Vidhan Sabha Marg Lucknow, 8.33 percent, Sarswatipuram PGI 5 percent, LDA Colony Kanpur Road 8.33 percent, and Gomti Nagar 10 percent. 8.33 percent each are from Amrapali yojana, Aashiyana Colony, Para Lucknow, Indra Nagar Lucknow, Kailashpuri, and 5 percent are from Rajajipuram

Table 3.1 Locations of The Sample Population

	Frequency	Percent
Ali Ganj	5	8.33
Nishat Ganj	5	8.33
Alam Bagh	3	5.00
Vidhan Sabha Marg Lucknow	5	8.33
Sarswati Puram PGI	3	5.00
LDA Colony Kanpur Road	5	8.33
Gomti Nagar	6	10.00
Amarpali yojana	5	8.33
Aashiyana Colony	5	8.33
Para Lucknow	5	8.33
Indra Nagar Lucknow	5	8.33

Kailash Puri	5	8.33
Rajaji Puram	3	5.00
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.2 shows age of the respondents of Barua Buddhist community, from 18 to 25 Years 13.3 percent, from 26 to 35 years 26.7 percent, from 36 to 45 years 33.3 percent, from 46 to 55 years, 5 percent, and from 56 to 65 years 21.7%.

Table 3.2 Age of the Respondent

Age	Frequency	Percent
18 To 25 Years	8	13.3
26 To 35 Years	16	26.7
36 To 45 Years	20	33.3
46 To 55 Years	3	5.0
56 To 65 Years	13	21.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.3 shows gender wise distribution of Barua Buddhist community in Lucknow city. 48.3 percent are found female and 51.7 percent are male population.

Table 3.3 Gender of Respondent

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	29	48.3
Male	31	51.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.4 shows household structure of Barua Buddhist community in which we found 41.7 percent lives in joint families and 58.3 percent are living as nuclear families. Which means mostly people now a days prefer nuclear families among Barua community.

Table 3.4 Household Structure of Respondent

	Frequency	Percent
Joint Family	25	41.7
Nuclear Family	35	58.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.5 shows education of the respondents among Barua Buddhist's in Lucknow. 11.67 percent are Graduate and Above, 13.33 percent are Illiterate, 20 percent from Primary up to V, 10 percent Secondary (IX To X), 20 percent Senior and 25 percent are from Upper Primary (VI-VIII).

Table 3.5 Education of the Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percent
Graduate and Above	7	11.67
Illiterate	8	13.33
Primary Up to V	12	20.00
Secondary (IX To X)	6	10.00
Senior	12	20.00

Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	15	25.00
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.6 shows Occupation of the respondents, 35 percent are Casual Labourer, 16.67 percent are Housewife/Homemaker, 25 percent Salaried (Private), and 23 percent Salaried (Government).

Table 3.6 Occupation of Respondent

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Casual Labourer	21	35.00
Housewife/Homemaker	10	16.67
Salaried (Private)	15	25.00
Salaried (Government)	14	23.33
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.7 shows annual income of the respondents, 30 percent have 10000-20000 rupees, 13.3 percent has more than 100001 Above rupees, 8.3 percent has 20001-40000 rupees, 30 percent 40001-60000 rupees and 18.3 percent has 60001-100000 rupees

Table 3.7 Annual Income of Respondent

Annual Income	Frequency	Percent
10000-20000	18	30.0
20001-40000	5	8.3
40001-60000	18	30.0
60001-100000	11	18.3
100001 Above	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.8 shows frequency of income of the respondent's 30 percent Daily earners, 26 percent Irregular, 30 percent are taking Monthly and 13.3 are taking Weekly bases.

Table 3.8 Frequency of Income of Respondent

Frequency of Income	Frequency	Percent
Daily	18	30.0
Irregular	16	26.7
Monthly	18	30.0
Weekly	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.9 shows working days per month, 6.7 percent are attending (1-10) days per month, 15percent are attending (11-20) days per month and 78 percent all attending (21-30) days in a month.

Table 3.9 For How Many Days You Did This Work?

Working Days Per Month	Frequency	Percent
1-10	4	6.7
11-20	9	15.0
21-30	47	78.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.10 shows number of working hours attending per day. 13.3 percent (1-5) hours per day, 1.7 percent are attending (11-15) hours per day and 85 percent people are attending (6-10) hours per day.

Table 3.10 How Many Hours You Did This Work?

Hours Per Day	Frequency	Percent
1-5	8	13.3
11-15	1	1.7
6-10	51	85.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.11 shows amount paid per day on an average 16.67 percent are getting (200) rupees per day, 35 percent are taking (350) rupees per day, 10 percent people are taking (600) rupees per day, 35 percent people are taking (500) rupees per day and 3.3 percent are taking (550) rupees per day.

Table 3.11 How Much Amount Was Paid?

	Frequency	Percent
200	10	16.67
350	21	35.00
600	6	10.00
500	21	35.00
550	2	3.33
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.12 shows type of houses in which the Barua Buddhist community lives. The 65 percent are living in Pucca houses and 35 percent are living among Semi Pucca.

Table 3.12 Type of House

Type of House	Frequency	Percent
Pucca	39	65.0
Semi Pucca	21	35.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.13 shows drinking water facility of Barua Buddhist community in Lucknow. 83 percent households are taking drinking water from common public taps outside from their houses and 16.7 percent are using drinking water from own taps available at their houses. From this table we find people are still dependent on common water supply available to the masses outside from their homes.

Table 3.13 Where Do You Get Your Drinking Water?

Drinking Water	Frequency	Percent
Common Tap	50	83.3
Tap in The House	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.14 shows Electricity supply of Barua Buddhist households in Lucknow. The electricity connection facility is as follows - 100 percent houses are using electricity so all houses have electricity connection available to them.

Table 3.14 Does the Respondent's House Have Electricity?

Electricity	Frequency	Percent
Yes	60	100.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.15 shows type of cooking fuel used by Barua Buddhist in Lucknow is as follows. 100 percent people are using LPG/Gas for cooking.

Table 3.15 What Type of Cooking Fuel Do You Use?

Type of Cooking Fuel	Frequency	Percent
LPG/Gas	60	100.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.16 shows sanitation facility of Barua Buddhist in Lucknow. 48 percent are using commonly shared with other people in a community, 25 percent are using public

toilets and 26.7 percent are using Private toilets personally in own houses.

Table 3.16 What Toilet Arrangements Do You Have?

Toilet	Frequency	Percent
Common (Shared by Others)	29	48.3
Public Toilets	15	25.0
Private (In Own House)	16	26.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.17 Shows persons with Disabilities among Barua Buddhist community in Lucknow. 91 percent families have not any disability and 9 percent families have disable family members in their families. To conclude we find Barua Buddhist are facing the challenge of health issues due to which they are facing the problem of disabilities in their families.

Table 3.17 Are There Any Persons with Disabilities in The House?

Disabilities	Frequency	Percent
No	55	91.
Yes	5	9
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.18 Shows Economic status of Barua community in Lucknow. 80 percent are living Above Poverty Line (APL), 15 percent among are living below poverty Line and 1.7 percent are without ration card.

Table 3.18 Economic Status of Families

Economic Status	Frequency	Percent
APL	48	80.0
BPL	9	15.0
NO RATION CARD	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.19 shows assets of the House Hold in which 23.3 percent have cycles, 73.3 percent Scooter/Bike and 2 percent car. In conclusion mostly people have bike in their houses.

Table 3.19 Assets of House Hold

Assets of House Hold	Frequency	Percent
Cycles	14	23.3
Scooter/Bike	44	73.3
Car	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

3.2 SOCIAL STATUS

Barua community and their social participation in table 3.20 we have asked Do you participate in Social Function? and the responses are 38.3 percent are participating regularly and 61.7 percent are participating occasionally. So, majority of the people are visiting social gatherings occasionally.

Table 3.20 Do you participate in Social Function?

Social Function	Frequency	Percent
Regularly	23	38.3
Occasionally	37	61.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.21 Shows nature of untouchability against Barua community. The nature of untouchability is found as follows, 16.7 percent are facing always, 13.3 percent some times and 70.0 percent have never faced. So, we can conclude 13 percent people are still the victims of untouchability problem in Lucknow.

Table 3.21 Did you experience untouchability?

	Frequency	Percent
Always	10	16.7
Sometimes	8	13.3
Never	42	70.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.22 shows the problem of discrimination faced by Barua community from upper caste is as follows, 20 percent people has been discriminated one way or other way by upper caste and 80 percent didn't face any discrimination.

Table 3.22 Did you ever experience discrimination by upper caste Hindus?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	20.0
No	48	80.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.23 shows Barua communities' relationship with Upper Caste people in Lucknow. The rate of relationship is 10 percent said very good, 31.7 percent said it is good, 43.3 percent said it is Average and 15 percent said not good at all. If we conclude from this table, we find 60 percent people doesn't have good relationship with upper caste.

Table 3.23 How will you rate your relationship with the upper caste people?

	Frequency	Percent
Very Good	6	10.0
Good	19	31.7
Average	26	43.3
Not at all good	9	15.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.24 shows organization participation among Barua community as active members are as 71.7 percent are active members of different organizations and 28.3 percent are not. Therefore, we can conclude that more than 70 percent people are active members of various organization in Lucknow.

Table 3.24 Are You an Active Member of any Organization?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	43	71.7
No	17	28.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.25 shows interest of children in the social movement 26.7 percent said yes and 73.3 percent are not interest.so from this we can understand new generation are more focussed on career than religion or social participations.

Table 3.25 Does Your Children Show any Interest in the Social Movement?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	16	26.7
No	44	73.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Barua community said over the period of our Social Status has improved. Table 3.26 shows whether Barua community is migrated or not? In which 80 percent are migrated and 20 percent belongs to Lucknow only.

Table 3.26 Have you migrated from any place?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	48	80.0
No	12	20.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.27 shows place of migration from which Barua community came to the city. From Chittagram 25 percent, Outside state 25 percent and Within Uttar Pradesh 50 percent. So, from the table we understand these people are migrated from one region to other.

Table 3.27 If yes from which place?

	Frequency	Percent
Chittagram	15	25.0
Outside state	15	25.0
Within Uttar Pradesh	30	50.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

3.3 EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Education one of the fundamental rights of every citizen in India. In this section we have collected detailed information of Barua community about education. The first question we asked them, whether all children in educable group are enrolled in the school? and all families responded yes, their children are enrolled in schools for education.

Table 3.28 type of school children of Barua community children are enrolled 20 percent are enrolled Private schools and 80 percent are enrolled in government schools. Which again shows that these people are mostly dependent on public institutions?

Table 3.28 If yes, Which Type of School

	Frequency	Percent
Private school	12	20.0
Govt school	48	80.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.29 shows satisfaction level from school education to the parents of Barua community in Lucknow. 88.3 percent parents are satisfying with the education and the performance of children in their schools and 11.7 percent are confused and they replied undecided about children's performance.

Table 3.29 How is the Performance of the Children in the School?

	Frequency	Percent
Satisfactory	53	88.3
Undecided	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.30 Shows School dropout level of children in your family, 21.7 percent children are dropout and 78.3 percent are not. So, we can conclude that still more than 20 percent student are leaving school education due to one or other reasons.

Table 3.30 Is there any School Dropout in your Family?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	13	21.7
No	47	78.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

3.4 Occupational, Income and Expenditure Status

Table 3.31 shows change in family occupation. 10 percent people has changed their occupations and 90 percent are having same occupation.

Table 3.31 Is there any Change in your Family Occupation?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	6	10.0
No	54	90.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.32 shows type of change in occupation 10 percent said we have positive change in their occupation and Negative by 90 percent.

Table 3.32 Type of Change Occupation

	Frequency	Percent
Positive	6	10.0
Negative	54	90.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.33 shows opinion about occupation and how much satisfy they are with their occupation 91.7 percent are satisfied with their occupation and 8.3 percent people are not satisfied with their occupation.

Table 3.33 What is your Opinion about Your Occupation?

	Frequency	Percent
Satisfied	55	91.7
Not Satisfied	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.34 shows number of months Barua community people works in a year. 60 percent people are working (3 to 4 Months), 40 percent are working (5to 8 Months). which means they are getting only 8 months work in year.

Table 3.34 How Many Months in a Year do you Work?

	Frequency	Percent
3 to 4 Months	36	60.0
5 to 8 Months	24	40.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.35 shows nature of employment among Barua community people. 96 percent are working in temporary jobs in informal sector and 3.3 are doing permanent jobs in formal sectors.

Table 3.35 Whether the employment is?

	Frequency	Percent
Temporary	58	96.7
Permanent	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.36 shows how the Barua community people feeling about their jobs. 3.3 percent are feeling secure about their jobs while 96.7 percent are feeling insecure about their current jobs.

Table 3.36 How do you feel about your Present Job?

	Frequency	Percent
Secured	2	3.3
Unsecured	58	96.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.37 shows discrimination faced at work place by Barua people. 40 percent said yes, they are facing or has faced discrimination and 60 percent said they didn't face any such problems.

Table 3.37 Do you feel any Discrimination at Work Place?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	24	40
No	36	60
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.38 shows relationship with employees at workplace, 65 said they had a very good relationship with other employees, 18.3 percent said they had a good relationship and 16.7 percent said they had an average relationship at work place.

Table 3.38 How will you Rate your Relationship with the Employees?

	Frequency	Percent
Very good	39	65.0
Good	11	18.3
Average	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Questions were asked Do you have Mandal / Org. / Association? And all the respondents said yes then second question asked was Whether benefited from these facilities? All said yes.

Table 3.39 shows savings of Barua, 30 Percent people have savings and 70 percent doesn't have savings.

Table 3.39 Do you have any Savings?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	18	30.0
No	42	70.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.40 shows If yes, whether it meets your Family Requirements? 71.7 percent said always and 28.3 percent said sometimes

Table 3.40 If yes, whether it meets your Family Requirements?

	Frequency	Percent
Always	43	71.7
Sometimes	17	28.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.41 shows money borrowed when needed, 26.7 percent are taking from Money Lender, 33.3 percent are taking from Relatives, 40 percent are getting from friends.

Table 3.41 When needed where from you borrow the money?

	Frequency	Percent
Money Lender	16	26.7
Relatives	20	33.3
Friends	24	40.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.42 shows, do you have any Debt on you? 55 percent said yes and 45 do not have any debt.

Table 3.42 Do you have any Debt on you?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	33	55.0
No	27	45.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.43 shows monthly expenditure of Barua community on daily food items, 56.7 percent are using 2000 rupees per month, 15 percent are spending 2500 rupees, 13.3 percent are spending 3000 rupees, 13.3 are spending 4000 per month and 1.7 percent are spending 5000 per month on their food.

Expenditure per month on Clothes is as follows, 35 percent has Zero cost on clothes, 63 percent had 1000 rupees, and 1.7 percent people had 1500 rupees per month on clothing.

Housing Expenditure per month is as follows 23.3 percent had zero expenditure, 58.3 percent had 1000 rupees per month, 11.7 percent had 1500 rupees and 6.7 percent had 15000 rupees respectively. Similarly, the health expenditures per month are 41.7 percent had zero expenditures and 58.3 percent had 50 to 500 rupees per month.

Table 3.43 How do you spend your money per month?

Food		
Rupees in Amount	Frequency	Percent
2000	34	56.7
2500	9	15.0
3000	8	13.3
4000	8	13.3
5000	1	1.7

Total	60	100.0
Clothing		
Zero	21	35.0
1000	38	63.3
1500	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0
Housing		
Zero	14	23.3
1000	35	58.3
1500	7	11.7
15000	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0
Health		
Zero	25	41.7
50 to 500	35	58.3
Total	60	100.0
Education		
Zero	18	30.0
2000	42	70.0
Total	60	100.0
Transportation		
50 to 200	18	30.0
500	42	70.0
Total	60	100.0
Communication		
50	1	1.7
100	32	53.3
200	27	45.0
Total	60	100.0
Other Expenditures		
50 to 500	21	35.0
1000	38	63.3
15000	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Expenditure on Education 30 had zero expenditure, 70 percent 2000 rupees per month. The expenditure on transport is 30 percent had 50 to 200 expenditures and 70 percent people had 500 rupees on monthly expenditure on transport. Expenditure on communication like telephonic conversation such that 1.7 percent had zero

expenditures, 53.3 percent had 100 rupees per month and 45 percent had 200 rupees expenditure. Other expenditures 35 percent had 50 to 500 rupees expenditure. 63 percent had 1000 rupees and 1.7 percent had 15000 rupees expenditure on other items etc. and for entertainment each family on an average had expenditure of 500 rupees.

3.5 HEALTH STATUS

Table 3.44 shows Health centre facility near to Barua community 78.3 percent said yes hospital are near to their communities and 21.7 percent are living far from hospitals.

Table 3.44 Do you have a Health Centre Nearby?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	47	78.3
No	13	21.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.45 shows treatment taken for diseases. 85 percent people took treatment from government hospital and 15 percent are taking from private hospitals.

Table 3.45 When sick where do you go for the Treatment?

	Frequency	Percent
Govt. Hospital	51	85.0
Private Hospital	9	15.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.46 shows facilities at government hospital and the rating from people are 65 percent said good, 18.3 percent said average and 16.7 percent responded that the services are bad at government hospitals

Table 3.46 How will you rate the Facilities Government Hospital?

	Frequency	Percent
Good	39	65.0
Average	11	18.3
Bad	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

In compare to government hospitals, we asked How will you rate the facilities private Hospital? All the respondents said they are good. Table 3.47 shows, Is there anybody in your family suffering from chronic disease? And the responses are 23.3 percent said yes, they have chronic disease patients in their families and 76.7 percent said no we don't have any serious patient in their families.

Table 3.47 Is there anybody in your family suffering from chronic disease?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	14	23.3
No	46	76.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.48 shows family members addicted to intoxicants like alcohol, smoking, tobacco and other drugs, 11.66 percent said yes, and 88.33 said no they doesn't have any one addict to these things.

