

## **Cooch Behar District of West Bengal in Twentieth Century: A Study of Socio - Cultural History**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the villages, most choices and debates affecting and governing the existence of village communities are made – even if they are influenced by the greater society – whether it be the allocation of limited resources such as irrigation water or the normative control of society. Also, the first and principal scene for the public involvement of the rural people is the village scene. The village and its political life alone are significant for the study of Indian society for these reasons. Moreover, village policy is significant since it directly or indirectly affects the developments and policies of the broader community as well as the way in which this occurs. These statistics are just influences but in the village politics, a political community in many ways distinct from the world of interests-based parties, elected office and independent judiciary, involvement by the villagers in the greater politics is created, whether by foot or by vote. The way village politics work is directly relevant to any desirable politician, leader of political parties and students, as much as we have learnt to understand (i.e., concepts like factionalist or early loyalties or class or false consciousness) and forms the perceptions of party, ideology, costs and benefits in translation into action and inaction.

***Keywords: Socio - Cultural History, Cooch Behar District, West Bengal, Twentieth Century.***

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the two villages that I named Udaynala and Gopinathpur, three decades of politics and social development (ca. 1960-1990) are utilized here to shed light on the campesino mobilisation in western Bengal or what we could term a rural communist emerging. The villages are located in the Dakshin Damodar district, Bardhaman District, West Bengal, Raina thana, in the Police Station Area. It is a fertile region which nearly entirely lives off its farming. The CPM, shortly, the main Party of the left government of West Bengal (LFG) in power since 1977, was also extremely fruitful for the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to be held. The Dakshin Damodar offers the Dakshin party strong support in elections and in local businesses, as in much of Burdwan. In fact, the CPM Durga is the district of Burdwan (fortress).

### 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The idea is not dominated by the caste but by a restricted number of people from the caste. A very basic issue is this concept. According to Mayer, "A whole caste group in a hamlet is involved, yet only a few males show all elements of this position." More importantly, according to Dube, a dominating caste cannot be maintained until the unity of that caste is assumed, as Oommen says, "this is a matter of common knowledge [which] exists in Indian villages to a high degree of factionalism..." Again, the main political cleavages tend to be vertical, not between castes but within the dominance caste, according to Mayer, when one caste dominates. Lewis said from Rampur that the community barely exists in the sense of a unified village community." The first casualty of factionalism is the "dominant caste." Faction leaders usually belong to the same case, and caste members, like members of other castes, pay loyalty to both.

Such castes may be seen easily in most communities, sometimes less dominating, but frequently with a feeling of pride in their traditions and place, in the wake of a specific codex considered suitable for their historical position. The entire caste shares this pride, not just the strong few, but also maintains its domination. Below I turn to cultural buildings which assist both the ruling classes and the local leaders. However, the beginning of factions or interactions between the customer and the employer may be better.

## 1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Bengal is an important part of the history, culture and politics of India in the twentieth century. The debate and discussions amongst academics, sociologists, historians and other social sciences specialists have also developed during the last several years. Recent historic interpretations have contributed significantly to identifying the unique characteristics of regional historical experiences and to creative micro research in the fields of gender, culture and politics. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the colonial rule was introduced as a consequence of the long-term change of society in Bengal. In the 19th century India was a distinctively defined discourse as a consequence of this transformational process. It was a public conversation, the most fascinating aspect. In Bengal, the women entered public life more firmly in the twentieth century. Not only in the political domain of nationalism was the presence of women felt, but in the larger area of left politics. Interestingly enough, women were also a significant social power beyond the structured circle of politics. Women had the main role in radicalizing the protest movement in subordinate resistance politics.

Homes are recognized to be a key driver of school enrollment and performance in developing and developed nations, particularly in terms of parental incomes, wealth, education and employment. The same goes for features of local educational facilities: when excellent schools are located within a reasonable distance of home, there are much higher possibilities for children in school. The intermediary function may be played by cultural influences. Their own views and those of others in their own surroundings affect the decisions made by individuals. With regard to culture, India is a member of the classical patriarchy which Caldwell (1982) has termed from North Africa to China, including the Muslim, Hindu and Confucian civilizations. There are poor social positions in many nations, particularly in the more conservative areas, which reflect low female enrollment rates. In addition to the patriarchy, caste is also an important cultural element, which still affects to a significant degree result in life in many areas of India, although the constitution of 1950 prohibited "untouchability." The educational engagement of children from below castes in states where caste still plays a prominent role is low.

