

ISSN 2455-2798



INDIAN JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Vol. 11 No. 1 (JANUARY 2026-APRIL 2026)

INDIAN JOURNAL
OF
ARCHAEOLOGY

Vol. 11, No. 1

Year 2026

(Peer reviewed e-journal)

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:: Published by ::

National Trust for Promotion of Knowledge

Lucknow

Year: 2026

Vol. 11, No. 1

Date of Publication: 15-01-2026

ISSN : 2455-2797

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Address : C-2460, Indra Nagar, Lucknow

Price: N/A

Publisher: National Trust for Promotion of Knowledge.

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Editorial

The 41st issue of "Indian Journal of Archaeology (www.ijarch.com)" has eight articles. The first article titled **"Tapka: A Newly Discovered Rock Art Site in Sonbhadra Region, Uttar Pradesh"** by Manisha Singh, Sarvesh Yadav, Anisha Singh, Abhay Pratap Singh, Satyam Kumar, Vikas Kumar Singh, Brij Mohan, S Chakradhari, S K Singh, Ravindra Nath Singh gives the details of the painted rock shelter located near Lauva village which lies 20km southeast of Robertsganj, district Sonbhadra, India. The second article titled **"Torana Art and Architecture"** by Dr. Amar Singh describes the evolution of *Torana* which is an important element in Indian architecture. Some of the types of *Toranas* describes in the literature and actually found are *stambha-torana*, *patra-torana*, *makara-torana*, *chitra-torana*, *pushpa-torana*, *ratna-torana*, *vaktra-torana*, *illika-torana*, *hindola-torana*, *tilaka-torana* and *gajatalu-torana*. The third article titled **"Sacred Transformation: Religious Influence and Socioeconomic Dynamics in Ancient and Early Medieval Kashmir"** by Irfan Bashir and Abdul Rashid Lone examines the profound influence of religion on the socioeconomic landscape of ancient and early medieval Kashmir, highlighting how religious transformations shaped social structures and economic activities. The fourth article titled **"Metal Icons of Assam: Tracing the Sculptural Tradition"** by Jutimala Mishra and Manjil Hazarika, explores the metal sculptural traditions in Assam, highlighting their artistic, technological and cultural significance within the broader context of Indian metal art. The fifth article titled **"Translation of Manuscript Describing the Reigns of Early Sultanate Period titled 'Ahad Nama Salāṭīn-i- Ghorī wa Khilji'- Presently Kept in Rampur Raza library, district Rampur"** by Vijay Kumar gives the portraits and details of the 14 kings from *Muḥammad Ghorī* to *Mubārak Shāh Khiljī*. The sixth article titled **"Paintings of Awadh School, Company School and ivory paintings and Pencil Sketches kept in State Museum Lucknow, district Luknow "** by Vijay Kumar and A.K. Singh gives the details of 176 painting/sketches of Awadh school, company school and ivory paintings presently kept in State Museum Lucknow, district lucknow. These painting mainly throw light on the period of Nawabs of Awadh. The seventh article titled **"Human Movement, Demographic Impact and Settlement Pattern in Ancient Past: The Manipuri (Meitei) in Tripura"** by Asem Bidhyaleima Chanu and Prof. Oinam Ranjit Singh, makes attempt to trace the migration, settlement pattern and demography of Manipuris in Tripura since ancient period. The eighth article titled **"Tracing biodiversity through museum sculptures: A case study of the State Museum Lucknow"** by Alshaz Fathmi identifies different animals shown on the sculptures kept in the State Museum, Lucknow. Some of these birds like dodo and rodrigues solitaire have become extinct and some are foreign animals like

aardvark. The ninth article titled **“Heritage Management and community Participation: A case study of *Pancha Tirtha* Temples in Hajo, Assam, India”** by Pankhi Sharma, Jonali Devi and Maishnam Rustam Singh describes the history, archaeology and efforts being made for heritage management of five temples namely Hayagriva Madhava, Kedareswar, Kamleshwar, Kameswar and Ganesh Temples located in Hajo, Assam and locally known as *Pancha Tirtha*.