Table 3.48 Are there any addicts in your family?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	11.66
No	53	88.33
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.49 shows If there has been a death in the family recently, (say last 5 years)? 11.6 percent people said yes and 88.33 percent responded no they do not have any death in their family since last five years.

Table 3.49 Is there any death in your family in the recent period, (say last 5 years)?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	11.66
No	53	88.33
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.50 shows the cause of death? 5 percent replied due to disease and 95 percent said natural death.

Table 3.50 If yes, what was the cause of death?

	Frequency	Percent
Disease	3	5.0
Natural Death	57	95.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.51 shows the food items (A to Z) taken by Barua families. The daily based food items are wheat, rice, dals, and green vegetables and almost each family is following the same pattern. The food items which they are consuming sometimes are Jawar, Bajari, Chicken, Eggs, Milk and Fruits etc.

Table 3.51 Diet Taken by Barua Families in Lucknow

Food Item	Daily	Some times	Very Rarely	Never
Wheat	✓	X	X	X
Jawar	X	✓	X	X
Bajari	X	✓	X	X
Rice	✓	X	X	X
Dals	✓	X	X	X
Green Vegetables	✓	X	X	X
Mutton/Chicken	X	✓	✓	X
Eggs	X	✓	✓	X
Milk	X	✓	✓	X
Fruits	X	✓	✓	X

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.52 shows do you have sufficient food stock at home? 88.3 percent said yes and 11.7 percent said no.

Table 3.52 Do you have sufficient Food stock at Home?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	53	88.3
No	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.53 shows, purchase of food grain from the ration shop. 90 percent respondents said yes, they are buying from government ration stores and 10 percent said no they may be buying from private shops.

Table 3.53 Do you purchase the food grain from the Government ration shop?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	90.0
No	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.54 shows the quality of food grains available at government ration shops, 90 percent said good and 10 percent said average

Table 3.54 Quality of food grain

	Frequency	Percent
Good	54	90.0
Average	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.55 shows if Anxiety/Stress/Tension is felt in the family? 18.3 percent said yes, and 81.7 percent said no.

Table 3.55 Do you feel any Anxiety/Stress/ Tension?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	18.3
No	49	81.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

3.6 RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL STATUS

Table 3.56 shows if the family visits a temple or Vihar? The responses are 90 percent said yes and 10 percent said no.

Table 3.56 Do you go to temple/ Vihar?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	90.0
No	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.57 shows that most of the people are visiting to temple and the frequency of visit is as follows, 83.3 percent are visiting sometimes, 3.3 percent are visiting rarely and 13.3 percent people never visits to the temple.

Table 3.57 Visit to Temple

	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	50	83.3
Rarely	2	3.3
Never	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.58 shows If yes, do you perform it in your family? 81.7 percent said yes daily and 18.3 percent said sometimes.

Table 3.58 If yes, do you perform it in your family?

	Frequency	Percent
Daily	49	81.7
Sometimes	11	18.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.59 shows the Religious festivals being celebrated by the families of Barua community. 58.3 percent celebrate only Buddhist festivals, whereas 41.7% celebrate both Hindu and Buddhist festivals.

Table 3.59 Which festivals are you celebrating in your family?

	Frequency	Percent
Buddhist festival only	35	58.3
Both Hindu and Buddhist festival	25	41.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

They were asked if they believed in God? And all said yes, and the second question asked to them was if they celebrated Ambedkar Jayanti/ Buddha Jayanti? The response was yes by all the families. Then in table 3.60 we said if yes how are you celebrating? 3.3 percent said by getting Dress well and greeting friends, 18.3 percent said by Participates in procession, 60 percent by Participates in discussions / seminars and 13.33 percent Participates in cultural Programs.

Table 3.60 If yes, how are you celebrating?

	Frequency	Percent
Dress well and greet friends	2	3.3
Participates in procession	11	18.3
Participates in discussions / seminars	36	60
Participates in cultural Programs	8	13.33
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.61 shows how Barua community places Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar ji in their religion? 15 percent said following him as a great leader, 5 percent accepting him father of Indian constitution, 80 percent following his ideology as a true spirit of humanity.

Table 3.61 what is the place of Ambedkar in your Religion?

	Frequency	Percent
Following him as a great leader	9	15.0
Accepting him father of Indian constitution	3	5.0
Following his ideology as a true spirit of humanity	48	80.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.62 shows how Barua community are doing marriages? 83.3 percent Buddhist way, 5 percent Hindu way and 11.7 percent both ways Ceremony are performed.

Table 3.62 how are you doing marriage?

	Frequency	Percent
Buddhist way	50	83.3
Hindu way	3	5.0
Both ways Ceremony performs	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.63 shows, Barua communities birth day celebration of new born babies and other rituals

96 percent said they called a Buddhist Monk and 4 percent said other ways etc.

Table 3.63 When you get new born child in your family what rituals are you following?

	Frequency	Percent
Buddhist Monk	58	96.7
Others	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.64 if the families were propagating their own religion by motivating people of other religion? 99.3 percent said yes and 6.7 percent no.

Table 3.64 Are you doing religion awareness by motivating people of other religion?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	56	93.3
No	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

Table 3.65 shows how awareness and other teachings about religion was being circulated by the people? 93.3 percent by religious teachings and 6.7 percent said by others.

Table 3.65 If yes, what are the means you adopt?

	Frequency	Percent
By religious teachings	56	93.3
Others	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

3.7 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Table 3.66 shows followers of different political parties, 33.3 percent said BJP, 46.66 percent Congress and 20 percent BSP

Table 3.66 which political party do you like most?

	Frequency	Percent
BJP	20	33.3
Congress	28	46.66
BSP	12	20
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

The question asked, have you or any of your family member, ever been a member of the Panchayat? All said no we don't have any one in family.

Table 3.67 shows, if the improvement of political rights of the families has improved during the past few years. 1.7 percent said yes, we are strongly agreed and 1.7 said agree to some extent, 96.7 percent said we are strongly disagreed nothing has improved in our favour.

Table 3.67 your political status has been improved during the past few years or not?

	Frequency	Percent
strongly agree	1	1.7
agree to some extent	1	1.7
Strongly disagree	58	96.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Estimated from Field Survey

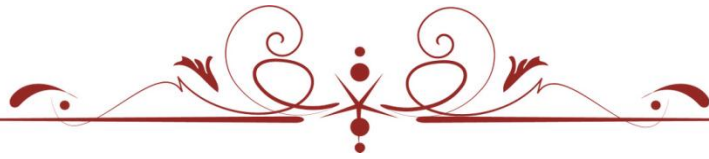
Note: Figure in Parenthesis Are Percentage in Total

3.8 Findings of The Chapter

- Barua community mostly prefers nuclear family system 58.3 percent people are living
In nuclear families
- The sample based gender ration is 48.3 percent females and 51.7 percent male.
- Among Baura community people are mostly engaged in casual labour force 35 percent and 23 percent are in government jobs.
- The educational status of Barua community shows 13.33 percent are illiterate and 11.67 percent are above graduate and 70 percent people have primary and secondary level education
- The income status of baura community shows higher income inequalities with the community 43 percent are living below one lakh indian rupees annually.
- The access to safe drinking water facility is available to only 20 percent people and 80 percent are still lacking the facility of safe drinking water.
- Access to home based personal sanitation facility is only available to 26.7 percent, still people are lacking access to safe and hygienic sanitation facility.
- The problems of disability is found among 9 percent of the Baura community families.
- The access to food security 15 percent people are living below poverty line and 1.7 percent people have no ration card
- The practice of untouchability and discriminations is still going on against Baura community at minor levels.
- Upper and lower caste groups are playing rivals each other, they do not have good coordination in their social life.
- The Baura community also have a migrated population of 25 percent which came outside from the Uttar Pradesh.

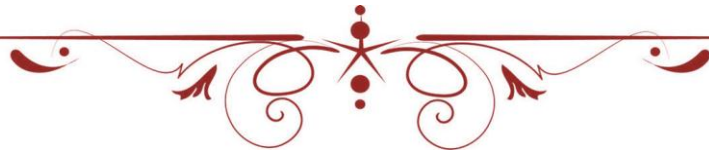
3.8 Conclusions

Baura community one of the minirotry community of India. in this chapter we have discussed their socio-economic conditions and other living aspects of life. Mostly they are under the trap of vulnerabilties like low income, low education, lacking safe drinking water facilities, Hygenine. They are facing health issues like disability, discrimination, untouchablity in their localities. The political mainstraming is missing among this community. They need attention from the government to uplift them on all grounds of exculsion, vulnerability and what not? Government should announce a targeted policy to adopt them and welfare them so that they can like smoothly with out struggling issues in their families/communities.



CHAPTER-4

BARUA BUDDHISTS –RELIGION, BELIEF AND CULTURAL PRACTICES



CHAPTER-4
BARUA BUDDHISTS –RELIGION, BELIEF AND CULTURAL
PRACTICES

In every society, culture and faith are closely interwoven. In cultural traditions, human beliefs, integrity, intellect and visual elegance can be seen. Culture is the expression of polished and beautified customs, modified as a way to entertain, either to influence or to foster fine arts. The human imagination is inspired by cultural traditions. By cultural passions, human desires may be regulated, fulfilled and deified. Asia's glory depends a great deal on its history, and Buddhist culture has played a prominent role in this regard. Culture could also defend a faith and encourage it. Our day-to-day religious activities will be more appealing as we incorporate faith into our cultural traditions and we will be able to persuade others to adopt it as a living faith. We may assume that the steps in recognizing the religious way of life are cultural rituals that are religious in nature. Many who at the outset are not religious oriented will slowly get used to engaging in and appreciating religious practices. People will eventually get the ability to develop proper religious awareness and comprehension by engaging in such events. Otherwise, they will appear to fully shun religion.

Buddhism is not simply a faith but a doctrine that incorporates a range of philosophies, beliefs and practices based primarily on the teachings credited to Siddhartha Gautama, popularly known as the Buddha (meaning "the awoken" in Sanskrit and Pāli). Buddhism is a philosophy of continuously refining our style of life in the light of the interactions that continue to characterize us. If we become addicted to a notion of what these partnerships should be, and focus on the primacy of our

experience, it is the responsibility of the experienced professional to destroy all pieces of us that perpetuate this false way of thinking / being.

Although not strictly speaking, Buddhism is a philosophy, it is a formal experiment of theology, and undoubtedly one of the best ever conceived. This gives the entity a way by which through learning he will satisfy himself, eventually reaching the plane of the supra-person on which both self and self-knowledge are no longer useful. The Buddhist claims that through contemplation and good hard thinking he will obey the Buddha through the various stages of enlightenment and at last attain the ultimate wisdom that overcomes every need.¹ Gandhiji did not see Buddhism as a new religion, rather, traditionally, as India's most audacious attempt to revive and revitalize the Hindu sanatan culture. He saw it as the most radical effort to spread ahimsa philosophy, or non-violence, in its broadest sense.²

What is Theravada Buddhism?

Theravada (pronounced "terra-VAH-dah"), the "Doctrine of the Elders," is the school of Buddhism which derives its scriptural influence from the Tipitaka, or Pali Canon, which scholars generally agree to contain the earliest surviving record of the Buddha's teachings. Over several centuries, Theravada has been the prevalent faith in continental South-East Asia (Thailand, Myanmar/Burma, Cambodia and Laos) and Sri Lanka. Today, Theravada Buddhists number well over 100 million in the world. Theravada has started to take hold in the West in recent decades.

We are well acquainted that, as the Dhamma continued to spread across India after the death of the Buddha, different versions of the original teachings began to emerge,

¹ <http://www.theatlantic.com>

² Anand, Y.P. *Mahatma Gandhi and Buddhism Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (revised edition), Publication Division, 2000, New Delhi; [hereafter referred as 'CWR'] 44:142–3.

eventually led to schisms within the Sangha and the creation of as many as eighteen separate faiths of Buddhism.³ One of these schools ultimately gave birth to a reform movement that renamed itself Mahayana (the "Greater Vehicle") and that derisively pointed to the other schools as Hinayana (the "Lesser Vehicle"). That we name Theravada currently is the only survivor of all those early non-Mahayana schools. To escape the derogatory meaning of the words Hinayana and Mahayana, it is common today to use a more neutral language to differentiate between these two main branches of Buddhism. Since Theravada has traditionally controlled southern Asia, it is sometimes referred to as Southern Buddhism, whereas Mahayana, which has spread northward from India to China, Tibet, Japan, and Korea, is regarded as "Northern" Buddhism.

Until the late 19th century, the doctrines of Theravada were little known outside of southern Asia, where they had flourished for about two and a half millennia. In the last century, however, the West began to take note of the unique spiritual heritage of Theravada in its Awakening teachings. This trend has grown in recent decades, with the monastic Sangha from various schools in Theravada setting up hundreds of monasteries throughout Europe and North America. Increasing numbers of lay mediation centres, established and run independently of the monastic Sangha, are struggling to meet the demands of lay men and women — Buddhist and otherwise — who try to study chosen facets of Buddha's teachings.

Buddhism has a theory of ideology, a social structure and a code of morals that has a sense of divine unity among its adherents. As the years went on, Buddhism grew, giving rise to various sects, the main of which were Hinayana or Theravada and

³ Buddhist Religions: A Historical Introduction (fifth edition) by R.H. Robinson, W.L. Johnson, and Thanissaro Bhikkhu (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 2005), p. 46

Mahayana. The Theravada Buddhism in India emerged in Hindu Brahmanism and achieved its greatest triumph not only in the land of its creation, but also in the greater part of South-East Asia and Far-East.⁴ In reality, Theravada Buddhism implies the primitive type of Buddhist concepts. It is important to note, in this context, that the early Buddhist — thinking of the principles of four noble truths. (Arya Satyas or Cattari Ariyo Saccani) and Noble eight fold path (or Ariyo atthahgikomagga) of Deliverance formed very significant parts. The principle of the Four Noble Truths expressed the unquestionable truth of human suffering, that is, all objects pass away, wishes, aspirations, fears and desires, no one can escape the absolute dominance of death. The middle path is more correctly called the Eightfold Path because it is the Buddha's basic concept for deliverance from human bondage because the first three resolutions contribute to mental control and the last five resolves to intellectual growth. Buddha, while teaching the basic tenets of his beliefs, stressed Impermanence (anitya), pain (duhkha), non-ego (anatman), the twelve chains of cause (Pratitya-Samutpada), the Principle of Causes and Effect (Karyakarana vada) of Karma, the Teachings of the everlasting flow of becoming, etc.⁵ In all practical purposes, Buddha, through the philosophy of his concepts, not only holds up the principle of ' Arhatship ' but also the need for mankind to aspire for freedom from the wheel of death and life. Buddhism learns not to be but to become. There is nothing lasting in the empiric body. The World, according to Buddhism, is full of sorrow, is fleeting, has no real existence, and is soulless. The World is a constant stream, and all ideas of permanence are part of the basic confusion that induces sorrow. But there's a secure thing, and that's ' nirvana.' It is known to be because it is not part of the Universe. It is defined as neither life nor nonexistence, nor does it imply either or none of them at

⁴ Dutta, Nalinaksha, *Early Monastic Buddhism" 137p.p and Mukherjee B.N., * The Genesis of Buddhism"*, p-12.

⁵ *Ibid.* p.137.

once. It is infinite, everlasting, without creation and decay. Philosophically, nirvana is the same as moksha.

Buddhist Purnima Ceremonies

The Buddhists of Bangladesh who follow Theravada tradition observe many socio-religious and popular ceremonies, festivals and rituals throughout the year. Among them the noteworthy are Purnima, Uposatha, Vassavasa, Kathina Civara Dana, Sangha Dana, Atthaparikkhara Dana and Parita ceremony etc. They observe twelve Purnima (Full Moon Day) ceremonies. But it is noteworthy that all the Purnima ceremonies are intimately associated with the life and teachings of Buddha and his disciples and most of the religious ceremonies are celebrated in relation to Purnima days of Bengali calendar. Buddh Purnima is the most sacred and most festive occasion observed with due solemnity. It is also the most important religious occasion of the Buddhists of Bangladesh. They celebrate this ceremony with deep reverence and sanctity of mind. It is held in Bangladesh in the month of May or in Vaisakha (Veshakha), the first month of Bengali calendar. The Buddh Purnima is associated with three important events of Buddha's life. For example on this Purnima or full moon day i) he was born at Lumbini forest, ii) he attained Buddha-hood or enlightenment at the age of 35 and iii) finally he attained nirvana or total extinction in the chain of birth and demise. As these three important events of Buddha's life happened on this Purnima or full moon day, so it is called Buddh Purnima.

At present the Buddha Purnima has a great significance for the Buddhists of Bangladesh and India. On that day, all believers, regardless of age and sex, go to the monastery, offer prayer and worship, hear the sutra chanting and sermons from monks and lay scholars, reflect on their own activity, take oath to live a pious life, wish

happiness of all beings and world peace, and entertain the monks and poor with dainty foods. The Bangladesh government has declared this sacred day a public holiday. Bangladesh Radio and Television present programmes relating to the Buddha's life and teaching, and daily Newspapers bring out special features and supplementary copies.