### **1.3 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF RESEARCH**

Cooch Behar is a district under the Jalpaiguri Division of the state of West Bengal. Cooch Behar is located in the north-eastern part of the state and bounded by the district of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar in the north, Dhubri and Kokrajhar district of Assam in the east and by Bangladesh in the west as well as in the south. The district forms part of the Himalayan Terai of West Bengal.

A geopolitical curiosity was that there were 92 Bangladeshi exclaves, with a total area of 47.7 km<sup>2</sup> in Cooch-Behar. Similarly, there were 106 Indian exclaves inside Bangladesh, with a total area of 69.5 km<sup>2</sup>. These were part of the high stake card or chess games centuries ago between two regional kings, the Raja of Cooch Behar and the Maharaja of Rangpur.

Cooch Behar is a flat region with a slight south-eastern slope along which the main rivers of the district flow. Most of the highland areas are in the Sitalkuchi region and most of the low-lying lands lie in Dinhata region.

The rivers in the district of Cooch Behar generally flow from northwest to southeast. Six rivers that cut through the district are the Teesta, Jaldhaka, Torsha, Kaljani, Raidak, Gadadhar and Ghargharia.

### **1.4 LIMITATION**

- (i) The study will be restricted to Cooch Behar District, West Bengal
- (ii) In this study we have only discussed about Socio-cultural aspects of Cooch Behar District, West Bengal

### **1.5 HYPOTHESIS**

As previously said, the research suggested mainly aims to determine the nature and importance of Cooch Behar growth in the Maharajas (1847-1949). The research aims to determine that in studying the nature of this evolution:

- Development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas achieved a phenomenal success during the period, 1847-1949

- Cultural development in the princely State of Cooch Behar was noticeable.
- The Cooch Behar State Railway accelerated the process of development not only for Cooch Behar but also for the whole of the surrounding regions.

The research concludes that classical development in Cooch Behar was deep only when the contemporary perspective of the reigning family was influenced. Cooch Behar's Maharajas stayed in London several times. They were educated there, and they assumed full responsibility for the Kingdom one after another when they arrived to Cooch Behar, they made active efforts for the development of the State to demonstrate the magnificent historical renown of Cooch Behar in this area of the nation. Therefore, any effort to build Cooch Behar's growth under the Maharaja and its historical importance would succeed.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Krishna Soman (2011) In addition to its contributions to social reproduction, women have a role in biological reproduction in Indian society. Dais, the traditional midwives, has for centuries been playing a major role in the care of babies in India, and yet they are marginalized socially and economically. These women's poor conditions reflect contemporary inquiries about their life. They remain, however, a rich legacy of healthcare and are possibly the only recourse for those still to enjoy planned and forced development. This image has its origins in the institution's social past. The institution has changed throughout time. It was primarily influenced by colonial medicalisation forces at the beginning of the 21st century, and subsequently by nationalist politics. Over time, the worldwide forces controlling and using contemporary knowledge and technology linked to health have created strength and circumstances for this body as part of the broader medical reform debates. Gender policy has impacted views, interpretations and speeches on birth in India and representations of the dais in its healthcare culture, both globally and nationally. Although historical documents illustrate their status inside and outside the health care system, their lives have been sparsely recorded. In addition, the material accessible reflects on pictures of the mares which these women themselves seldom create. Drawing on historical narrative in progress, this study seeks, in the context of shifting socio-economic, cultural and political settings of the Bengal 20th century in East India, to identify and explain the social construction of the dais representations. The article emphasizes continuities and institutional changes.

Janine Huisman (2010) We are testing theories on the role and nature of the educational infrastructure in primary school enrollment in 439 districts of 26 states of India for the socio-economic and cultural variables. The majority of variations in education registration (about 70%) are explained by household variables, which are most significant socioeconomic determinants. None of the features of the educational establishments examined in urban regions is substantially connected to participation, which shows that schooling choices in cities are not affected by supply-side issues. These variables have a significant influence in rural regions, though. If there are fewer schools, less instructors or more patriarchal local culture, rural youngsters - particularly females - are far less involved. Interaction analysis shows that the impacts of household variables rely on their contextual features. One important conclusion in this regard is that, if more schools and instructors become accessible, in rural regions, disparities between socioeconomic classes are reduced.