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Indian Journal of Archaeology

Tapka: A Newly Discovered Rock Art Site in Sonbhadra Region, Uttar Pradesh

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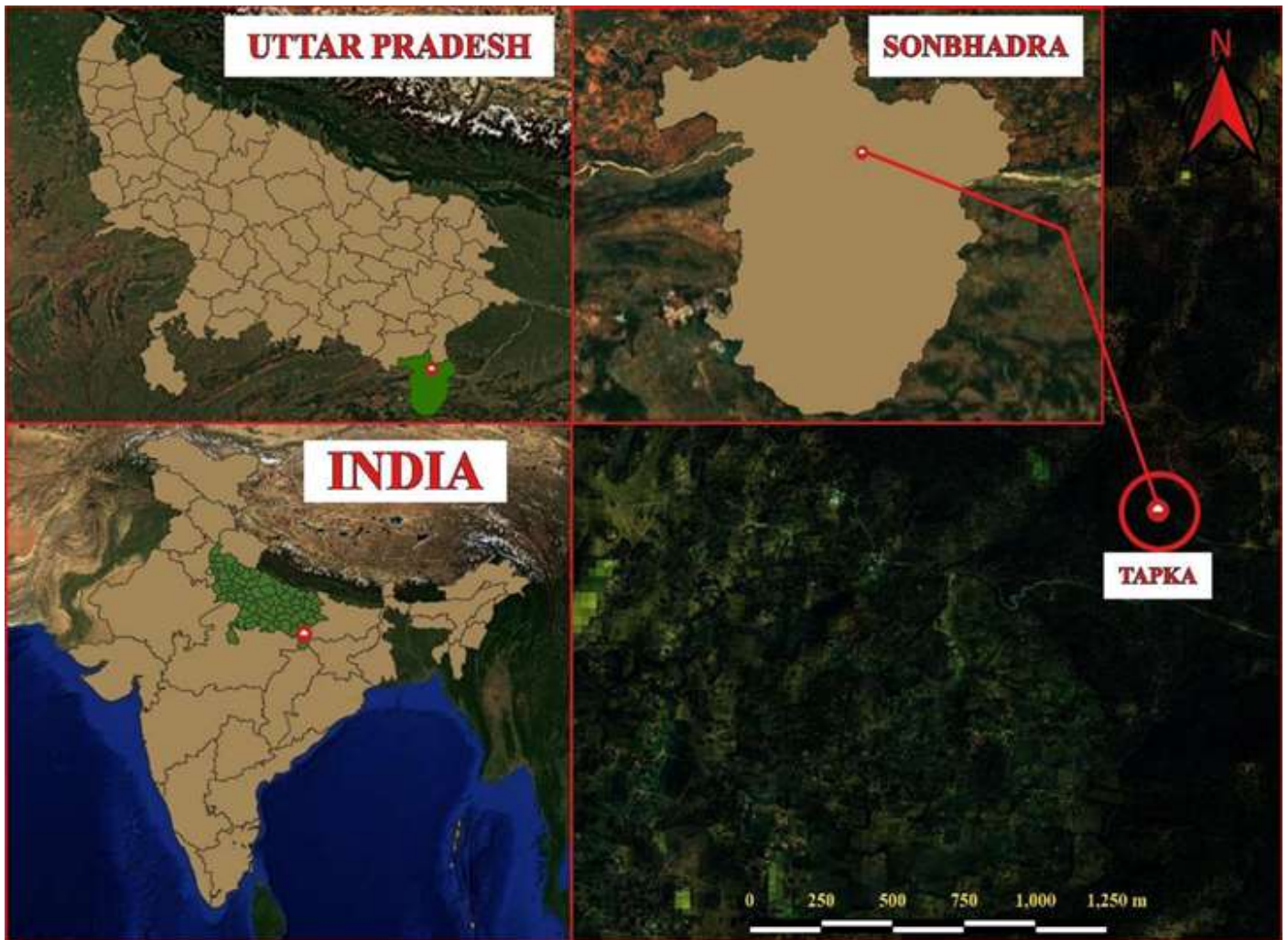
&