Table 4.1 Pattern of ceremonies followed by Barua Buddhists

Bengali Month	English Month	Purnima Name	Events
Vaisakha	April-May	Buddha Purnima or Vaisakha Purnima	Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment and Great demise (<i>Mahaparinibbana</i>).
Jiastha	May-June	Jaistha Purnima	Buddha's first preaching his Dhamma to the people of Savatthi
Asadha	June-July	Âsadhi Purnima or Varsavasa	Siddhartha Gautama was conceived in mother's womb as embryo, his Renunciation, Varsavasa or rain retreat is introduced to the Bikkhus for three months, etc.
Sraavan	July- August	Sravani Purnima (Not so popular)	It is observed to mark the orientation of the First Buddhist Council at Rajagraha.
Bhadra	August-September	Bhadra Purnima or Madhu- Purnima	Buddha was entertained by a Monkey with honey.
Arsvin	September-October	Ârsvini Purnima or Pavarana Purnima	Buddha came down from the Tavatimsa heaven after preaching <i>Abhidhamma</i> to his deceased mother and other gods; vassavasa of the Bhikkhus come

			to an end.
Kartik	October- November	Kartiki Purnima (Katina Civara Dana)	The parinibbana day of <i>Sariputta</i> And <i>Moggallana</i> , the two foremost disciples of the Buddha.
Aghrayan	November- December	not observed	
Paus	December- January	Paus Purnima (Not so popular)	Buddha's first visit to Sri Lanka.
Magh	January- February	Maghi Purnima	Buddha announced his final demise or <i>Maha</i> parinibbana
Falgun	February-March	Falgun I Purnima	Buddha's first visit to Kapilavasthu after his enlightenment.
Chaitra	March-April	not observed	

Table 4.2 Exclusive Design of Religious Events in Purnima Rituals

Morning	Worship the Buddha with flowers, water, candles and incenses
Before noon	Worship the Buddha with flowers, water, candles and incenses
Evening	Worship the Buddha with Candles and incenses
Prayers and other activities (Morning, noon and evening	1. Taking refuge in <i>Tisarana</i> or Three Jewels: Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. 2. Taking refuge in Five or Eight Precepts. 3. Chanting various <i>suttas</i> from holy <i>Tipitaka</i> . 4. Delivering sermon on Buddha's life and teaching. 5. Offering Dana and Entertainment.
Afternoon and evening	Meditation 1 hour
Evening	Recitation of holly <i>Suttas</i> , Devotional song, Preaching on Buddha's life and teachings.

Kathina Civara Dana:

A holy ritual rite for the Theravada Buddhists is *Kathina Civara Dana*. All the Buddhist communities of Bangladesh and India hold this ritual with great pomp and splendour once a year as adherents of the Theravada tradition. The Barua's, with proper moral honour and fervour observe this festival. *Kathina Civara Dana* means 'difficult offering,' and is so named because it is important to follow multiple formalities.

The 'robe offering ritual' or '*Kathina Civara Dana*' is a festival in which Buddhist devotees donate numerous things, including robes for the monks to live. The robes the monks wear get worn out during the rainy season. As Buddhists, thus, it is their responsibility to give those new robes and new criteria so that they can usually get on with their lives and meditate. The creation of clothing involves the cooperation of a variety of women. It is usually possible to complete the weaving from the thread spinning to the stitching in a single day and night. Indeed, it is a challenging task, which is why it is called *Kathina*. But mostly because it is a long-drawn and time-consuming procedure and requires many people, the scheme has gone out of favour. Today, after proper sanctification through the utterance of mantras, the garments are bought from the market and given to the Sangha by the godly people, of course.

Procedures of the Ceremony (*Kathina Civara Dana*):

To attend the ritual, a committee is formed of Bhikkhus and devotees. The committee schedules a jet and gathers the devotees' funds to conduct the ceremony efficiently. The committee invites other villages' Bhikkhus and devotees to attend the ceremony. A full-day program is performed, including meditation, worship, *Kathina Civara Dana* ceremony, examination of religion and different cultural roles. The villagers decorate the monastery with bright balloons, festoons, roses, banners and clothes etc.

before the day of the ceremony and make a stage in the monastery yard to witness the ceremony. As a result, there is a spectacular view of the monastery. Adherents also invite their relatives and friends to perform the ceremony. In addition to the individual households in the ceremony, the committee also offers Chivara and looks after all the ceremony's issues.

There are two sessions for the ceremony: in the morning and in the afternoon. The devotees arrive at the monastery in the morning with diverse offerings and *delicate* food. They participate in mass prayers and mass worship alongside Bhikkhus and samaneras. The householders provide the Bhikkhu samaneras with food and various offerings for Buddha worship. After the religious performance, the devotees entertain the devotees.

With the dishes they offered, Bhikkhu- Samenaras and guests. The devotees go back to the houses after this ritual and take their meal.

In the afternoon, the principal part of the ritual begins. In the afternoon, all the devotees generally meet in the yard of the monastery. The items of *Dana*, especially arranged in a tray or winnowing fan to the monastery, are borne by any housewife on her side. A very fascinating accompaniment to the spectacular procession is the devotional song called *Samkirtana*. A *civara* or yellow robe, a bunch of banana, some sugar, a coconut (usually ripe one), some betel nut and betel leaves, some candles, a needle along with a short coil of white thread, and sometimes even some fruits, are notable articles of the Dana ceremony. All the edibles presented are prettily displayed in front of the stage created for the ceremony.

All the edibles presented are decoratively displayed in front of the stage built for the ceremony. After this, the main part of the ceremony of Kathina Chivara Dana begins.

Main part of the ceremony:

Bhikkhus and Samaneras are seated on the stage according to seniority while devotees are gathered in the yard of the monastery. A committee member then declares a few terms to catch the interest of those involved. The most senior bhikkhu then inaugurates the ceremony by offering the devotees three shelters and five precepts. After that, Bhikkhus and scholars deliver speeches on the importance of the ritual of Kathina civara Dana and the instruction of Buddha. Then, the senior Bhikkhu sings the following devoted verse to make Kathina the civara. The dedication verse is uttered three times by all devotees holding the civara in folding hands.

Ashari Purnima: As it is held in the month of Ashara of Bengali calendar, it is called Ashari

Purnima. Ashari Purnima is equally significant in the Buddhist world in general and Bangladesh, in particular. This day also is observed gorgeously with deep respect and veneration. This day is associated with four important chapters of Buddha's life and activities. On this day, firstly, Prince Siddhartha Gautama (family name of Buddha) was conceived in the womb of Mayadevi; secondly, he renounced home and went out to find the reason for human suffering in order to search for real truth and for the liberation of mankind; thirdly, he preached his first sermon at Savatthi, which is known as 'Dharmacakra Pavattana'; finally, he observed first rain-retreat (vassavasa) and introduced it among the monks. Moreover, Buddha exhibited twin-miracles. So, in order to commemorate these significant events of Buddha's life, the Buddhists of Bangladesh observe the day with great religious fervour like that of Buddha Purnima. The Bangladesh government has declared the sacred day as an optional holiday in order to allow the Buddhists to participate in the day's programme.

Bhadra or Madhu Purnima: Like other Purnima days, this full moon day is also observed with solemnity and dignity by the Buddhists of Bangladesh. It is held in Bhadra Month of Bengali calendar. ‘Madhu’ means honey. Along with other articles of puja (worship) honey is compulsorily offered in this Purnima ceremony. So, it is called Madhu Purnima.

Ashvini Purnima or Pavarana Purnima: This Purnima is very significant for the Buddhists of Bangladesh and is equal in status to Buddha Purnima or Ashari Purnima as is evidenced by its widespread celebration. It is held in Ashvina, the six month of Bengali calendar. It is also called Pavarana Purnima. The word ‘Pavarana’ has many meanings, for example, satisfaction of desire, fulfilment of wish, the day of completion of study and meditation, invitation, prohibition. After performing three months course of purification, Pavarana is performed at the end of rain-retreat. So, it is also called ‘Buddhists Joy Day’. The compulsory performance of Pavarana has its practical implication. It seems that Buddha made it compulsory because it provides an opportunity to perform Kathina Dana ceremony: secondly, during the ceremony monks make a confession of guilt and declaration of parisuddhi (purification). The compulsory confession of guilt helps us to facilitate peace and mutual understanding relation with some important events of Buddha’s life.

Maghi Purnima: The Buddhists of Bangladesh observe the Maghi Purnima day as a proclamation of Buddha about his final demise or Mahaparinibbana on the day of next Boishakhi (Veshakha) Purnima at Capala Caitya of Vesali. On this Purnima day also the Buddhists of Bangladesh go to the monastery and perform religious rituals with due respect and reverence. In order to commemorate this auspicious event of Buddha’s life, some villages organize fairs some of which are very important in the socio religious life of the Buddhists of Bangladesh.

Falguni Purnima: On this Full Moon day, one year after attaining Buddha-hood, Buddha went to visit Kapilavasthu, and to meet with his parents and kinsmen, being invited by his father king Suddhodhana and other Shakyas. So, in the Buddhist society of Bangladesh this day is regarded as a day for exchange of views among kinsmen. As such and commemorating this auspicious event of Buddha's life and translate into practice the Buddha's teachings, Buddhists observe Falguni Purnima with religious fervour and zeal, in a similar fashion to other Purnima ceremonies.

The religious ceremonies, festivals and rituals of the Buddhists of Bangladesh are intimately associated with the life and teachings of Buddha. Among them, the Purnima ceremonies may be considered the source of Buddhist culture and tradition. They play an important role in the religious life of the Buddhists. Furthermore, they are affirmation not only of the dependence of the Sangha on the society for material needs, but also of the society on the Sangha for spirituals instruction and guidance. Hence, it may be said that such observances help to establish a bridge of fraternity, solidarity, amity and mutual understanding between the Sangha and the lay community of Bangladesh.

Basically, as adherents of Theravada Buddhism, all Buddhist groups in Bangladesh practise the same religious practises, festivals and ceremonies for the same reason. Any of them are closely linked to the life of the Buddha. As a result, they have a tremendous role to play in satisfying the divine inspiration of the lay devotees. Moreover, these rituals help to create a bridge of shared awareness and fellowship between the Sangha and the lay devotees. The turn of the 21st century provides prospects for the growth of Theravada Buddhism in the South and South-east Asian countries. But for Theravada Buddhism in the West, this century poses both possibilities and risks. Since Buddha's would be the issue that inevitably emerges in

that teachings are learned and put into effect patiently, so that they can be for the good of many years to come, was it enabled to develop deep roots in Western soil. Will the present cultural atmosphere of 'transparency' and cross-fertilization of philosophical practices lead to the advent of a powerful new model of Buddhist practice unique to the modern period, or will it merely lead to the dilution and misunderstanding of Lord Buddha's invaluable teaching? Questions are available, only time can tell.

The truest test of these lessons, of course, is if they would give birth to the promised result with the crucible of your own heart. The Buddha has presented us with a challenge; it is up to and of us to take the challenge to the test individually.

Theravada has expanded globally in the modern age through the Diaspora and mission. Theravada is actually the dominant form of Buddhism in the world like in Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, of course. It remains a core component of Vietnam's Buddhism, particularly after its official merger with Mahayana styles of the 1960s. Tradition has been practiced by the Baruas, Chakma and Magh ethnic groups in Bangladesh. In the Buddhist renaissance in India, the Theravada school has been instrumental and has started to replace orthodox Newari Buddhism in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley. Missionary monks - leading both diasporic and converting Buddhists worldwide, sometimes as independent congregations. In the two comparatively new trends of Committed Buddhism and Western Convert. Instead of being culturally unique, Theravada is likely to be universalized and to be combined, or at least in conversation, with other types of Buddhism and also other faiths. Worldwide, there are an estimated 100 million Theravada Buddhists. The terms such as Liberation, ignorance, liberty and connection are preliminary aids in the teachings of Buddhism, pointing to no ultimate truth, simple clues or signposts for the traveller on the Road, serving only to point out the purpose. The insight that Buddhism seeks is

not the wisdom of competing philosophical systems; it is the wisdom of the Enlightenment on the true essence of human life. This is in contrast to the fundamental philosophy of Buddhism, which calls attention only to the achievement of nibbana. The conviction of all Buddhists in this respect is same. Apart from all sacred religious ceremonies, they are to be considered the source of the Buddhist culture which shows their religious belief.

Marriage Ceremony of Barua Buddhists

There is little question that marriage is the most crucial aspect of the life cycle ceremonies and practices. The first and main component of every marriage is the choosing of a bride and groom. It is traditionally stated that as Siddhartha himself married Yoshodhara, his cousin's niece, so this kind of marriage is permitted in a community ruled by the law that cousins are cross cousins. Although the present culture is seeking to stop a marriage between families. Inter-religious marriage, while not promoted, is not very uncommon. As was custom among the Bamas, the groom party had to send daba (bride-price) to the bride in the forms of ornaments, clothes and even cash money, and for this purpose the marriage took place in the bridegroom's home. But now-a-days, through the presence of Hindu neighbours, Buddhist bridegrooms go to the bride's home, and marriage is performed there.

A large range of social formalities are to be performed on the day of the Barua marriage ceremony. Before the actual marriage takes place, the Bhikkhus (Vantes) are asked to read the Mangal Suttas in order to thank the pair for their healthy and fruitful conjugal existence. After that, a non-professional priest (Mantra — data) 6 conducts the specific rites for the ceremony. The slogan he utters is usually in Pali. In reality, contrary to the Hindu model of marriage, the Buddhist marriage structure is quite simplistic, but it has several ritual components that occur on specific days. And

offering a good feast to the neighbors is a crucial part of the Barua family. There are two systems of marriage of Barua Buddhists. If the bridegroom heads to the bride's father's home, and the wedding is held there, it's called Chalanta Vivah. Thus, if the bride is taken to the bridegroom's house and the nuptial is held there, it is called Namanta Vivah. Namanta Vivah is much more popular in Bangladesh, though Chalanta Vivah is a daily activity in India.

Let us address the specific ritual aspects of the type of marriage of the Barua Buddhists that are prevalent in contemporary society.

1. Ceremonies before marriage
2. Ceremonies on the day of marriage
3. Ceremonies after marriage

1. Ceremonies before marriage -

When the final selection of the bride and groom is made, the first ritual that takes place in the bride's house is regarded as 'alankar-charam' which is to eventually engage the girl by offering her new ornaments and garments on the bride's hand. From that day forward, the girl involved got basically married. In the house of the bride groom, all parties finalize the exact date of marriage and often enter into a structured arrangement on the question of what would be offered in full to the child and the girl (in most cases only to the girls) involved. People are welcomed as witnesses to this, and they are offered a sumptuous feast. The elders officially bless the girl and authorize her marriage. This scheme is widespread even now among the Baruas, but the name of the occasion is generally referred to as Ashwirbad rather than Alankar Charani. Another part of this occasion in these days is the exchanging of rings and the cutting of cakes as a sign of engagement.

Pansalla, Nayari and Haala Song- These three traditions are very much connected with the marriage ceremony in the conventional Barua culture. Neighbours are invited to discuss all the steps of marriage perfectly. The name of this social gathering is Pansalla, where all essential decisions about marriage are made. After fixing the date of the marriage, several friends and relatives visit the house of the bride and groom, known as Nayari, who are very helpful in domestic relations. In reality, from the day of Alankar Charam or Ashwirbad, and in both houses, Girl and boy, there was a daily festival. Among those festivals singing of Haala Song was a Major one Women's folk generally sung in a chorus on the days of the marriage rehearsal and on the day of the real union. These songs were called Haala and included episodes of some joyful historical events, such as *Kaikeyir haala, Janakir haala, Janak rajar haala, Dharmik raajar haala* and the like, although its meaning is very hard to comprehend, but from the titles of these songs we can clearly examine the impact of Hinduism over Buddhism. Kaikeyi, Janaki, Janak raja are characters of the Hindu epic Ramayana. At North Bengal all these practises are not in operation now, but some new trends are joining the culture, as young brides are currently involved in decorating their hands with mehndi paste prior wedding.

Tel Loani- Actually, three days before the marriage begins another ceremony called Tel Ioani. This ceremony is being held in both the house of the boy and the girl. In that period, going to the Buddha temple (Bihar) and worshipping the Buddha and taking the blessings from the Bhikkhus are some of the basic practises. A holy thread purified by the Bhikkhus is tied to their ankles to protect them from the dark eyes of witches and ghosts. Then in a decorated winnowing-fan (aanak kula) paddy, durba lawn, oil lamp, green banana, stone pebbles, green turmeric, ghila (a seed of mimosa scandens) and a drawn water jar filled with leaves of mango sprouts, bamboo sprouts,

mijri sprouts (one type of tree) are mounted. Many of these have a symbolic meaning. According to Buddhist teachings, the green fruits are a symbol of good health, the green turmeric is a symbol of grace, the pillar is a symbol of firmness, the eternal light is a symbol of hope, the water is a symbol of life and desire, the ghila of gravity and the leaves inside the container are a symbol of long life. The boy is sitting in a room surrounded by males and females, especially young people. One by one, they hold that winnowing fan and cause the same thing to move in front of the boy and touch his forehead. The wives of the elder brothers of the boy must take part in it to augment the pleasure of the company. Widows are not permitted to participate, and Buddhists, like their Hindu friend, claim that if a widow takes part in this auspicious ritual, the couple will still have the same blessing. This is performed twice — in the morning as well as in the evening. The same thing is done in the girl's house in the same manner. But now, in most cases, this is done on the day before marriage and on the day of actual marriage. As another part of this ceremony on the morning of the wedding day, both the boy and the girl are anointed with green turmeric paste. This ceremony (as Gaye Halud in Bengali's Hindu marriage) is rising in popularity nowadays. After the shower, they are required to dress something made of iron like a belt, a brace, or even a small key that hangs around the waist with the aid of a cord. They are used for the same reason, i.e. to shield them from evil eyes. Here again, we can see the role of the Hindu occupational caste in Buddhist marriage. The house god (Ghardevata in Bengali) is revered with unboiled rice, banana and some molasses in Bangladesh during the wedding days. All the inhabitants of the house pay their respects to this god and pray for the well-being of the partners who are going to be married. This is not a popular practise among the Barua settlements of North Bengal, India.

2. Ceremonies on the Day of Marriage -

According to the traditional marriage concept of the Bangladesh Barua Buddhists prior to migration, marriage is to be conducted in the house of the bridegroom (Namanta Vivah). Then there are two more phases in the Namanta Vivah.