**Rajat Kanti Sur (2019)** Sawng was subsequently utilized as one of the 'weapons' of the national struggle in the early 20th century, one of the renowned streets performances of Calcutta in the nineteenth century. Nationalist leaders selected sophisticated and educated composers or dramaturges, but the sawn individuals on the streets of Calcutta came from the slum areas. Although they were from different workers, sawng was referred to as the Kansariparar Sawng or Jeleparar Sawng (the sawng of the fishermen). This paper focuses on the consequences of demographic changes in the socio-cultural environment of Calcutta in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It focuses also on the effect of migration from 1876 to 1931 in order to explain why sawng is declining. The essay also attempts to disclose the intricacy of many caste groups that participated in these famous street shows.

**Manosanta Biswas (2018)** The caste system is regarded the most distinctive characteristic of Indian social organizations by anthropologists and social historians. Namasudras, an untouchable caste, was numerically big, but socially discriminated against by upper castes, in the old Bengali Hindu society. In order to meet certain social needs in the upwardly mobile farming communities of the Namasudras, which have gained solidarity and self-confidence by means of the Matua socio-religious identities, the "Matua" religious sections were formed under the leadership of Harichand Thakur (1812-1878) and its son Guruchand Thakur (1847-1937). The real value of the Matua sect is that a community of the downtrodden tried to establish an alternative religious concept in opposition

to an ideology which assigned the downtrodden an independent identity, for the upliftment in an elite society dominated by the high caste, and the revival of the relation of power within local society, which they believed would be In the present article, I should like to show the fact that the Matua Socio-Cultural Reform Movement continues to fight the orthodox scriptural, Brahmanic, customary and cultural traditions and that it leads to an alternative, hybrid culture by reflecting on its own indigenous, very humanitarian, liberal, progressive literature and folk culture.

Moloy Rakshit (2013) The power of theater as a media rest in the fact that it can speak to people, in a way that is animated and dynamic, in a way that cannot correspond to any other language of art and literature. Theater was set up in Bengal as an accompanying colonial rule and culture of the United Kingdom. The theater is not the culture of Bengal itself such as Jatra-Lokantya-Thumer-Sang Nach-Half Akhrai-Khemta etc. Cronically, it had become a European import of theater, rather than ethnic forms, when Kolkata became prominent in the 19th century as the capital of British India and as a center of commerce and government and was the preferred medium for the culture of educated inteligenes. The main Bengali, 'Babu,' who are illumined by European education and culture, firstly embraced the theater as a way for pleasure and secondly, as a platform to show to the British that they are equally important in contemporary cultural practices in terms of money. This specific class of the 'Anglicised' Bengalis sought to establish a class of their own Bengalis district who were enamored of the previously stated ethnical types of culture. It is therefore possible to conclude that a minority culture has come from the beginning, European theater, which took root in Kolkata because of the efforts of a few Babu's students. The society outside the city of Kolkata had little or no two ties. Things have not altered a lot even now. The power of theater as a communication medium depends on the fact that it is able to convey to people as animated and kinetical mediums to the degree that no other language of art and literature can equal. Theater in Bengal was founded as an accompanying colonial control of Great Britain and its culture. Theatre, like the Yatre Lokantya-Thumer-Sang Next to Half Akhrai-Khemta, is not the culture of Bengal itself. Chronically it was the European import of theater, and not the ethnic forms, that became the favored medium for the cultural practice of educated intelligences, when Kolkata became prominent as Britain's capital of India and center of commerce and administrations in the 19th century. The fundamental Bengali 'Babu,' shown with European education and culture, firstly embraced theater as a method of pleasure

and, secondly, as a platform to demonstrate to the British that in contemporary cultural activity they did not do less with regard to capital. This specific "Bengalis" class sought to create a Bengali class from its own area, who loved ethnic cultural forms previously described. It is therefore possible to conclude that a minority culture has come from the beginning, European theater, which took root in Kolkata because of the efforts of a few Babu's students. The society outside the city of Kolkata had little or no two ties. Things have still not altered a lot today.