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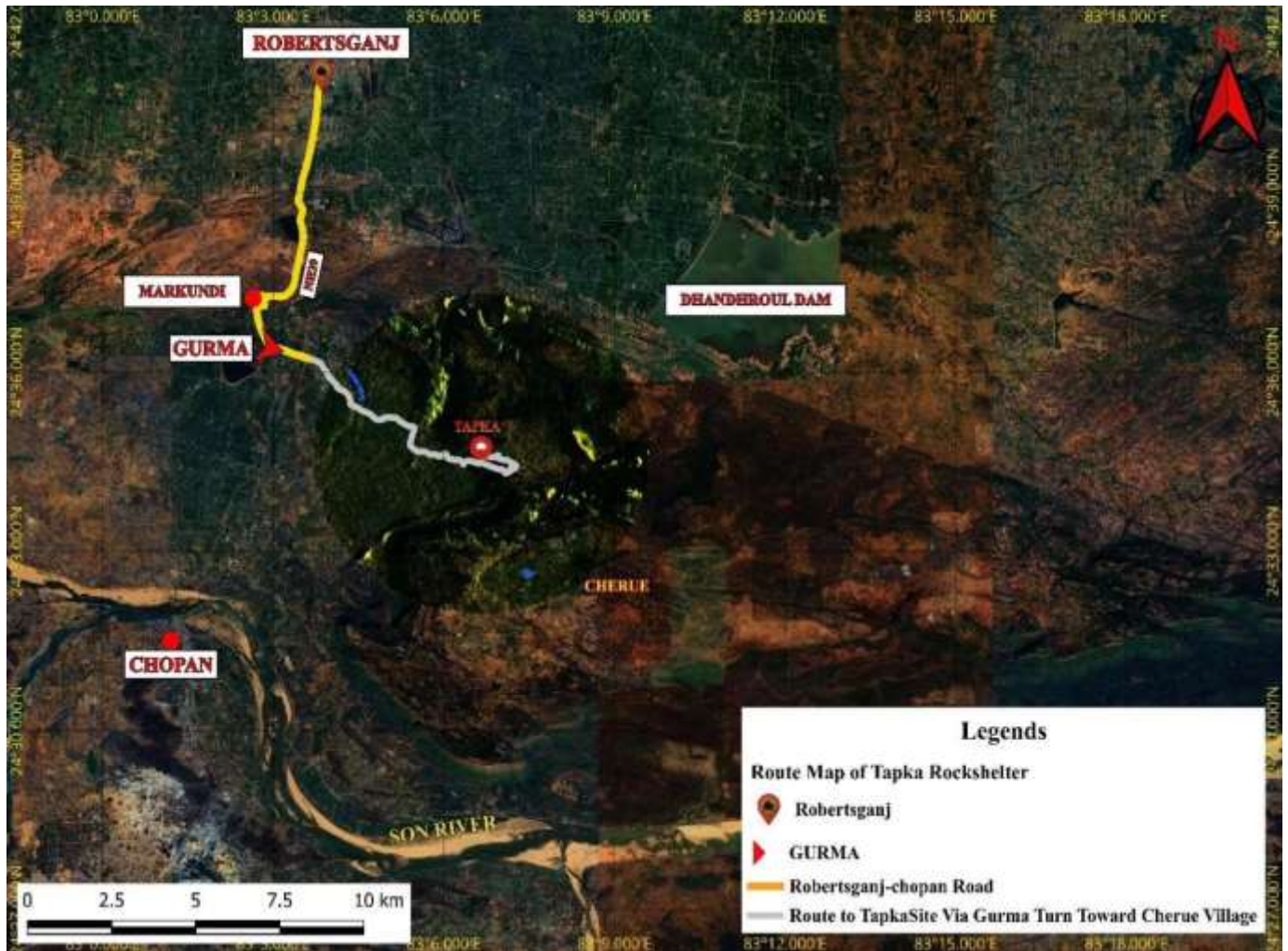
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History of Rock Art Research in Sonbhadra and Mirzapur Region: The Sonbhadra–Mirzapur region holds a central place in the history of Indian rock art research. Until 1989, Sonbhadra formed part of Mirzapur district, and early archaeological reports recorded under district “Mirzapur” also include the painted shelters now located in Sonbhadra. The Vindhyan and Kaimur hill ranges contain some of the earliest documented rock paintings in India. Rock art research in the region began in 1867–68, when Archibald Carlleyle recorded paintings at Sohagi Ghat and identified them as prehistoric, although only a short abstract of his findings “*Notes on Lately Discovered Sepulchral Mounds, Cairns, Cave Paintings and Stone Implements*” was published later (Carlleyle 1883: 49). Systematic documentation followed through the work of J. Cockburn, whose papers from 1883 to 1889 described rhino-hunting scenes, pigment durability, stylistic traits, and ethnographic associations (Cockburn 1883; 1883b; 1884; 1889). Early twentieth-century contributions by Rai Sahib Manoranjan Ghosh (ASI), published in *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* (1932), included detailed descriptions and tracings from sites such as Vijaygarh and Lekhahiya. Post-independence research expanded through the work of V.D. Krishnaswami and K.V. Sundararajan (1949), followed by discoveries reported by G.R. Sharma (University of Allahabad) in *IAR* 1955–56. A major scholarly advance came with Radha Kant Varma’s *Stone Age Culture of Mirzapur* (1964) and later publications (1981–2012), which developed a stylistic and chronological framework. Extensive surveys by Rakesh Tewari between 1979 and 1991, including *Khohon Main Khoya Atit* (1980), *Thirakte Shailachitra* (1981), and *Rock Paintings of Mirzapur* (1990), further enriched regional documentation. Recent works by Erwin Neumayer (1993; 2013) and Ajay Pratap (2016) continue to highlight Sonbhadra–Mirzapur as one of the most significant prehistoric rock art landscapes of India.