Bridegroom's party goes to bring the bride –

On the wedding day, the bride is to be carried from her parent's house to the bridegroom's house in a ritual manner. So, on the wedding day, the bridegroom party goes along with cakes, ornaments, clothes and perfumes to get the bride. They're named the Barjatri. They will not enter the bride's premises as long as they are not duly accepted by the bride's party. A wooden frame is installed in the courtyard of the bride's home, where the seats for the guests are placed. The party of the bridegroom sits in front of each other with the respective members of the bride culture. It is called kanakani or konakoni based in the Chittagong language. Healthy wishes are shared between the two parties therein. They are then served with sugar and betel-leaves neatly set on a plate. Everyone's takes the candy. After refreshment, the bridegroom party turned over what they had bought for the bride. All the items on the tray are displayed to all the guests present, and the women's folk adorn the bride with these items. It takes a long time. In the meantime, refreshments are being served to the visitors. After serving the visitors, time comes when the bride has to leave. Few respected elderly people from the bridegroom's side are brought inside the home. The father or an elderly relative of the bride hands her over to them saying, "Please accept our daughter and consider her as your own daughter from this day onwards and take good care of her. Hope she'll have a happier life in the house where she's going to live.

Rituals for bride reception-

When the bridegroom party returns home with the bride, the female members of the house cordially welcome them

in a formal manner. Generally the daughters, the brother-in-laws, accompany the bride to the bridegroom's house. The other relatives, including her father, will attend the ceremony. But the bridegroom and the bride could not see each other before the actual service was held. The bride is kept in a house of her own and does not take any food or drinks at the bridegroom's house until she's a legitimate wife by Buddhist rituals. So, at the time of departure from her father's home, bananas and some other food are sent to the bride. But usually cooked rice and appetising food is provided to the bride by any other family or neighbours. In the evening, the neighbours are served with tasty meals. When the wedding party comes to the bridegroom's home, they are greeted in a formal manner and they are prepared for the real wedding ceremony.

The actual marriage ceremony of the Barua Buddhists (both Numanta and Chulanta) is divided into three sections, but the importance and description of the last part, which arose as a powerful influence of the Hindu community, is far higher in North Bengal, India.

Religious ritual or Mangalusu-

A separate room is prepared for the ceremony where honoured guests from both sides take their seats. The bride and the bride-groom are carried in and seated side by side. It is customary that none of the couple will stare at each other before the wedding comes to an end, so that on the bride-groom 's head there will be a turban on which a coronet (sehra) should be put so that his face remains to some degree hidden. But in

these days, boys were using topor rather than sehram. The seating system is composed of mattresses, bed covers and pillows on both the girl's and boy's arms. The bride is sitting on the left side of the groom. Then Bhikkhus invited the pair to come and take refuge in the five precepts along with Trisarana. Bhikkhus continues to recite some suttas from holy Pitaka and to offer preaching on the operation in their new life, particularly from Sigalovada sutta, Mangala — sutta, Parablzaba sutta, etc., which included the duties of householders and used in Paritta. They consider the teachings of the Buddha described in this sutta as "the code of conduct for householders" or "*Grihi'-Vinaya*." This role is called the Chittagong dialect *mangalasu*. It is the primary sacred aspect of marriage that is regarded by the Buddhist tradition. Two propitious water jars (Mcmgalghat) are put there, then the Bhikkhus arrive and bind the jars as well as create the boundary line of the region with the aid of the Bhikkhus seven layers of yarn. They fasten the holy thread on the bride's hand, and the groom spray the holy water on it at the end.

Rituals performed by lay priests-

Well after religious ceremonies executed by the Bhikkhus, a lay priest named *Mantradata* is required to perform the specific rituals of the wedding ceremony. The lay priest pronounces all the mantras in Pali, and then gives his explanation in Bengali. The tale of the marriage of Vaisakha is an important part of the marriage ceremony of Buddhists in Bangladesh and this tale is stated in any marriage ceremony. The mantras used in the marriage ceremony are comparatively recent sets of various Paritta-Suttas. Many academics have written books on this topic and have tried to provide a formal structure to the Buddhist marriage method. Notable among them are Dharma Tilak Sthavir, Dharmapal Mahathera and Dr. Sukomal Chaudhuri.

Dr. B. M. Barua mentioned in depth the marriage ceremony in his book "*Bauddha Parinay Paddhati*"

Mantradata officially grants a couple permission to lead a married life from now on. First of all, he wants the defence of both himself and the couple by the 'Act of Honesty.' This is followed by the Metta Bhabna, in which he expresses love for all ten-way living beings, asking their aid to protect the duo. Then he pays tribute to the three gems (Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha). Afterwards, he brings up all the devas from all the world-cycles to be present and to shield the couple from evil eyes. And he asks the bride's representative to hand over the bride to the bride-groom, which will be accompanied by certain formalities such as 'to make the groom's left hand unified with the bride's right hand,' 'to make the groom's left foot united with the bride's right foot,' 'to make the bride go round the groom's right side to the bride-groom seven times,' etc.

Trns: Like in this union of the two hands, you too have been living in harmony for a long time. May your combined be like that of god and goddess.

It is noticeable that although in one of the Mantras for the blessing of a couple, the priest says, you have no other refuge, Buddha is your only refuge. You don't have another refuge; Sangha is your only refuge. You don't have any other shelter; Dhamma is your only refuge. The safety, welfare and help of the universe rely on the strength of Buddha, Sangha and Dhamma. Let success and wealth come to you through this act of honesty. Although at the same time he says, "Bhavatu sabbamangalam rakkhantu sabba devata" (May all the gods protect you). Thus, through marriage mantras, priests pray to Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, along with all gods and goddesses, not only for wisdom, wealth and peace, but also for safety

from an unfortunate omen, an inauspicious occurrence, and an awful scream of evil birds, an ugly, horrible world, and a terrible nightmare.⁶ After which he gives a number of wishes and holds the bundle of sprouts on the auspicious container, spills them in the water of the pitchers, and spray the water on their heads seven times, and utters mantras seven times. The priest then gives them some guidance on the pleasure of their marital life, including the ten preachings that Dhananjaya Setthi gave to her daughter Vaisakh when she was going to her father-in - law's house.

Striachar (Womanly conventions)-

When the priest finishes his output, the couple is taken to attend some other formalities. In this third section of the union, Hindu union customs have been added, such as 'exchanging the pair's garlands (maala badal), 'taking a first auspicious look at each other' (subha dristi), 'putting Vermilion' (sindur daan), etc. These measures are usually performed as 'womanly conventions' (stri achar) and no priest is required to do so. Finally, Bhikkhus and other visitors are given their meals.

3. Ceremonies after marriage

Madi-Hondani, Na-Dinna, Phiranya-Bhat— In the case of marriage at the bride-groom 's home, normally one or two days after marriage, the couple heads to the bride's parents ' house, followed by others. As if the bride-groom first touched the soil of his father-in - law's home, this feature is known as Madi-Hondani or touching the soil.

Then again, on the 9th day after marriage, both duo visits the house of the bride's parents. This role is known as Na Dinna (9 "day). This period, the bride usually doesn't come back with her husband. She's been staying with her parents for a few days. In a few days, the son-in-law will again be invited to bring his wife back home.

⁶ Chaudhuri, S. (1982). Contemporary Buddhism in Bangladesh.pp. 135-39.

This role is known as Phiranya—Bhat (literally 'returning food'). The son-in-law stays in his father's house for a day or two and comes back with his wife. After that, he can visit the house of his father-in-law anytime he wants, no formal invitation is needed.

While Buddhists have been living outside the caste system since the time of their birth, they very much aspire to the same rank and privileges as worshipping Hindu gods and goddesses or performing different rites and rituals at the time of life cycle ceremonies. Mog Baruas of North Bengal worship Kali or other Hindu temples, and in order to give sacrifices with names and gothra (clan), they adopt Goutam Gothra as their clan name (because they believe that they are just like the descendants of Gautam Buddha). This realistic life-style approach has shown that, while they are multicultural, linked with the name of the 'Buddhist Tribe,' but culturally not quite so. Here, another part of this cultural influence needs to be listed. As other cultures, Hindu culture is a perfect example of a complex system of big and little rituals. For eg, Hindu marriage is not practised in the same way in India. There is a Shastriya part of the marriage, involving *Hom* — *Yangya* (worshipping and oathing in front of the fire), *Kanyadaan* (giving the bride's hand to the bride's groom), chanting vedic mantras, etc. but there is also a *Loukik* part, which, according to local culture, differs from community to community. For example, there are many variations between the Hindu marriage of Northern India and Southern India in this section of the Loukik because they are affected by local culture, the atmosphere and the availability of goods.

The degree of propagation of these two forms is therefore, not the same. The Loukic rites and rituals propagate faster than the Shastriya one, since they are external, easy to observe and flexible for the time and need of society. Bengali Buddhists of North Bengal are now much influenced by Bengali Hindu marriage, but this influence is

largely confined to the propagation of little practise such as mala badal, subha dristi, sindur daan and stri-achar.

Thus, aside from this syncretism, there are still several instances of distinctiveness. They don't hold a marriage ceremony in front of a fire (agnisakshi). In other words, they stop Hom — Yangya in their marriage. As Barth said, in this case, it is clear that, amid the movement of people through them, borders exist. Despite inter-ethnic interaction and interdependence, cultural differences can remain.

Some Distinctive Features of Barua marriage —

- I. The participation of Buddha Bhikkhus (Bhante) is important. In Pali, they recite mangal-sutra. There is no role of Brahmin priest in Barua's marriage.
- II. One of their community's non-professional priests (mantra data) conducts actual rituals.
- III. Seating arrangement for the bride and groom is made a little apart.
- IV. While inter-religious marriages are taking place nowadays, but in generally marriage within the community is preferred.
- V. They do not make a fireplace (Agni Sakshi) at the time of marriage.

The issue with Barua community members is that they do not have such a fixed pattern of conduct that can give them some distinctive identification in their daily lives. In these days, the traditional tradition of marriage is to set one day for Ashwirbad, where both parties meet together and give their gifts and blessings to the bridegroom. After that, they swap rings and cut the engagement cake, which is clearly an effect of Western society, and this system is gaining acceptance by the day. As this is limited to well-off families only to date. Basically, because of moving from one

position to another and intermingling with other individuals, the pattern of marriage activity here is not rather set or static, more dynamic.

Funeral Rituals of Barua Community

Funeral rituals are customary and compulsory social ritual of the Buddhist community of Bangladesh. Buddhist in Bangladesh and the Hindus burn their dead. In the case of Buddhists, its origin dates back to the time of the Buddha.⁷ When a person (man or woman) dies his kith and kin move the deceased person in the courtyard. First, the family and well-wishers of the dead are called upon. This is a general pattern across all religious groups in Bangladesh. Bhikkhus is welcomed from numerous monasteries far and wide to observe funeral rites.⁸ Typically, the funeral ceremony of the Barua culture takes place in the afternoon.⁹

Customary Bath of the Dead Body- At the beginning, the corpse is taken out of the house and put on the ground. First of all, the oldest son of the deceased person (or his or her nephew if he or she has no son) brings water from a local tank or river. He then dips into the water three times first. Then he fills the jar with water, and holds it on his shoulder towards the body of dead or to the location where the deceased's body lies. Then he rubs water mixed with scented water and green turmeric from head to toe three times. Hereafter, the elderly women of the village dump water on the corpse of death and have it fully bathed.¹⁰ After finishing the normal wash, the corpse is placed on a decorative cot. A white shroud is placed over the body, and candles and incense are burning continuously. The perfumes are dispersed around the body. Parched corn or "Khai" is also spread and salutes the body of deceased, each of them throwing the

⁷ The Digha Nikaya, vol. ii, PTS, p. 161; Sumangal Vilasini, vol. ii, PTS, p.584.

⁸ All the ethnic Buddhist groups invite Bhikkhus to perform religious rituals of funeral ceremony.

⁹ For they wish to give a last chance to the relatives who live in distance places to see the disease.

¹⁰ To wash death body is a customary and obligatory to all religious communities. However, the ritual is different from each other.

parched corn on it. A new umbrella and stick is given to his grandson, offered to Bhikkhus in the obsequies or the "Saptahik kiriya" ceremony.

Religious Rituals- While all the families and interested people gather, it is almost in the afternoon that the Bhikkhus perform religious rituals. Firstly, all present seek shelter in Tisarana (Buddha Dhamma and Sangha) and request for five tenets. Five precepts are issued by a Bhikkhu or an elderly Bhikkhu, as recommended by the chief of assembled Bhikkhus. After that, Bhikkhus pronounced verses from the Tipitaka, particularly concerning the transience of life in a chorus. Bhikkhus and nearby gentlemen discuss the life history of the deceased and applaud the former's behaviour of the deceased. The devotional song of Buddha Kirtana is sung by the youth. The devotional music group accompanies the bier to the location of the funeral. Many of us who take part in burial rites wish the dead person's achievement of heaven and peace in the hereafter. Some other, however, wish him nibbana through the removal of all pain and sorrow and hardships.

Popular Notions and Burning the Dead Body- The corpse's pyre is prepared with mango branches and sandalwood.¹¹ The funeral pyre is named "cite" in the Bengali language. When the bier with the dead body is carried to the pyre, the parched corns are dispersed on the way ahead of the funeral collection. Rice was specially prepared for the deceased person. The elder son of the dead carries rice with some other food and a glass of water on his head. Carrying rice is the most magnificent credit to a living elder parent. He conducts any obligation against his departing mother or father. It indicates that the individual is fed for the last time. Typically, the feeding strategy is somewhat the reverse of what we do in everyday life. When feeding is over, and the body of dead person is placed on the pile of mango stems, the elder son takes the

¹¹ To give a mango branch in the pyre is considered as a pious act.

stacks of dry bamboo and burns it. Holding it he goes around the pyre seven times, and as he does that, he then bends down his head at the feet of the dead body after every round. At seventh occasion, the fire is taken to the mouth of the body of dead. This is called "mukhagni."¹² The pattern is close to that of the Hindu counterpart.

Rituals after Funeral Ceremony- On the next day after burning, the pyre is washed and all the ashes or bones or half-burnt bones are heaped together and reburnt. After that, the ashes are thrown in a basket in the river or in a forest. Any parts of ashes can be stored for use in stupas for potential building. It's got a historical explanation. Buddha's relics have been stored and placed on numerous stupas all over India. Within seven days of death, the feature known as "Saptahik kiriya" (or Sat or Hat dinna, in colloquial language of Chittagong, i.e. the 7th day) is organised and certain formalities are followed. Each evening, after the day of death, the Bhikkhu of the nearby monastery is invited to recite the verses of St. Pitak in the deceased house before the weak end of the ritual is observed. Bhikkhu is given food and drink known as "*choaing*" in the morning or at noon. The bathing place of the body of dead is divided from the others by a barrier, and the fruit, sweets, candy and flowers are given there. Candles and incense are burning every evening. This location is really holy and its sanctity needs to be protected. From the day of death, all the members of the family take vegetables as curry and embrace austerity to a degree. Since death is an inauspicious occurrence, at least for the first seven days, everybody needs to take certain precautions. Since, they conclude, the departing soul remains in danger throughout this time, and only after seven days of regeneration can it take. Thus, after seven days, whenever the obsequies for the departed are over, the village returns to its

¹² In the case if a pregnant woman dies, the fetus is taken by cutting open the lady. The fetus after being separated is graved alongside and the dead body is burnt as usual. If the fetus is not separated, it become a serious offence in the society. The lady is turned into a witch or ghost, if the fetus is not freed from the womb, as the Buddhist believe.

usual condition. The obsequies or "Saptahik Kiriya" ritual shall usually take place on the seventh day after death. When, however, the planned date appears inauspicious, the ceremony may take place before the day. But under no conditions will the date be more than six to seven days after death. At least five Bhikkhus are welcomed to the house of the deceased in the forenoon during the obsequies. A sangha Dana is held which is a must in this occasion. Among the things to be given to the Bhikkhus, there must be the following: a piece of white cloth, a parasol, a threadball needle, soap, candles, pen or pencil paper, cigarettes, milk, etc., and some cash money. Other required items could also be provided. For those who entered the cremation ground with the dead body must be welcomed and fed. On that day, various foods of all sorts, particularly after the taste of the dead, are put on a bamboo platform above the ground. It's named "Mocha" or "Machang" locally. This "Mocha" is usually put after the role of sangha Dana. It is customary for the sons and immediate relatives and beloved ones to shave their hair, their beards and their moustaches on the day of the ceremony. Son or grandson of the deceased is also given pabbaja preferably on that day only receive any merit and propose the same for the benefit of the deceased. On the 15th day, the monk is invited to offer food and drinks. The monk pronounces the verses of the sacred Pitaka. Few householders are again conducting sangha Dana, which is not necessary or obligatory for all householders. After this, once a month, identical food and drinks for the monks are customary, and the monk pronounces verses as the previous one. It's gone on for a whole year. In the 6th month and at the end of the year, monks are welcomed and sangha Dana is done, and "Mocha" is put in remembrance of the deceased. As this is not the case in all cases. The pre-assessed death of a human is not accompanied by too many formalities. In successive years, only on the day, in fact on the day on which the deceased died, a procedure known as

"Batsarik kiriya" (= yearly occasion) is observed. Bhikkhus and some visitors are invited, and there is a sangha Dana that must be conducted on this day. In both cases, after Dana, Bhikkhu recited "Punn anumodana-gatha" or "dakkhina-gatha."

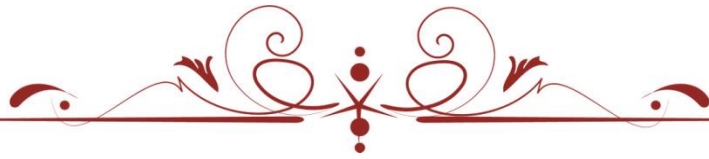
The funeral procedures of various Buddhist ethnic groups in Bangladesh are quite different from one another; particularly in the socio-popular sense rituals have been conducted. Both religious and common rituals occupy a significant role in the funeral ceremony of the Buddhist culture, but various ethnic groups role different importance on these two forms of rituals. In the case of the Barua culture, religious and common traditions play a crucial role. In religious rituals, the influence of the Theravada tradition is greater, while in socio-popular rituals, local, ethnic and other group influences are more important. In particular, the socio-popular funeral rituals of the Barua community are strongly influenced by those of the Hindus. This is a startling contrast to the burial rites of other minority groups of the Buddhist culture.