**Arup Maharatna** (2008) Western Bengal, an important state of East India, was not only ruled by an elected left-wing coalition since 1977 (often described as sound 'political stability'), but also by its widespread success in the fertility transition and implementation of the land redistributive reform and policies for decentralization. However, the State maintains a lagging position with respect to many other states, in particular in the south and even against all of Indian records, in virtually all comparative evaluations of social, human and infrastructure advancements. This study aims to analyze this contradiction in a thorough evaluation of the relative performance of West Bengal in demographic and socio-economic change. The Left Front parties' well-disciplined grassroots network and its apparatus have been very useful to support relatively rapid reductions in fertility and population growth and to provide sustainable political stability in a system of development which is otherwise 'distract.' Nevertheless, if there are relative neglects on social movements, economic infrastructure and human development, the government is likely in the longer term to suffer adversely via its grassroots mobilization network to ensure broad electoral support.

Grammatiki (Emmy) Papazoglou (2019) This paper analyzes cultural policies developed by local authorities and their effect on social and regional development in Xanthi, Thrace municipality. It also looks at the cultural activities of the Greek towns. It reflects, in particular, on cultural events, changes, and concerns, and assesses its socio-economic, political, geographical, and regional aspects. Given that the village is part of the whole, the process of cultural growth in Xanthi is especially fascinating since the whole of the Greek cultural image is essential. It may also be characterized as national as a regional feature of the region. Local cultural development thus becomes a critical component of national growth. This research may generate a fruitful and constructive thought process on the role of municipal cultural policy in the future development of society and economy. The study topics contribute to scientific inquiry and discussion and underline the role of



municipalities in a Europe of Regions as active cultural assets with a clear cultural identity.

**Devesh Vijay** (2012) The 20th century has frequently been recalled as a result of landmarks such as the Bolshevik Revolution, the world wars, the emergence of fascism and independence from colonial control of Asian and African countries. All these breakthroughs were without a doubt important and had a profound influence on the current world. But the fact that society is changed not just by spectacular events but also by numerous gradual and long-term economic, cultural and demographic changes is significant. The 20th century was also a time of many such changes, some of which could not be seen by those who lived through them, but nevertheless played a significant part in giving the world its current shape at long last. You learned about a number of such changes in the previous chapter, including population expansion, urbanization and the formation of new class relations over the previous century. In the same time, cultural transformations, i.e., changes in human values, attitudes, artistic preferences, etc. also occurred over the same period via a gradual and long-term modification of social organizations and social connections between main groups in the various countries.

**Madara Apsalone** (2015) Socio-cultural elements – common values, standards and attitudes are important, although worldwide competitive sources are less recognized. Previous research has shown socio-cultural variables that have a beneficial effect on a variety of areas of global competitiveness – business, innovation, production and international collaboration. These variables are more sustainable in contrast to conventional factors and less influenced by external changes in the environment. Socio-cultural variables provide a chance to create methods of competitiveness based on distinctive advantages. The study is intended to examine the effect of socio-cultural variables in small open economies on international competitiveness. Six socio-cultural factors have emerged: collectivism and hierarchy; future cooperation, performance orientation; autonomy, monochronism and rationality; economy: analysis relationships between 400 socio-cultural indicators and indicators of competitiveness, such as productivity, economic development, business and government efficiency, innovation capacity and infrastructure in 37 countries The first element – the Collectivism and Hierarchy – tends to decrease international competitiveness.

Sadykova Raikhan (2014) today, globalisation, even irreversible, is continuous. Globalization also affects cultural trends. Moreover, different movements in art and their interchange are mutually permeated. The acceleration of country integration in the global system is described in globalization. It helps to expand cultural links and human migration between peoples. There is also a drawback, though. Unfortunately, a unified art form is sometimes lost about its own culture. Young people are no longer interested in their own culture. Moreover, the growth of the country's art in its own manner is given less emphasis. Art also starts serving the economic market's interests. In this context, the interaction mechanisms of globalization and culture are essential to investigate.