Map 1- Location of the Site, Tapka

Approach to the Site: The rock shelter is located within Lauva village, lying about 20 km southeast of Robertsganj. It lies between Arauli and Cherue.



Map.2- Approach to the site, Tapka

Rock-shelter at Tapka: The rock shelter stretches for about 13 metres and includes single figures, paired figures, and group scenes. Its average width is around 2.32 metres. The densest cluster of paintings is found within an area about 1 metre height and 5 metres wide. The documentation was carried out by the team from west to east, and the painted surface is described in the same order, starting with the Left panel. The main painted panel runs along the entire length of the shelter wall, and a few figures are also painted on the ceiling. Several microliths, such as chert and chalcedony blades and blade cores, were found inside the shelter. Because the painted panel is quite large, it has been divided into three parts for convenience: *'the left panel, the central panel, and the right panel'*.



Fig. No. 01: General view of the rock-shelter, Tapka



Fig. No. 02: Close-view of the rock-shelter, Tapka

Description of the rock painting Left panel: The left panel contains a sequence of figures painted in black, red ochre, and white using thin, continuous lines.

Figure 3: The left panel shows several figures painted in black, red ochre, and white using thin, continuous lines. It begins with a single black anthropomorphic figure, about 15×15 cm in size, shown in a hunting pose with a bow and arrow and facing toward the right (west). This is the only figure in the panel made entirely in black colour.



Fig. No. 03: A Man with bow and Arrow, Tapka

Figure 4: Just below Fig. 3, two horse riders painted with white about 24×16 cm in size. Both riders face toward the right, suggesting forward movement. The rider on the left side holds a sword raised upright in his right hand and leans slightly forward, giving a sense of readiness or alertness. The rider on the right side is shown with his right arm fully extended in a spear-throwing posture, indicating active engagement.



Fig. No. 04: Two Horse-riders, Tapka

Figure 5 & 6: Sitting on the two red horses, two large stylized horse-rider figures painted in red ochre about 35×35 cm (Fig. 5) and 34×30 cm (Fig. 6) in size, dominate this part of the panel. They are drawn with thin, continuous lines and filled with geometric patterns such as slanting strokes, cross-hatching, and triangular forms, giving their bodies a decorative and symbolic appearance. Both figures have lotus-bud-shaped heads with inverted C-shaped ears, and their elongated necks are marked with horizontal lines. The left figure has hair-like strokes rising from the top of the head, giving it a more feminine appearance, while the right figure has no visible hair lines and is therefore often assumed to be a male figure. Their torsos are filled with slanting geometric lines, adding a decorative and symbolic feel. The arm of left (Female) figure curve outward in smooth S-shaped lines without spikes, while the arm of right (Male) figure end in radiating spike-like lines that may represent armour or a ritual symbol. Both riders hold the reins in their left hand, while their right hand carries a weapon, most likely a dagger. Both figures are shown on horses painted in red ochre with white dotted patterns, where the female figure is seated on the horse, while the male figure is standing on the horse, and the horses have forward-leaning heads, and tails drawn with spikes. The right figure stands on the horse in a posture that looks symbolic rather than realistic, reinforcing the idea that these two riders represent supernatural beings, ritual performers, or high-status characters rather than ordinary humans. Local villagers associate these figures as king and Queen and call this cave *Raja Rani Ghar* (house of the king and queen), showing how community memory shapes the interpretation of this particular scene and its highly stylized forms.