Conclusion

In the Barua community's marriage rites, many lively rituals are observed. These practices allow them to maintain their distinct identity as a different group. It is evident from our studies that popular and religious practices both play an important role in their marriage ceremony. Nowadays, however, several practices from the mainstream culture are often followed by the Barua. While marriage without the involvement of monks is considered incomplete by the Barua Buddhists, popular rituals play the key role in the ceremony. Their racial and popular culture and convictions are strongly influenced by them. In addition, they follow ceremonies for finding protection and stability, and the Barua's preserve community separation through the practice of endogamy, like other cultures. Barua's practice their festivals and ceremonies without strict obedience to their new religion's rules and bindings.

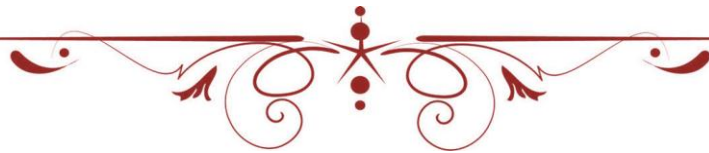
They create a harmonious alliance between aspects of their world - God, ghosts, nature and man - through the continued practice of their traditional festivals and rituals. In addition, Barua's get a chance to revive their physical and mental vitality through the success of the festivals. In addition, by these they maintain their distinct identity as a separate group by festivals and rituals.

The Barua Buddhists interpret significant chapters of human life as birth, marriage and death. For those events for safety, prosperity and to restore purity, they observe many social-religious and obligatory rites and rituals. We have studied the different ceremonies and customs they follow during the marriage ceremony and have based their conception and knowledge on these traditions. It became evident from our studies that in their marriage ceremony, both popular and religious practices play an important part. The numerous facets of their religious beliefs and customs have been analysed in this chapter and it is worth mentioning that the various religious practices help to establish a bridge of mutual understanding and amity between the sangha and lay devotees.



CHAPTER-5

IMPORTANT BUDDHIST, PLACES, ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONALITIES IN UTTAR PRADESH



CHAPTER-5

IMPORTANT BUDDHIST, PLACES, ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONALITIES IN UTTAR PRADESH

A distinctive heritage and cultural traditions gathered through the ages are bestowed on the land of Uttar Pradesh. Lots of luminous personalities have also graced it. Lord Buddha was prominent among those who travelled across the land. It is said that Gautam Buddha, known as the first spiritual missionary, spent at least 24 monsoons in what is now Uttar Pradesh. The land was made by him as the 'Cradle of Buddhism.' He violated rituals, inspired kings and the masses to look at their immortal identity. He urged them to rise above the shackles of longing, desire, pain and death. It should be noted that Buddha taught and traveled extensively in Uttar Pradesh—Kapilvastu (where Lord Buddha spent his early years), Sarnath (where Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon, having attained enlightenment), Shravasti (where Lord Buddha spent 24 monsoons), Kaushambhi (where Lord Buddha visited in the 6th and 9th year after attaining the enlightenment).

It is assumed that in Uttar Pradesh he might have toured many more places and modern Lucknow could be one of those. But there is yet another version of this name's origin that says that Lucknow was previously known as Nucklowl (still used by aged people). The history behind this is that Buddha's nails have been brought here and put in a stupa. Thus, the name changed from Nucklow to Lucknow when Buddha's nails were put here. Another tale revolves around the Buddheshwar Chowraha, where once stood a Buddhist shrine that was later seized by the Hindus and later converted into Lord Shiva's temple. Another legend that goes around Amavasi Baudh Vihar is still there. Buddhists are thought to have assembled there on

the day of the new moon (Amavasa). There is now an airport called 'Amousi airport' and the word 'Amousi' comes from Vihara. The main Buddhist centres in Uttar Pradesh and their monuments and remains are described here.

5.1 SARNATH

Sarnath occupies a very popular position among the Buddhist centres in India. It was here that the Buddha gave his First Sermons since the Awakening. The 'Wheel of Law (Dhamma Cakka) rotated in all directions from this base. It was here again that the Samgha had been created for the first time. From the time of Buddha to the 12th century A.D. Buddhist faith, philosophy, art and literature—all of them had their continuous development here. It was not so difficult for scholars to identify Sarnath with the present site near Banaras, as was the case with many other ancient sites. The Chinese pilgrims have found Sarnath at a distance of around two miles from Banaras. But the precise distance between the two locations is now only five miles. The remains of the old path that joined Kasi to Mrigadava (the ancient name of Sarnath) are still visible. The name 'Sarnath' is not quite old. According to General Cunningham it was formerly the name of the local temple of Siva. It derives this name from 'Saranga Natha,' which can be identified with both Siva and Buddha. Its ancient name isipatana (Rshipattana) is commonly used in Buddhist works. His other name was Migadava or Migadaya (Sans. Mrgadava or Mrgadaya). This second name is based on the tale of Mrga Jataka, a Nigrodha. According to this story of Jataka, Buddha and his disciples were born here as an antelope in one of their previous lives. The King of Banaras, satisfied with Bodhisattva, the leader of the antlers, granted him protection, making this whole area reserved for the antlers. It was called, then, Mrgadava or Mrgadaya. This location is also called Dharmacakra Pravratana Vihara in the inscriptions from Sarnath. Formerly, this was the name of the Vihara here,

whose name became symbolic of the entire site of Sarnath in the course of time. It was from the time of the Buddha that Sarnath became significant. Since attaining the ultimate wisdom, Buddha chose this position for his First Sermons. He delivered the Dharmacakra pravartana sutra to Ajnata Kaundiya and his four companions. This was a great event in Buddha's life, and it has been described time and time again in Buddhist literature. This occurrence also became a favourite theme of the sculptors who, in their sculpture, portrayed the scene of the First Sermon of Buddha, depicting the turn of the 'Wheel of Dharma. In one of the stone slabs found in Sarnath, we see the figure of the Buddha in the middle of the dharma chakra pravartana mudra. The figures of the first five apostles are seen on his sides. The 'Wheel of Law suggestive of the First Sermon' is visible in front of the pedestal. There is a deer on both sides of this wheel. Buddha remained at Sarnath for some time giving speeches to his disciples. Gradually, the number of followers rose. The Sangha was founded in Sarnath after a period of three months. At the time, the number of Buddha's disciples was. According to the Buddhist tradition, two Vihars were built here during the Buddha's lifetime. One of these is said to have been founded by Nandiya, the wealthy merchant of Banaras.

From the time of Asoka, the great emperor of Maurya, Sarnath became a prominent center of Buddhism. Asoka came with his preceptor, Upagupta, in the midst of his journey. The latter told him that Buddha had turned the Rule Wheel here. Asoka ordered the building of a lofty column on the site where Buddha gave his First Sermon. The capital of this pillar was decorated with four lion figures. The Caitya was also ordered to be built. During the Sungian era (2nd-1st century B.C.) a railing was installed in Sarnath, the ruins of which are now preserved in the Sarnath Museum. The Temple of the Crescent—shape was once founded here, only the base

of which still survives. Any shattered statues containing a sparkling polish have also been made. During the Kushana period (1-180 A.D.) many images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were carved in Sarnath. The early statues are based on the Mathura style of sculpture, a very prominent example of which is the Bodhisattva image of red sandstone donated by Friar Bala. The first Chinese pilgrim, Fa-hian, visited Sarnath early in the 5th century A.D. There were 4 massive Stupas and 2 Sangharanas. In the 7th century, the second pilgrim, Hiuen-tsang, found here 30 Sangharanas in which 1,500 monks stayed. They were all followers of the school of Samitiya. At that time, Mrigadava's buildings were divided into 8 parts, all within one wall of the enclosure.

Hiuen-tsang described the imaginative Chaityas, Stupas and Temples in fantastic terms. One of the temples was 200 feet tall. Its lower half was composed of stones and the upper part of bricks. The pilgrim mentions that the Ashokan pillar was 70 feet high and the Stupa was 100 feet tall. He also identified a number of commercial stupas. Sarnath enjoyed the patronage of the emperors of the Gupta and even of Harsavardhan. Any of the Buddhist sculptures here were possibly designed by the Emperors Kumaragupta and Budhagupta. Any of the sculptures produced during the Gupta era are outstanding from the point of view of sculpture. After Harsha Sarnath, the Emperors of Kanauj lived under the Gurjara-Pratihara. So far, no inscription of their time has been found here. After the Pratiharas, Sarnath came under the control of the Pala Kings of Bengal. Two inscriptions, dated 1026 and 1058 BC. They were collected at Sarnath, respectively. The first relates to the two brothers, Sthirapala and Vasantapala, who had restored the Dharamarajika Stupa and the Dharmacakra. During the time of the second inscription (dated 1058), Sarnath was ruled by the Cedi dynasty of Karnath. The 12th century A.D. Sarnath received the patronage of the Gahadval kings. Kumaradevi, the devout Buddhist queen of King Govinda Chandra,

not only restored many ancient buildings in Sarnath, but also founded a huge Buddhist monastery in Sarnath.

We find that the first Vihara to be built in modern times was Kusinagar in 1902, Kusinagar in 1902. Ven. By Ven. Mahavira, gya. Venerable Bodhanand established Buddha Vihar at Risladar Park, Lucknow, in 1925. In 1931, the famous Mulagndha Kuti Vihar was established in Sarnath by the Maha Bodhi Society. The opening of the Vihara was an important landmark in the development of western Buddhism. Most of others vihars have come up after the Buddhist renaissance of 1956 started by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.¹ In 20th century Budha Vihars and Dr. Ambedkars Parks have become the symbols of Buddhism.

5.2 Mahabodhi Society

Maha Bodhi Society, an association founded in India and abroad to promote Buddhist studies. The society was founded in 1891 by Anagarika Dharmapala in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka); one of its original purposes was to restore the Mahabodhi temple at Buddh Gaya (Bihar State, India), the site of the awakening of the Buddha, which was in the possession of a Hindu landowner at that time. The Buddha-Gaya Temple Act, which assigned the administration of the temple to a committee consisting of Hindus and Buddhists alike, was passed by the government of Bihar in 1949.

The society is headquartered in Kolkatta and has branches in various other cities in India, such as Orissa, New Delhi, Chennai, Ajmer, Lucknow and Bangalore, and in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. The society publishes an English-language magazine, *The*

¹ Ahir, D. C. (1992). *Buddhism in modern India* (p. 217). South Asia Books.

*Maha Bodhi.*² In 1917, Anagarika Dharmapala visited Chittagong, where he was inspired by a nine-year-old boy who later became a popular Pali scholar Prof. Dwijendra Lal Barua.³

The Maha Bodhi Society takes its title from the tree under which the Great Being took the enchanted seat (Vajrasana) at Buddha Gaya about two thousand five hundred and thirty-five years ago and envisioned the Truth, the Reality. This was the Asvattha, sanctified under its shadow by the acquisition of the Highest Knowledge (Bodhi) by Siddhartha Gautama. From then on, it became known in India as the Bodhi-Tree and in Sri Lanka as the Bo-Tree. Today, in association with Buddhist practices, the word Bodhi has become an internationally recognized concept or noun. In the Indian Museum, Calcutta, the Seal of the Maha Bodhi Society was copied from an alto-redievo tablet, and possibly seen against the right-hand wall of a large square room from which one enters the Archaeological Sculpture Gallery. It is included in Major General Sir Alexander Cunningham's Gandhara Series. It is estimated to be more than 2000 years old, and General Cunningham and most other archaeologists believe it was the seal of the greatest Viharas of those days, adopted by the Sangharajas. In the centre, there is a trident representing the three gems-Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The wheel that supports it is the Dharma Chakra or the Wheel of Law, referring to the deer park, Isipatana near Benares, where the Buddha preached his first Great Discourse, entitled the Dhamma Cakkappavattana Sutta, which embodies his teachings. In the act of adoration, the two figures typify the heavenly hosts. This has been adopted as their emblem by the Japanese auxiliary of the Maha Bodhi Society. According to Anagarika Dharmapala, in the first issue of the Mahabodhi Journal (May 1891), the main objective of the MahaBodhi society was "The Buddha Gaya

² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Maha-Bodhi-Society>.

³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barua_\(Bangladesh\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barua_(Bangladesh)).

Maha Bodhi Society has begun its mission to resuscitate Buddhism in the country of its birth." It will have its headquarters at Buddha Gaya, sacred to the Buddhists as the place where the ultimate knowledge of "Abhi Sambodhi" was attained by Prince Siddhartha, "the light of Asia," and became the all-knowing Tathagata, and its hopes in time to establish a college and monastery for the residence of monks representing the Buddhist countries of China, Japan, Siam, Cambodia, Burma, Ceylon, Chittagong, Nepal, Arakan and Tibet on that sacred site. As one of the key goals of society is to disseminate Buddha's metaphysical and ethical teachings, translations of the Pali and Sanskrit Pitakas into English, Bengali and Hindi must be made."⁴ "In addition to having a headquarters at Buddha Gaya, the Society aims to carry on its executive function with a permanent office in Calcutta...."⁵ There was a link between Calcutta and the Theravada monks of Myanmar, Chittagong, from the outset of the Community, as evident from the above quotes. Via repeated visits in both directions and the sharing of culture as a result of which there was an exchange of news and customs in the area of Theravada Buddhism, this practice was carried on even to the next few decades where the relations with the monks of these nations were enhanced. The Society has given priority to writing and translating books on Buddhism in order to impart knowledge of Buddha's teachings. In Calcutta University and Bombay University, the Maha Bodhi Society of India inspired the authorities to open research courses in and on the Pali language as a starting point. This exercise has now expanded across the world and Pali and Sanskrit classes are now conducted on a daily basis throughout the region. It was the founder of the Society who, with the support of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, first set up a training unit for Bhikkhus at Shantiniketan and later moved it to Sarnath. "With additional new buildings, this

⁴ Maha Bodhi Society Centenary Volume, vol 11 pp. 214.

⁵ Maha Bodhi Society Centenary Volume, vol 114 pp.21.

college is revived and named after the founder as the "Dhammapala Bhikkhu Training Centre. Finally, Anagarika Dharmapala himself was responsible for the establishment of a permanent headquarters in Calcutta.

The Maha Bodhi Journal of the Magh Barua Group Religious Institutions began to act as a vehicle for the sharing of news between Buddhist countries and later acted as a popular forum for the whole Buddhist world. The magazine contributed essays to noted scholars, renowned Buddhist writers and authors of Buddhist publications, and it has provided yeomen's work to spread the light of Buddhism around the world. It is now intended, with the generosity of Dr. Kwok Shiu Ming, Chairman of the Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhist Institute of Hong Kong, to print this magazine from Singapore, retaining a high quality and proving articles and data of Buddhist interest. At a time when both India and Sri Lanka were under British rule, the Maha Bodhi Society of India came into being. The Society's mission and vision brought the national movements in both countries and other neighboring countries around them, which were under the colonial administration, immense courage to achieve their independence. The Society has given its services not only in the area of religious practice, but also in the fields of social, educational, health, education and humanitarian assistance. It came about when hunger broke out in India, especially in West Bengal and Orissa. Pioneering steps have been taken to change Sri Lanka's socioeconomic, religious, cultural and educational trends. The other major activities in Calcutta are Sri Dharmarajika Vihara in Calcutta, where the relics of Lord Buddha are consecrated, a free Homoeopathy Dispensary and other social services, Maha

Bodhi Book Agency that caters to the reading public with publications on Buddhism and Indology, and a large library with a diverse selection of books.⁶

5.3 Branches of Maha Bodhi Society

The year 1900 was an eventful year for the revival of Buddhism. In that year, two branches of the Maha Bodhi Society were opened at Madras and Kushinagar. In 1904, the famous Ashokan Pillar, the Lion Capital of which has been adopted as National Emblem, was discovered at Sarnath. A relic casket was discovered in 1917 from the only brick stupa of probable pre Ashokan date at Piprahwa in pre Ashokan Characters on this relic casket, the discovery of so many relics from different parts of India, the Buddhist heritage and culture were fully brought to light. Inspired by Sir Arnold's articles a young Ceylonese Buddhist of 29 years old, named Dharmapala had visited Sarnath in 1891. Another illustrious personality Bodhanand became a Bhikshu in 1914 at the hands of Ven. Kripasaram Mahasthavir. Since at that time there was no consecrated sima in India for this purpose, the upasampada ceremony of Ven. Bodhananda was performed in a boat on the Ganges near Calcutta by the Bhikshu of Burma, Ceylon and Chittagong. Anagarika Dliarmapala was also present on this occasion, on becoming a Bhikkhu, Ven. Bodhananda returned to Lucknow and made it the centre of his activities. Thereafter, in 1916, he established the Indian Buddhist Association (Bhartiya Baudh Samiti). In 1925, he erected a beautiful Buddha Vihar in Risaldar Park Lucknow. As a result of the preaching of honourable Bodhananda Mahasthavir, a congenial atmosphere was created for the revival of Buddhism in North India, which give inspiration to many people of North India to adopt the

⁶ OSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 22, Issue 9, Ver. 2(September. 2017) PP 21-25e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845. www.iosrjournals.orgDOI: 10.9790/0837-2209022125 www.iosrjournals.org 21| Page Religious Institutions of the Magh Barua Community of Kolkata Debolina Sen (Senior Research Fellow, Phd Candidate, Department of Geography, University of Calcutta, India)Corresponding Author: Debolina Sen

Buddhist way of life. In December, 1928, Shri. Shiv Charan Lal of Lucknow presided over an All India Buddhist Conference at Calcutta in the Mahabodhi Society Hall. Of the many achievements of the Maha Bodhi society for the revival of Buddhism in India, we must mention the Herculean efforts made by Anagarika Dharma Pala to raise funds for constructing Dharmasala at the three holy places of Buddhist pilgrimage, Viz.; Buddha Gaya Sarnath and Kusinara and to secure lands and building materials for construction of the same.