## **2.1. RESEARCH GAP**

The ends of the « cold war », the establishment of a unipolar world and the new international order of globalization have brought about significant changes in the politics of Europe and of the globe at large, as well as developing norms for the US and other Western nations. As an integrating event, globalization is an objective process as the central line and trend of world growth. This growth in information, financial, economic, commercial and exchanges at global level and this process of global economic, political, and cultural integration and unification (Lebedeva, 2007). This is mainly due to the international division of work, the international movement of money, human and industrial resources, legal standardisation, economic and technical processes, convergence and fusion of cultures in each country. This is a systematic and objective process encompassing every area of society. The globe is becoming increasingly linked and reliant on all its subjects as a consequence of globalisation. Will the number of common issue groups grow and the number of integrated topics and kinds increase? Background research is based upon many elements, among which you must first name globalization a deciding force in the evolution of the world's economy, politics and culture. It covers the most significant social and economic development processes in the globe, contributing to the acceleration of economic growth, modernisation and cultural interchange. At the same time, globalisation, in the global economy, generates new conflicts and difficulties. Today, the globalization of all the nations in the globe is varied. Culture is one of the areas where activities have shown the effect of globalization.

### 3. OBJECTIVES

- To discuss issues on gender, Culture and politics in the historical perspectives of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Bengal.
- To systematize a hitherto incoherent discussion on the development of Cooch Behar District/Kuch Bihar District, West Bengal
- To suggest the linkage of political allegiance to cultural reform and social status.
- To present the rise and growth of media in Cooch Behar District, Bengal

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The proposed research will be based mostly on formal records and analytical methods and is historical in content and approach. The main sources will be gathered for that purpose, i.e., the papers. Secondly, for the creation of a relevant framework study the entire range of literature on the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas will be analysed. To this aim, the appropriate official historical documents and books will be chosen and the most representative for the research is used in the case of a collection of official historical documents falling under the same category of the work. The final section focuses on the historical importance of Cooch Behar's growth under the Maharajas as a whole. The libraries and institutes used in Kolkata and elsewhere to gather original data and critical references.

The nature of the work proposed relates mainly to the two key issues of the presence in this context of the classical modern history of Cooch Behar, which is essential in order to establish the meaning of development, which affects the modernisation technique of the state of the Prince under the Maharajas. From the foregoing analysis it is very evident that the current research does not conduct a cohesive and complete investigation on the topic. In this short summary, the fact that the continuing growth of the Princely State of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas from 1847 to 1949 in its entirety is clearly seen.

## 5. EXPECTED OUTCOME

Cooch Behar's history is a multidimensional picture consisting of the princely state's social - cultural - political – economic history. It simultaneously symbolizes the Maharajas' humanitarian efforts. In British India, leader's progressive, contemporary ideas set an example. On the one hand, the history of Cooch Behar describes the connections between Anglo and Cooch Behar from 1772 and on the other hand, it explains the relations between Cooch Behar and Bhutan. So in the history of Cooch Behar, we are finding a new chapter. The weakness of the Koch monarch allowed the Bhutias the chance to interfere in Cooch Behar state internal matters (Bhutan became virtually the king - Cooch Behar's manufacturer. In 1765 the grandeur of the dynasty had been established when Maharaja Dhairjendra Narayan came up on the throne of the Cooch Behar. The Bhutias kidnapped and imprisoned the Maharaja taking advantage of the weaknesses of the Koch monarch. The British Indian Government was disturbed by the continued involvement of Bhutan in the Duar regions. In order for the British Government to ensure a calm north-eastern border Cooch Behar became strategically essential. The form of administration established by Cooch Behar in various areas of the globe was probably used to demonstrate a system of indirect control.

Cooch Behar State, with its growth as a modernization project, may be compared to Western, South and Northern India's advanced princely states. It would not be useless to note out that Cooch Behar's mental makeup has been modelled in line with the English taste. During the 1890's the Raj general strategy towards the native princely state was to make a tool of development and modernization, which would allow the system of princely rule, remove from the dead wood, to continue to play an efficient role in government in the subcontinent. But this civic purpose grew to be too big, according to Ian Copland. The sluggish rate of modernisation was criticized in many countries and the effect of modernisation on the lifestyle of the reigning royal disillusioned. An exception to this may be made for Cooch Behar. Princess Gayatri Devi may be referred to as "they enjoyed all kind of privileges in a few princely kingdoms of that era." Cooch Behar's Maharajas have managed to achieve the allegiance of their people with their development policies and humanitarian activities. Finally, in the long term of the State of Cooch Behar, from 1847 to 1949 the time was a golden and contemporary age of Maharaja Development and therefore the study of their social, cultural and economic activities in the historically important area in its entirety.

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