5.4 SARNATH DHARAMSALA

In 1901, a plot of land was purchased by the Maha Bodhi Society at Sarnath with Rs. 600/— donated by Anagarilra Dharmapal's mother, Snit. Mallilca Hewavitarne. On this plot a small building was erected with the funds collected from a few Burmese friend an Englishman Mr. Sturdy, and Mudaliyar ER. Goonaratne of Galle, Ceylon. An extension of the building was made with Rs. 1000/- contributed by the Maha Bodhi Society of Aralcan. MRS. Foster contributed Rs. 1500/- to the Temple fund of Sarnath. The Dharmasala was completed in 1904 when the Anagarika returned from his American tour. He started the Banaras School of Arts and Agriculture in the Dharnasala and its maintenance charges were borne by MRS. Foster.⁶ This school was non-sectarian and was meant to train young children in such a way as to develop their latent individuality by means of natural education. In 1917 the Raja of Bhingra donated Rs. 2000/- to the society. This sum was utilized in purchasing ten bighas of land at Sarnath

5.5 KUSINARA DHARMASALA:

A beautiful Dharmasala was erected at Kusinara under the supervision of Bhikshu Mahavira, who was able to collect RS. 13,000/- from Burma with the help of Maung Khee Zarhe⁷.

5.6 HEAD QUARTER OF MAHA BODHI SOCIETY SHIFTED TO BANARAS

In 1904, after the building of the Rest House in Buddha Gaya and Sarnath, the Headquarters of the Maha Bodhi Society were transferred from Calcutta to Banaras and Buddha Gaya, thinking that more extensive work could be achieved by making the Headquarters of the Society in the actual field of work, soon after the relocation, the error was made and the Headquarters returned to Calcutta. Of the four sites of pilgrimage suggested in M'ahapaririibbana Sutta, the first place was occupied by Buddha Gaya, while the second place was Sarnath, where Buddha gave his first speech after Bodhi's achievement and made his first converts. The Maha Bodhi Society bought thirteen bighas of land at the second holy site, and the Government of India promised to award a portion of the Buddha's relics if the necessary Vihara could be erected there. A few years ago, at the behest of Anagarika Dharmapala MRS, Foster donated Rs. 17,000/- to the building of the mausoleum. This sum was deposited and, by 1931, it had risen to almost RS. 30,000/- which was used for the building of Vihara. When all the plans for the building of the Vihara were ongoing, the Archeological Department emerged from its slumber and decided to purchase the site chosen from the Vihara. After a lot of difficulty, created by the Archeological Department, the Society was given a site, albeit smaller in the city, where the foundation stone was laid by HE. Sir Harcourt Butler, U.P. Governor, November 3,

⁷ Maha Bodhi Journal, January, 1906.

1922. Soon after this ritual, it was agreed to take Sarnath's revival seriously. Ven. Come on. K. Sirinivas, though Shri, became a resident monk. D. Valisinha spent about ten days a month in Calcutta and 20 days in Sarnath. The Vihara Plan was first drawn up by Mr. Khanna of Banaras, who oversaw the work until its completion and thereby rendered useful service to society. After the building of the Vihara had been assigned to the builder, and some progress had been made on the job he had done without delay. It was up to Taxila to reach Sir. John Marshall, who gave him a really good hearing. The disagreement between the Archaeological Department and the Society was resolved in 1926 by the Government I promising to pay the expenses borne in connection with the work of the Foundation and (ii) giving the Vihar an appropriate plot of land.

The Archaeological Department was gracious enough to create a portion of almost 20 acres of land and to consent to bear the cost of laying it as part of an annex to the Vihara, with appropriate trees planted therein. These talks were held Dr. Hewavitarne and Dr. Shri together. Valisinha, on behalf of the Maha Bodhi Association. However, in the absence of Anagarika Dharmapala, the responsibility of actually completing the job fell on Sri's shoulders. Valisinha, guy. It was he who determined that the building should be made of red stone, while the allowance for brick was made in the initial calculation. He left for England in 1928 as manager of the London Buddhist Mission and Mr. P.P. Siriwardene, who acted in his place, carried out the task painstakingly, Shri. Valisinha moved back to India in 1930 and saw the completion of the Vihara in 1931. After the final agreement the Archaeological Department the construction of the Vihara was entrusted to Mr. Munnalal Govila, whose tender of Rs. 95,000/— was accepted by Sarnath Vihara Committee Treasurer of which Shri. Shri.prakash, the Governor of Madras. The account of the construction of the Vihara showed

that Rs. 82,653.39 had already been spent up to the end of May 1930 as against Rs. 74,449/- the subscriptions collected including Rs. 30,000/— from Mrs. Foster and Rs. 10,000/- being the Compensation received from Government. The final cost came to about Rs. 120,000 The Vihara turned out to be a majestic building with ancient Buddhist architectural decorations carved out of Indian red stone and frescoes designed by the renowned Japanese artist. Via the unceasing efforts of Anagarika, a Vihara worthy of the name and glory of the place had come into being, and now it was the responsibility of Buddhists scattered with intellectual and religious pulsation, as it was two thousand to fifteen hundred years before.

5.7 LUCKNOW

1. Buddha Vihar (Puraniya) Indira Nagar, Lucknow:

It was established in 19903.

2. *Bodhisattva Vihar, Gautam Buddha Marg, Lucknow*- Bodhisattva Vihar (Buddhist Dharmankur Sabha) Road, which is located at the right end, two kilometres from Charbagh railway station. The main branch of this Buddhist Vihar is the Buddhist Dharmankur Sabha, located in Bow Bazar Kolkata. It was founded in 1892 AD. The Bodhisattva Vihar of Lucknow was founded by Kripasharan Mahasthavir in 1907 AD. This Buddhist Vihar is considered to be the monastic centre of the Barua Buddhist community in particular. In this Vihar many Barua Buddhists come from different places for various occasions related to Buddhist traditions.⁸

⁸ Interview with Anand Babu Barua on 26-04-2016 at Bodhisattva Vihar Lucknow.

3. *Buddha Vihar, Barah Birwa, Alambag, Lucknow.*

4. *Buddha Vihar (Risaldar Park), Lucknow:* Bhikkhu Bodhanand was ordained by Ven. Kripasaran Mahasthvir, who was a Brahmin by birth. He was the founder of the second oldest Buddha Vihar, associated with the Mahabodhi Society of India at Risaldar Park, Lucknow. In 1874, in Chunar town of Mirzapur district, Uttar Pradesh, Bodhanand was born as Mukund Prakash to the Varendra Bengali tribe. Orphaned at a young age, he was brought up in the holy town of Banaras by his father. He started to lose faith in the religion of his birth as he grew older and felt suffocated in a culture informed by the inhumane system of Varna and injustice. He came in contact with many ascetics while in Banaras and finally became one himself. His birth name was dropped and he became known as Swami Bodhanand. Wearing a sadhu robe, he toured several areas of the country and lived in Sindh in the Punjab for about 12 years. He undertook a comparative study of distinct religions and cultures during this time. This helped him get an idea of religion's real nature. His philosophical experience saw him shift to the Theosophical Community and then to Christianity, from Brahma Samaj to Arya Samaj. As Banaras suffered a drought in the year 1896, he saw Christian missionaries serve the victims. This had a tremendous influence on him. The love that Jesus Christ inspired touched him so strongly that he wanted to accept Christianity. Meanwhile, at Sarnath in Banaras, where Buddha gave his first sermon, he encountered some Sri Lankan Buddhist Bhikshus. The Bhikshus, who were also affiliated with the Theosophical Society, told him that he did not need to become a Christian, claiming that in his own land, Buddha, the compassionate, was born. They told him, "Commit yourself to Buddha," and also sent him a copy of Vasalsutt to read. He was filled with joy while reading the letter, for he had found what he was looking for in Buddha: Buddha gave the rejection of the Varna structure

and caste inequality, and urged compassion for humanity. Before officially accepting Buddhism in Calcutta in 1914, he practiced Buddhism in detail for 18 years. Bhadant Kripasharan Mahasthavir gave his "Diksha" and Anagrika Dharmapal of Sri Lanka became a witness to the ceremony.

He started to be addressed as Bhikshu Bodhanand when he returned to Lucknow and began staying at the Buddha Vihar on Latouche Road (now known as Gautam Buddha Marg). He founded the Bharatiya Bauddha Samiti, where he taught Buddhist concepts. In 1925, with the aid of his friends and disciples, he purchased a plot of land in Risaldar Colony and established a great Buddha Vihar on it. Soon, the place became a center of social events. Bodhanand had three yearnings, according to Rahul Sankrityayan, 1) to revive Buddhism in the country of its birth, 2) to banish the caste system from India and 3) to read books. The educated lower-middle class and the backward castes, who heartily gave him charity and invited him home, found resonance with his teachings. Bodhanand was a reader who was voracious. His library of thousands of Bangladeshi, Hindi, Pali and English books left many shocked and amazed. A testament to his devotion and his scholarship was the library. The in-depth understanding of Buddhism by Bodhanand left Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar with a lasting impact. In reality, it was Ambedkar who expressed his intention to follow Buddhism after meeting the sage. Ambedkar was visiting Bodhanand in Lucknow the next time; he had remarried. Bodhanand said to Ambedkar, "You have to become a Buddhist." But instead, you got married," Ambedkar replied, "Marriage is not going to affect my decision." Along with me, she[Savita] will also convert to Buddhism." He tried to take Diksha from Bhadant Bodhanand when Ambedkar agreed to accept Buddhism, but by then, the sage was no more. Bodhanand also dedicated his life to uplifting the Dalits and the Backwards, in addition to propagating Buddhism in the

country. He founded the Navratna Committee in Lucknow in 1928. Firebrand social workers were the members of the committee: Swami Achhutanand, Raisaheb Ramsahai Pasi, Raisaheb Ramcharan Mallah, Shivdayal Singh Chaurasia Advocate, Chandrika Prasad Jigyasu, Mahadev Prasad Dhanuk. Bodhanand emerged as a genuine reformer who dedicated the Dalits and the backward castes to the development of his entire life. The Buddhist Vihar that he established became the center of the activities of Bahujan. The relentless battle and intensive testing had taken a toll on his body by the early 1950s and he was diagnosed with cancer, and he breathed his last on 11 May 1952, at the age of 78.⁹ Babasaheb Ambedkar and Bhadant Bodhanand kept in touch. In reality, he made it a point of visiting the Buddh Vihar at Risaldar Park whenever he visited Lucknow. He is said to have been in their library for long hours. He is said to have found a copy of the book "The Essence of Buddhism" by Laxmi Narasu in this very library. It was Bodhanand, originally, who was to assist Babasaheb in accepting Buddhism. But, according to Bhikshu Pragayasar, the untimely death of Bodhanand in 1952 paved the way for his disciple to fill the vacuum for Pragyanand. Pragyanand came from Sri Lanka, he came to India in 1942 and then decided to stay in the region. Like his guru, Bhante Bodhanand, Pragyanand ji made Buddh Vihar vibrant by holding frequent seminars on the occasion of Buddh Purnima. Every now and again, he arranged young children's tournaments. In Uttar Pradesh, he led several conversion campaigns. In 1946, under its aegis, he founded Boudh Shiksha Parishad, Jetavana Vidyalaya in Shravasti in 1993. Several ancient idols and inscriptions were found during excavation in 'Sahet-Mahet' near Shravasti City. They are now being housed at the Mathura and Lucknow museums. At present, the Indian Government's archaeological department is

⁹ <https://www.forwardpress.in/2018/05/why-was-bhadant-bodhanand-so-dear-to-ambedkar/>

excavating the site to conduct allied research. The monastery of Jetavana was a prominent monastery close to Shravasti. It is also known as Gautama Buddha's main shrine.¹⁰

As far as Buddhism in Lucknow is concerned, in the center of the Martyr's Memorial, a park called Gautam Buddha Park dedicated to Lord Buddha is situated and Bada Imambara is also one of the significant developments. This park was established in about 10 acres by LDA in the year 1980 with a huge Buddha statue in a seated position. This is one of the biggest Buddha sculptures we can find in Lucknow. On various days that are significant in the rituals and calendars of Buddhism, many people meet here.

Ambedkar Memorial Park

In Gomti Nagar, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India, Ambedkar Memorial Park, formally known as Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Samajik Parivartan Prateek Sthal, is a public park and memorial. The statue is devoted to B. R. Ambedkar, the Indian polymath of the 20th century and the "father of the Indian Constitution". The park also honors social reformers' lives and memories, such as Jyotirao Phule, Narayana Guru, Birsa Munda, Shahuji Maharaj, Kanshi Ram, and all others who have dedicated their lives to humanity, freedom, and social justice. Mayawati, the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, built the memorial during her administration while she headed the Bahujan Samaj Party.¹¹

¹⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shravasti>

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambedkar_Memorial_Park.

5.8 ETAWAH

BUDDHA VIHARAS:

1. *Buddha Vihar Ratnipur, Etawah:* This Buddha Vihar was established in 1988. The founder of this Vihar is Bhante Dhamma Kamo. Statues of Lord Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar have been installed here Buddha Vihar, Viruni, PO Ratnipur Oraiyya, Etawah. This Buddha Vihar was established in 1991 on 15th February. Bhante Vishuddhanand is its founder. Statues of Lord Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar are installed inside the Vihar. Bhante Vishuddhanand arranges Sunday prayers here. New Buddha Vihar, Friends Colony, and Etawah: It was established in 1996. Shri Radhey Shyarn Shakya and Gyani Ram Sant were the key persons behind its establishment.¹²
2. *Buddha Vihar, Ambedkar Bhawan, Civil Lines, and Etawah:* This Buddha Vihar is situated at Civil Lines, Etawah. It was established on 29th July in 1979. Its founder was Shri Gaya Prasad Verma who has died in some years ago. He was MLA from Lakhna Constituency and held for some time the post of a minister of state in the Mulayam Singh Yadav ministry. At present 3 big halls are there. A park viz. Dr. Ambedkar Park is also situated inside the premises of this Buddha Vihar. At present Bhante Ashwaghosh manager the affairs of the Buddha Vihar.
3. *Gautam Buddha Vihar, Rajau, PO Aghiyapur, Etawah:* It was established in 1988. Bhante Ashwaghosh founded this Buddha Vihar. A life-size statue of Dr. Ambedkar is also likely to be installed by the end of this century.
4. *Buddha Vihar, Bharathna, Etawah:* It was established in 1970.
5. *Buddha Vihar, Jaswantnagar, Etawah:* It was established in 1994.

¹² Interview with Bhikkhu Chanradip on 25-05-2018 at Etawah.

5.9 HARDOI (Buddha Vihars)

1. *Buddha Vihar, Near Balamau Railway Station, Hardoi:* This Buddha Vihar was constructed by Dr. C.L. Buddha in 1994. At present Shramner G.D. Bauddha lives here.
2. *Buddha Vihar, Near Simra Chauraha, Hardoi:* It was established in 1994 by Shri Pyare Lal Gautam on account of the disputed land the Buddha Vihar could not be developed.
3. *Buddha Vihar, Saratho, Hardoi:* It was established in 1990 by Shri Pyare Lal Gautam Shramner Siyaram Gautam lives here and manages the Buddha Viharas.
4. *Ellora Buddha Vihar, Hardoi:* It was established in 1990. Bauddha Parishad, Bilgram Manages this Buddha Vihar. The construction of the Gate of this Buddha Vihar was done by Shri Sunil Kumar Gautam I.P.S. At present there are two rooms in the Buddha Vihar which were constructed by Shri Chaturi Lal Kashyap and Shri Ganesh Satyarthi in 1994. It is situated near Sadar Tehsil Office. A monk reverend Bhante Shiv Pal Gautam resides here.

5.10 Buddha Vihars in Meerut

1. *Buddha Vihar, village Lalpur, PO Naibasti Meerut-* This Buddhist Vihar was established in 1993. Shri Sobha Ram Buddha fouded this Buddha Vihara.
2. *Buddha Vihar, Sher Gadhi, Meerut-* it was established in 1989. Reverend Bhante Sangh Jyoti is its founder. Insisde the premises statues of Lord Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar have been installed.

3. *Buddha Vihar Mohan Puri, Meerut city*-The Buddha Society of Meerut established this Vihar in Mohanpuri in 1960 and it was founded by Harbhajan Singh and Shri Vir Singh.
4. *Bhim Jyoti Buddha Vihar Old Mohanpuri Meerut*-It was established on 15th February, 1982 and inaugurated by Thai Ambassdor, His excellency Somboon Rochanakoran.
5. *Panchsheel Buddhist Vihar, Subhashnagar, Meerut*- it has been founded by Buddhist Society of India.

Besides these Vihars, there are also the Anand Buddha Vihar, Hatimpur Meerut, Buddha Vihar Subhash Nagr Meerut, and Navjeevan Buddha Vihar, Meerut City.

5.11 Buddha Vihars in Pratapgarh

1. *Buddha Vihar, Gadwara Pratapgarh*- This Buddha Vihar was founded in 1994 by Shri Lal Chand Maurya. Shri Lal Chand Maurya embraced Buddhism in 1985 and had arranged many Buddhist conventions. Shri Maurya manges the Buddha Vihar himself and has spent his own money to build this Buddhist Vihar.
2. *Buddha Vihar, Mandavi, Pratapgarh*- This Buddhist Vihar is situated at mandavi, 35km away from Pratapgarh and it was founded in 1976 by Shri Kirti singh Buddha. It was constructed on the plot of land donated by the former.
3. *Buddha Vihar Madhoganj, Pratpgarh*- This Buddha Vihar is known by the name of Buddha Mandir and was constructed by an organisation namely Bhikshu Kalyan Mitra. The organisation Bhikshu Kalyan Mitra was founded by Shri Hira Lal Bauddha and it is 20 km away from Pratapgarh.

5.12 KANPUR

1. *Buddha Vihar, Simra, Kanpur city*- It was established in 1994 and Shri Mohan Lal Bauddha is its founder who donated his personal land for the same.
2. *Adarsh Buddha Vihar, Hasanpur, PO Ruts Kanpur*- It was established in 1981 and Shri Vivekanand is its founder.
3. *Buddha Vihar Juhar Kanpur City*- It was established in 1979 by its founder Bhante Deepankar. The statues of Lord Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar have been installed inside the premises.
4. *Buddha Vihar, Kahlua, Kanpur City*- It is situated at Jhakar Kati Kanpur. There are two rooms inside the Vihar. It was founded by Vishuddhananda. The statues of Lord Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar have been installed here.
5. *Buddha Vihar, Shardanagar Kanpur City*- This Vihar was established in 1994, 2 rooms and 1 hall have been completed here. Shri Baruanand is its founder.

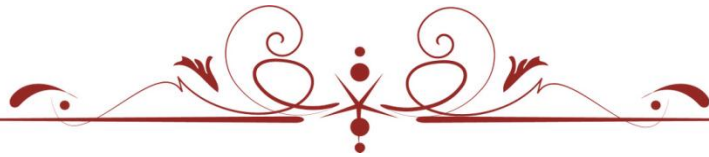
5.13 HARDOI

1. *Buddha Vihar, near Balamau Railway Station, Hardoi*- This Buddha Vihar was constructed by Dr. C.L Buddha in 1994.
2. *Ellora Buddha Vihar, Hardoi*- It was established in 1990 and the construction of the gate of this Buddha Vihar was done by Shri Sunil Kumar Gautam (IPS).
3. *Samrat Ashok Buddh Vihar, Terawa Madhoganj, Hardoi*. It was established 2002.

5.14 NIKHIL BHARAT BIDARSHAN SHIKSHA KENDRA

This monastery cum Buddhist temple is situated on the Pottery Road in the central east of Kolkata. This monastery has been founded on land donated by the owners of the Barua Bakery. At present, this monastery houses five monks and hosts activities such as the birthday of its founder, Ven. All activities such as Prabrajya Daan, Kathin Chivara Daan, Baisakhi Purnima, the twelve separate Purnima of the twelve Bengali months, etc. are held at Late Prajnajyoti Mahasthvir, In this Bauddha Vihara, the Poila Baishakh is also honored by giving prayers and meditation. Some other Buddhist temples of the city are situated at Alipore Ashoka Road, Chetla Alipur Road, Moore Avenue, Tollygunge, Garia Milan Park, Behala Srima Pally, Teghoria, etc. There are some traditional temple practices in all these Bauddha Viharas. In all the temple complexes, regular puja and chanting of suttas are very popular. In all these monasteries, meditation is also popular.

Concluding, it can be said that the religious institutions have in some ways contributed to the unity of the Magh Barua Buddhist community as a whole. The Monasteries and Buddhist temples serve as a link between the relations among the members of the scattered Barua families in the city and their religion. The monasteries especially the Maha Bodhi Society and the Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha are quite active in creating international links with the Buddhist world as a result of which huge donations and collaborations have flowed into these places which have helped sustenance of these religious institutes. Yet one finds side by side Dalit Buddhist movement is also establishing a stronghold over the region. Buddhism also had admirers like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru yet they did not formally embrace Buddhism. It is believed that it was with the Conversion movement led by Dr Ambedkar on 14th October 1956 that followers to the faith emerged and made its presence conspicuous.



CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

Concluding, it can be said that the social history of Barua's in Uttar Pradesh is marked by diasporization both in ancient, modern, and post-modern periods partly due to political exigencies and partly due to sectarian conflicts. But despite the political and sectarian onslaughts there are evidences of their desperate attempt to preserve their ethnic identity. The instances of community's partial assimilation with the host culture maybe seen as an attempt to secure their place in foreign lands. But inadvertently, their assimilation has further strengthened the forces of divisive nature that had earlier compelled them to leave their motherland. It is the influence of those very forces that prevent them to support the forces that undeteringly stand by the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity which Gautam Buddha stood for and made him popular the world over. It may be remembered that when Buddhism declined in India, it survived in Chittagong and some other hill areas, the credit goes to likes of those communities ie., Barua Buddhists and some others. They refrained from compromising with their religious identity and kept Buddhism alive even in the wake of fatal onslaughts. They left their motherland but not the religion preached by the great Gautam Buddha. Wherever Baruas went they made the building of a Buddhist Vihara 'mandatory.' The Vihara then became the centre of all the activities for keeping the society connected and helping them maintain their distinct identity.

Bhante Mahasthavir and Bhante Bodhanand made commendable efforts to revive Buddhism which inspired Dr Ambedkar to take to Buddhism. Their approach was very inclusive and with the spurt in Buddhist population after the Conversion movement of Dr Ambedkar on 14th October 1956, no stone was left unturned to keep pace with new developments by their followers like Bhante Pragyanand.

It was found through the study conducted on the Barua Buddhists of Uttar Pradesh that the community do not hold a very strong position in the region. Barua community is one of the minority communities of India but the name 'Baruas' is not yet separately listed in the Constitution. They are found to be under the trap of vulnerabilities like low income, low education, lacking of safe drinking water facilities etc. They face health issues like disability, discrimination, sometimes untouchability in their localities. The political mainstreaming is missing among this community. They need attention from the government to uplift them on all grounds of exclusion, vulnerability etc. Government should announce a targeted policy in their favour.

The eighth biennial conference of the Federation of Mogh Barua Buddhist Welfare Association of Assam held recently, demanded that the community should be re-enlisted as 'Mogh' Barua tribe in the Tribe Schedule list of Assam as in Tripura and West Bengal as per the Schedule Tribe Order (1950) Part I rules and other provisions under the Constitution¹.

But unlike the Baruas of Assam, in Uttar Pradesh, many from the community show no such inclination. That is because many make claims of being of Kshatriya origin. Their claim also prevents them from joining hands with the Dalit Buddhists lest it may displease the upper castes. On the other hand, Dalit Buddhists are found to be in a better place, they have more religious establishments and organizations. They have a stronger financial standing due to many affirmative action programmes initiated by the government at the instance of Dr Ambedkar.

Dr Ambedkar wanted all the Dalits to come under a common umbrella of Buddhism and also join hands with Buddhists of the world to emerge as a 'visible minority.'

¹ (<https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/buddhists-for-tribal-status/cid/937981>)

Staunch followers of Ambedkar are making an attempt to improve their quarters and also are making efforts to unite Buddhists of all denominations. Bhagwan Das close associate of Dr Ambedkar remained in close contact with Venerable Aryavansh Mahathera a Chakma Buddhist, who resided in Laxmi Narayan Temple of New Delhi. He raised the problems of Chakma Buddhists in his paper Samata Sainik Sandesh.²

Bhagwan Das also raised the issues of minorities and the marginalized when he submitted a testimony before UNO's Human Rights Sub-Commission at Geneva on 19th August 1983.

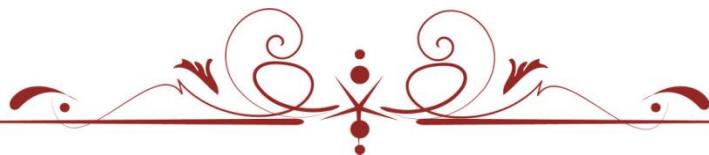
He gave the testimony on behalf of the Secretary General, Dr Homer A. Jack of World Conference on Religion for Peace and also on behalf of various Dalit and Buddhist organizations of India All India Samata Sainik Dal, an organization founded by Dr Ambedkar, Indian Buddhist Council, Ambedkar Mission Society (India), Ambedkar Mission Inco,.Canada, Dr Ambedkar Mission, Bedford(UK) etc³

His Holiness Dalai Lama, Venerable Thich Nhat Hahn with their preaching of 'Socially Engaged' Buddhism in the West and Won Buddhism in Korea are also operating on similar lines.

Therefore, in order to turn into a 'visible minority' Barua Buddhists of Uttar Pradesh too will have to address some of the contradictions existing within their own society. Some of the glaring contradictions existing between their interests and the interests of the majority community at large, are also to be addressed, unless that is done, it will be difficult for the Barua community to register their presence in contemporary times and the times to come significantly.

² (Samata Sainik Sandesh,- 'Voice of the oppressed and discriminated' people, Vol.3, May 1986, New Delhi

³.(Darapuri, Shura, in Dalits at United Nations-Globalization of Caste Discrimination, Dalit Today Prakashan, Lucknow, 2010 pp.67)



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- Sharan Priya Sharman (Kolkata)

Venue: - (Baudhha Dharmankur Sabha Bengal Buddhist Association) Gautam
Buddha Marg, Lucknow



PHOTO GALLERY

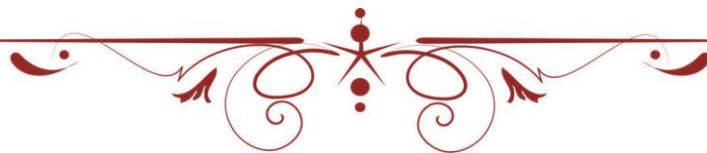


PHOTO GALLERY



Buddh Vihar in Lucknow



Buddhist Vihar Latush Road , Lucknow



Sangh Daan



Kathin Chivra Dana Mahotsva



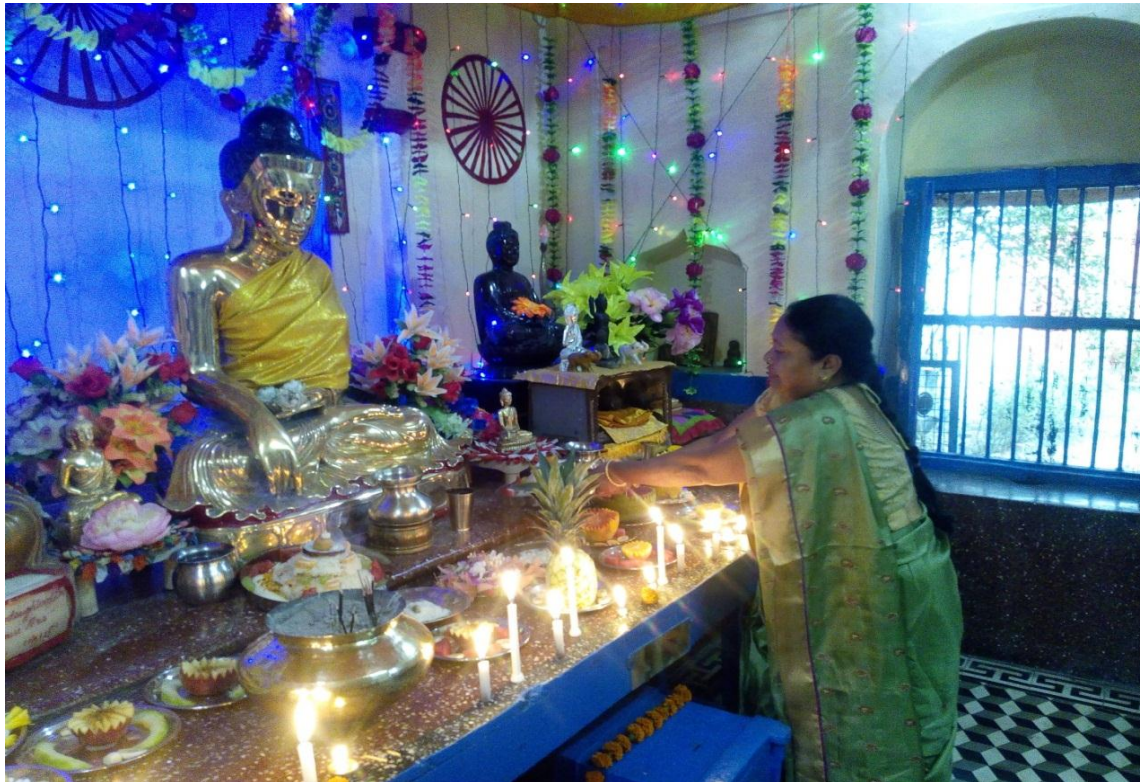
Bauddha Dharmankar Sabha



Barua Bauddhist Program



Bhante Vishwajeet Ji



Worship by Woman



PUBLICATIONS



Barua Buddhist Community: A Brief Study on Socio-Economic History in India

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ABSTRACT

The research paper deals with the specific brief history of Barua Magh Buddhist Community in Indian. Under this study we have taken some positive efforts try to point out on the Socio-economic historical status of Barua Buddhist community in India. Here we have chosen about the major populated geographical area of this community of India viz., Kolkata, Assam etc. It is telling that Kolkata is an important big Metropolitan City and whereas Assam is located in the south of the eastern Himalayas and which share its border with three international boundaries– Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. Though, Assam has a large variety of racial elements, of India. It is a migrant community which has migrated by several ways from Chittagong in Bangladesh to India. Also, they have had connections with the Arakan of Myanmar. The Barua Magh community after coming to Kolkata have set up several socio-economic cultural, educational and religious institutions in the city.

Key Words : Buddhist community, Brahmanical religion, Vajrayana, Barua

INTRODUCTION

Buddhism emerged in India in the 6th century B.C. Subsequently, many schools of thoughts developed in India and abroad within its fold. As a dynamic religion of the world, it received new modes of expression according to its needs for survival and expansion. Studies have shown that Buddhism absorbed local features and even contributed to the cultural evolution of a given region. Going by the general findings, Assam could not have been an exception to the development. Writers dealing with the history of Assam have highlighted the regions first long sociocultural contacts with the Indian mainland and its trade links with places such as Tibet, China, Bhutan, and Burma, where Buddhism had been dominant, from very early times. More importantly, the Brahmaputra Valley has been depicted as a region that had experienced waves of migration and settlement of people from various cultural and religious backgrounds. Some studies have shown that Buddhism had entered Assam even before

the development of Brahmanical religion. Second, Traces of Buddhism of the early period of Assam can be seen at the places like Surya Pahar, Nilachala, and Hajo etc. People belonging to the lower strata of the Varna-based Brahmanical social order in Assam accepted Buddhism. Third Different forms of Buddhism such as Santayana, Vajrayana, and Sahajayana and Kalacakrayana simultaneously developed with the Puranic religious sects like Saktism Saivism and Vaisnavism between the 7th and the 13th centuries A.D. in Assam. Buddhist elements seem to have influenced the rites and ritual practices, language and literature of all strata of the population of Assam.

‘Barua’ means:

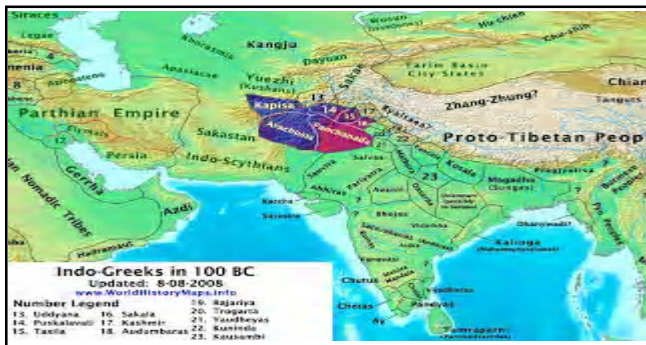
The surname Barua means which has two meaning. This word included two words first is ‘Bara’ which means ‘Renowned’ and second is ‘ua’ means ‘ruler’. The most highly ranked military ruler in the ancient times of Chattagram under the kingship of Arakan was that a man

called name as ‘Barua

In the Buddhist history Dark days effect on the Barua society

This was a period in history of Buddhism or Buddhist which are known as the dark days for the Buddhism had to pass through this period in India starting with the Muslim invasion when Ikhtiyar, Uddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji with his marauding soldiers plundered their way to the throne of India, it was a time when the identity and their existence were in dangerous. In this consequence, the Buddhist Viharas were destroyed and the brutally killing of monks on a mass level. They have to escape from their own place and later in this sequence; the Brahmins become too immense caused of damage to Buddhism by mass killing of monks and destroying to Buddhism. In the advent of the nineteenth century of, Buddhism was nearly extinct on the land of its birth save except numbers of Buddhist where it survived with the effector migration of Buddhist tribes from Myanmar, Chittagong (now in Bangladesh) and Thailand.” Bhikkhu Bodhipala

Social changes in Baruas and other historical evident:



According to considering the statements of Mr Hunter and the Bengali Encyclopaedia and looking at the history of Buddhist kings in Bengal it becomes clear that Baruas are the descendants of those kings. There are some important following dynasties of Buddhist kings they have ruled on Bengal from 6th up till 13th century A.D. The period of Buddhist dynasty’s Kingdom

- 6th B.C. to 1st A.D Sinha. Banga (At present in Faridpur District and Bakargunj)
- 2nd to 5th A.D. Barmo, and Banga (Faridpur District, Bakargunj, and Mymensingh)
- 5th to 6th A.D. Shal in South East Bengal
- 7th to 8th A.D. Kharga

(1203)

- 8th to 12th A.D. Pala Empire in North Bengal
- 10th to 11th A.D. Chandra dynasty in East Bengal
- 11th to 13th A.D. Chandra’s (Deva Dynasty) in South-east Bengal

The Dev-Pahar of present Chittagong was said to be the capital of Deva kings. The ancient ruins are found here. Mr. Suniti opines that these lineages of a king are the ancestors of Bengali Baruas. The title of Manik Chandra from the Chandra Lineage was ‘Barua’. And their subsequent generations dwelt near the place of Lalmai which is named after ‘Barua’. In current time Barua is the name of a district. The descendants from the Chandra-lineage could be seen even today. They are the people who use ‘Chandra’ after their names such as Satish Chandra Barua, Sunil Chandra Barua etc.

By the British ‘Chittagong’ is said as a misrepresentation introduced as they found not easy to pronounce as the original name ‘Datagram’ (Cetiayagama – meaning the village of Stupas) which have been suggested how Buddhism once flourished there. This region was also known by many other names among the dwellers thereon as – Control, Cattragram, Cnatga. Their spoken language was Bengali of Chittagong (Chittagnongian) Bengali – and same as the official language of the country. “However, there are two languages which are not mutually comprehensible, meaning with that those who know only how to speak Standard Bengali will not understand easily by Chittagonian speakers”



They are existing in many divisions which known as Thanas. Dwellers of various thanas in Chittagong to have distinct differences in their languages. However, they follow the same family or kinship pattern, religious ceremonies, New Year festivals and various celebrations.

According to the history in Bangladesh of Buddhism, there was once a distortion of the religious system; particularly about the role of priests who were not known by the State and had no their sponsors. As there was no much government supports to their cultural rituals and for religious festivals which were incorporated with the Hindu system. From the outer side, they were like Hindus but among themselves, they also retained the identity of Buddhist which is important mainly by names. Priests were a group of the people known as 'ravioli prophets'. The Hindus also used the term 'prophet' which was to refer to a class of their priests. Ven. Saramedha (Saramitra) who was trained according to Burmese Buddhism played an important role in the early 19th century for the revival of this religion and establish in the original form.

However, even today, Hindu influences to Buddhist by many of their cultural aspects including their dresses and festivals etc., among them according to Theravada tradition the form of Buddhism. They have faith in that every male Buddhist should be destined as a Buddhist monk to at least for a weak. Otherwise, he will never be reborn as human and hence no possibility of his liberation from samsara. In fact, when such peoples die their dead body will not be carried by shoulders but it holding this coffins above the knee level.

Most of the religious festivals among Baruas are common to other Buddhist countries. New Year festival gained religious importance among them. The Kathin Festival as known as that period which comes after three months of the rainy season and it was celebrated and regarded as a joyful event. A devotional song has been developed which was in unwritten form and is known as Kirtan (or samkirtan singing together) in praise of Buddha and good principles of life. In the most of the Buddhist festivals, Kirtans are sung either by a single person, in a group or only by two persons who debate taking two roles (popularly Siddhartha and Devadatta) and capturing a historical incident in Buddha's life. Sivali puja – offering of a large number of food and fruit items in name of Arahanth Sivali is one of the festivals not much popular among Sri Lankan Buddhists. Offerings in name of Ven. Upagupta who appears as a prominent figure in the Sanskrit avadana literature and believed still living in Nagaloka is significant among the Baruas and Buddhists in Bangladesh as a whole. Ven. Sadhanananda – popular as 'vanabhante' (a still living forest monk, who meditated in the deep forest for 12 years) from the Chakma

community is also venerated with great respects by them. The Barua community, there are many great Buddhist scholar monks who played important roles in the propagation of Buddhism in and outside of the country. Ven. Atisha Dipamkara srijnana – was the founder of Tibetan Buddhism in period of 10th century B.C. it is interpreted by Barua community's many scholars. Kripasaran Mahasthvir, Ven. Karmayogi with many others scholars was a close associated with Anagarika Dharmapala who has revived the Bodhgaya Buddhist Temple and Buddhism in India.

Prehistoric Barua Culture and Language:

In Bangladesh, during pre and post-Arakan period Baruas had their own, culture, and language, traditional costume etc. and later it was destroyed gradually during Muslim and Hindu ruling period. Now only Baruas have Buddhist culture and religion and it is linked with Buddhist temple.

Language and Culture of Modern Barua Community:

Presently Barua tribes speak Chittagong Bengali. In India, Baruas are adapted with local Indian culture and maintain their old traditional religion equally. Nothing can be denied; the Hinduism has influenced deeply to Baruas social life with the passing of time and the value of Buddhism is losing among in new generation, especially in India. In Bangladesh, the old tradition has been maintained some extent, although Islamic influence is clearly visible in their language and culture.

Migrated Baruas in India:

Most of Baruas are migrated from their ethnic place to India and other countries during the British Colonial period and East Pakistan. The main purpose of the migration of Barua community was to search job and find religious freedom.

Economic Condition of Barua Community:

The Economic conditions of Baruas in the village of (Bangladesh) are moderately lower middle class and depend mostly on agriculture. Today most of the youths of Barua are migrating toward the city or to a foreign country for the search of a job. There are few of Baruas have well established in Chittagong town. The government of Bangladesh has been listed as bother on minorities for their health, economic, and social

development. It is evident that many of dropout minor students from Barua are joining to garment manufacture industry for a fist of wages. Therefore the futures of them ruining at an early age. After become independents of Bangladesh, in Chittagong, there are some villages, few of underground by the Islamic land mafias and forcefully seizing ethic Baruas land and disestablishing Buddhist society and their culture. Likely in a recent decade, some improvements have seen in the political arena, where few ministers, belonging to Barua community elected as Local Minister and doing betterment for Barua community.

In India, most of the Baruas are lower middle class although Baruas are considering as minority community without any government economic support, except West Bengal. As an occupation, in India most of the Baruas are engage in a retail business, motor mechanic and some of them are serving government job in group C and Group D post. After migration from British India or East Pakistan, unluckily from Barua community does not have represented even a single ICS (Indian Civil Service), head of any Banks /PSUs or MP and Corporate from North East of India, except one or two from Northern belt and West Bengal. It is unfortunate because the Government of India being silent in this regards. It is indicating that the social and economic positions of Baruas are vulnerable stage. Government of India and State Governments from North East India has list bother with this unique Buddhist Barua tribe.

Barua:

Government of West Bengal has been recognized and accepted as a special ethnic group belongs to Schedule Tribe of Mug in the listed Indian constitution. Unluckily, just by the name of ‘Barua’ not yet distinctly listed in the constitution.



The Association of Assam said this community should be re-enlisted as “Magh” Barua tribe. In West Bengal has on lines of the Magh tribal the Magh Barua

Buddhists of Assam have demanded tribal status for the community. There are the eighth periodic conference of the Federation of Magh Barua Buddhist Welfare has been Schedule list of Assam as in Tripura and West Bengal as per the Schedule Tribe Order (1950) Part I rules and other provisions under the Constitution. Unfortunately, in other states, Baruas are in muted mood in this subject and some of them are opposed to secure the benefit given by Indian constitutions. According to them, Baruas are from the higher clan and does not deserve for listing in the ethnic tribe.

Objectives of the study:

The objectives of this research have been as follows:

- (i) To traces the brief history and development of Barua Buddhist Community of Assam and West Bengal in India.
- (ii) To examine the socio-economic impact on the society of Barua Buddhist Community.
- (iii) To highlight the brief history in the context of Bangladesh and Pakistan being earlier part of India.

METHODOLOGY

The areas where the considerable number of Magh Baruas has been available have been identified on the basis of that the study conducted. The secondary data has been received from the various institutes of religious, social, cultural, and economic importance to the Maghs Barua Community point of view. The data is collected with the help of related literature which is important for this study. And a source of information being relevance books, journals, photographs, and educational institute’s records etc. was base of this study.

Review of literature:

In this Buddhological historiography, scholars generally assess the importance of the role of Sangha, monastery, ethical principles of early Buddhism without offering much analysis to Mahayana and Vajrayana and the non-institutional Buddhist Siddhas traditions which have taken a form somewhat different from its earlier tradition. Scholars, who deal with religion, have also examined the relationship between religion and philosophical formulations against the backdrop of socio-economic settings. Accordingly, the emergence of Buddhism has been studied in the socio-economic context.

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

From the above study, it can be said that the history of Barua Buddhist Community India was not new. It was a very rich religion spiritually and social culturally. The Maha Bodhi Society and the Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha are quite active in creating international links with the Buddhist world as a result of which huge donations and collaborations have flowed into these places. This was very old religious in its existence with dynastically. At that when Muslims invader came to India and Brahmins both have done against Buddhism. They both were destroyed their identity by various ways like by brutally mass killing of Buddhist, plundered they're thrown, destroyed Buddh Vihar, education and religious institutions. This period was known as dark-days of this community and religion. The economic condition of Barua community is not good even today because the source of income of family depends on little agriculture base. The study said that they are not representing their proper representation in govt. sector's job. The community could not secure even a single post in civil service today. For the preservation of this minority community govt. need

to conduct proper senses of their population for better planning and development programmes.

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Neo Buddhism: A Study of Dr. Ambedkar's Vision with Subaltern Perspective

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Abstract:

Buddhism is a religion of goodness, justice and dignity. It is a development in the context of exploring the nature of human life on earth and the understanding of human behaviour by which human beings are raised. Buddhist teachings enlighten society to solve the various social problems associated with them. During the 2500 years of its existence, the Buddha's Buddhism persisted as both triumph and deterioration among the violent conflicts it experienced with other religions and ideologies, not only in India but in other parts of the world as well. As Buddhism first came into being on the Indian landscape in the 6th century B.C., the first experience occurred Vedas, the religion of Vedas, which is said to be the driving force of ancient Aryan civilization.

Introduction

Buddhism is a mild, peaceful religion which was unable to survive. Ambedkar preferred Buddhism in partiality with other faiths because he was bamboozled and misled by community Hindus who thought that Buddhism was a legitimate threat. One finds that Ambedkar's philosophy of Buddhism as well as the concept of conversion created a ground-ideology in the form of neo-Buddhism thus further dismissing not only ancient Buddhism but also offering a discursive undermining of Hinduism on the ideological plane. A deformation of his liberation would be the cornerstone of Ambedkar's intellectual search as well as his policy and assimilation of Ambedkar to Hinduism. In the words of Ambedkar, "my conversion is for no material gain." No salvation occurs through any other system of thought and action except Buddhism, because all other beliefs and ideologies are tainted by a false view of oneself.

Historical Background and origin of Neo-Buddhism

The Neo-Buddhism movement in India came neither from a missionary undertaking carrying its own organisational structure nor from the Buddhisation of a highly developed religious structure. Unlike any other conversion of masses in history, this new religious movement was almost totally alone. The massive conversion, which began largely in 1956, affected low castes, who for decades had been involved for political, social, and religious rights. Buddhism has been selected as the religious belief of transformation because of its characteristics or rational thought, equality and philosophical creativity—because it provided the opportunity out of the Hindu caste system's psychological imprisonment. Nevertheless, Buddhism as an organized religion was almost non-existent in India at the time, and the ex-touchables who wanted to convert had to establish government, organization, culture, observance and practice from very indirect models, and what they developed had to be a religion that suited their own needs. Neo-Buddhism and Dr. Ambedkar are more or less interchangeable in the way that the Buddha would be known to represent Buddhism and Gautama. In researching the Dynamics of Neo-Buddhism, we will understand the condition of Buddhism in its original form, which was more or less stagnant in India (even after its resurgence), before one person made it a fluid power that makes it possible to be called one of today's living religions.

Ambedkar's vision on Neo-Buddhism

It was Buddhism's successful revolt against Vedism and Brahmanism. The subsequent course of history favoured the Buddhist transformation of socio religious life. It happened after Buddhism had been officially propagated during the Mauryan period. It was needed Ashoka, with his humanitarian Mission, who preached the universal *Dhamma*. It provides a life throughout, like showing the correct way of solving human problems that agitates men's minds. Philosophy is imbued with utmost faith in human intellect, in the power of knowledge, in man's ability to fathom all the secrets of the world around him, and to create an order of justice based on reason and love.

Social environment thought is a sort of an order, it consists of varied customs, traditions, beliefs and types of organisation which exist within the social group in which men are socialised. It is the order of social institutions. The sociological imperatives of social

environment are such that they can be understood and be manipulated by men, they are not given by some unseen power.

Modernisation of Buddhism is part of the revival process. It is analysed that revival leads to modernisation and modernisation contributes to revival. The revival phenomenon initiated by the Ambedkar indeed has modernised the philosophy and culture of Buddhism. It is believed that ancient India was dominantly a Buddhist society. The minority condition of the Buddhist population in modern India force us to question the history Hindu dominance. Ambedkar applied the test of justice and the analysis of utility to the judge the philosophy of Hinduism. Justice of simply another name for liberty equality and fraternity he examined. It is in this sense Ambedkar used justice as criterion to judge Hinduism.

In twentieth century it was Ambedkar who set the process of modernisation of Buddhism; Modernisation of Buddhism was an effort aimed at bringing social transformation in the Indian society. The non- Buddhist philosophies in ancient India had their own limitations. They could not give correct world- view and so could not offer a solution to social conflicts of the human society. They were all engaged in speculation and imagination about the origin of the universe. The Buddha rejected the Hindu philosophy as a whole. The world is a universe of relations and what appears to be permanent and eternally determined, is a phase of temporary existence, an instant in a causal sequence and one ripple in the long line of waves the effect of the two or more causes combined.

Modern Dalit Buddhism is the product of Ambedkarism. Ambedkar liberated Dalits from Hinduism to come back to the religion of their ancestors. He declared in the Yeola conference on 13, October, 1935 that he was born a Hindu, but he would not die a Hindu. In the Bombay conference on 30-31, May 1936, he declared that conversion was the only path to freedom for untouchables. He declared after his conversion to Buddhism. This conversion has given me enormous satisfaction and pleasure unimaginable. I feel as if I have been liberated from hell. For Ambedkar, Hinduism is a hell and Buddhism is heaven on earth.

Ambedkar's critical approach towards the concept of good need to be understood in the context of negatives role assigned to god particularly in Hinduism. The philosophy of Hindu gods could not stand as Ambedkar put it to the test of the social utility and test of individual justice. Dalit context understands Hindu gods and social inequality and

irrationally. And it is to say that Gautama as a god of Marga data. It emphasises redefinition of god. God should not be a Moksha data (saviour) but Marga data (path shower). Dalit Buddhism of modern India has brought innovative interpretation to the concept of God in the Buddhist context and viewed God's existence in a more practical manner by adopting the middle path as base for its interpretation than any other streams of Buddhism that understood the theory of God's existence in an idealistic way.

Ambedkar's principles of the need to kill and the will to kill can be said as correct in the context of the purpose of the Buddha Dhamma. To kill is entirely a matter of necessity and personal moral responsibility. Ambedkar's interpretation of the role of the Bhikkhu is to be justified in the context of the need of social service. In the fact Ambedkar sees the future of the Buddhism, through its social validity. Of course for any religion or Dhamma, the purpose is service to human community. If Ambedkar's interpretation of Bhikkhu, serves the social cause there should be no problem in accepting it as the original doctrine of the Buddha.

Ambedkar proved that his interpretation of the Dhamma as the original doctrine of the Buddha by putting on test, which is available. Ambedkar defends his view with argument, if there is anything which could be said with confidence, it is: He was nothing if rational, if logical. Anything which is rational and logical other thing being equal may be taken to be the word of the Buddha. Ambedkar says that in discussing the questions about to which there is doubt and difference it is necessary to bear these tests in mind before deciding what the view of the Buddha was there on.

Today on all sides a seething mass of turbulent life. It is a situation produced by a combination of varied movements, which the world at large passed through during the last few centuries. The intellectual renaissance, the industrial revolution, the political struggle for freedom and democracy and the religious reformation which almost all the nations have experienced at different period of history. The social tradition derived from the ancient Buddhist culture has thought Indian society an idea of a just social order. The social unrest in Indian society is a tribute to the work of Castiest Hindus. They are more anxious to Hinduism Buddhist religion. However the future of Buddhism lies in the Dalit community. The silent struggles in the minds of men are important than the spectacular ones on then politico-religious arena.

The Buddha was dissatisfied with the way in which religion was practised in his days and said we want mercy not sacrifice. What needs is real help, love of humanity and not what Hinduism describes rituals and ceremonies. The Buddha condemned rituals and made out that these rituals do not take us to the Ultimate Truth.

The fact of Indian society is the confrontation of different cultures and different religions. Unfortunately, rather than addressing the false ideals like Varna- Dharma/ Jati/Castiesm etc. within his society, Hindu is trying to unite his society by posing against other religions namely Islam and Christianity. It has brought negative unity. Dalit Buddhism of Ambedkar is aimed to liberate Dalit from the clutches of Hinduism. Ambedkar did not want his people to follow Hinduism. He did not believe in worshipping Hindu gods. He want to people to leave Hinduism and embrace. If Dalit samaj wants to save itself, it must change the axis of its thought and life. Belief of religion and God is intrinsic element of human thought. Ambedkar has contextualised the Buddhism in the Dalit needs. He located the relevance of Buddhism in the Dalit context. The relevance of Buddhism in the modern India lies in the service to Dalit society. Modern Buddhism or Dalit Buddhism needs to be Ambedkarised for safeguarding Dalit Bahujan interests because Ambedkar wanted to give doctrinal basis to his religion.

The challenge is to deal with the marginalisation of so called lower caste and their inferior self- image which play an important role in constituting their identities. The religious identity has the potentiality to annihilate hierarchical Oder Hinduism as a religion has severed in many ways to legitimise the oppression of the Dalits. Buddhism as a religion of Dalits can provide alternative positive image of Dalit ideals. Cultural inferiorisation of Dalit can be removed with Buddhist identity of Dalits which aims provide self-esteem.

Dalits as a culture beings have sense of identity. Their cultural context needs to be positive to acquire capacity for self-representation. Dalits through concrete cultural struggle rooted in Buddhism as well as in the consciousness of Dalits who see themselves as individuals representing and embodying a particular cultural tradition bounded by a collectively of similar lives. Dalit Buddhism does not treat Dalits as passive recipient of socio- economic change administered by dominant groups but are active subjects engaged in constant struggle are define their identities in relation to others. Dalit Buddhism is to retrieve

Dalit as subjects of their own history. In the context the historical moments of change is perceived as confrontations rather than transition.

Conclusion

Dr. Ambedkar was great intellectual an iconoclast a social revolutionary, a unique constitutionalist, an able administrator and a masterly statesman. All agreed that he was a fighter for the dignity of man and the serious of a suppressed people. Ambedkar had chosen to convert to Buddhism as he perceived it as a religion that promoted ten tests defined in the French Enlightenment liberty, equality and fraternity. Ambedkar conception of the kind of measures that are needed to protect the interests of minorities like the Dalits is constant and well-grounded. He argues that separate electorates are the only means to ensure the minimum representation Dalit against a communal majority like the Hindu. With his Neo-Buddhism, he has given the new path for inclusive development of the masses in India.

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