Fig. No. 05: Stylized horse-riders, Tapka



Fig. No. 06: Stylized horse-riders, Tapka

Figure 7, 8, 9: Further to the right, and positioned in between and below the large stylized horse-rider figures, are three additional white-painted horses measuring 26×22 cm (Fig. 7), 23×15 cm (Fig. 8), and 22×17 cm (Fig. 9). These three white horses appear to be moving toward the horse riders shown in Fig. 1. The upper horse has a clearly visible rider, while the two horses below seem riderless or are heavily faded because of weathering, although their reins can still be seen.



Fig. No. 07: White-painted horses, Tapka

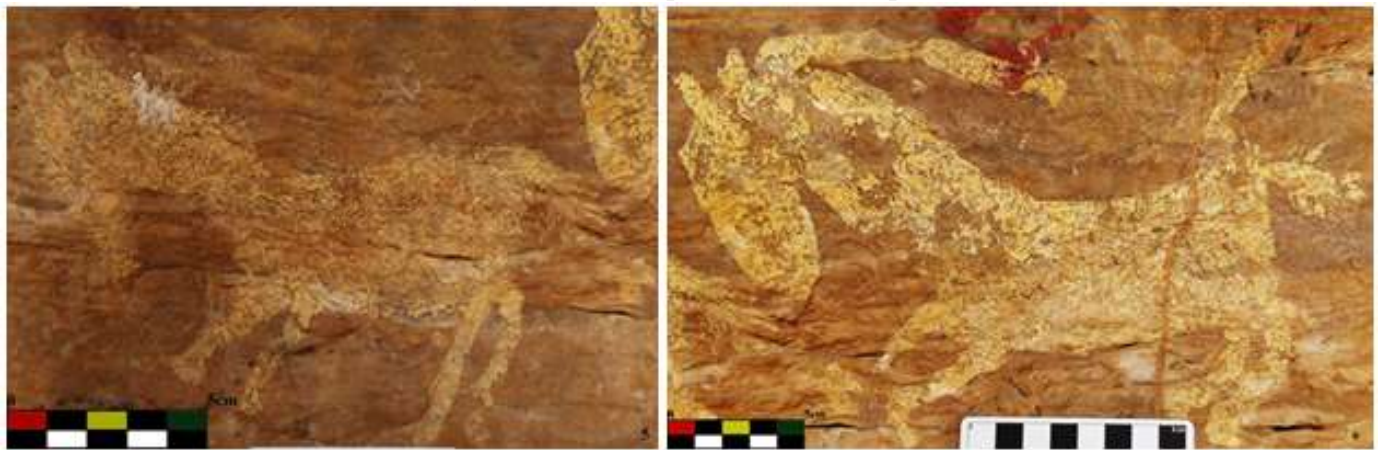


Fig. No. 08 & 09: White-painted horses, Tapka

Figure 10: To the right of the horse riders, there is a small stylised floral motif painted in red ochre. The whole motif measures about 19×14 cm. It is made up of four curved S-shaped stems, each rising from a rectangular base. The base contains eight tilted diagonal lines (/), giving it a comb/ladder like look. At the top of each stem is a round flower head with radiating spike-like petals, which creates a sunflower-type appearance. The stems bend slightly and give the motif a sense of movement. All the lines are thin, continuous, and neatly drawn, showing good control.



Fig. No. 10: Stylized Floral motifs, Tapka

Figure 11: Below the floral base, there is an animal figure painted in red ochre, most likely representing a horse. The motif measures about 14×13 cm. The painting is partly faded, which makes the outline unclear in some areas. The head appears slightly distorted, creating the impression of two mouth-like shapes. If viewed as a single-headed figure, the animal seems to face toward the right. The legs are drawn with thin, continuous strokes, though several portions are now faint and incomplete. Despite the fading, the overall posture and body shape remains visible enough to identify it as an animal motif, painted in the same fine-line red ochre style found in the surrounding figures.



Fig. No. 11: Animal Figure, Tapka

Central Panel:

Figure 12, 13 & 14 (Hunting Scene): Figures 12, 13 and 14 form a single group within the same panel, together measuring about 50×34 cm. The largest figure in this group is a Swamp Deer-like animal painted in ochre (Fig. 12), measuring 30×17 cm. It has a bulky body, short legs, and a rounded back, but the surface is heavily faded, which makes much of the outline unclear. To the right of this faded animal is an anthropomorphic figure holding a bow and arrow (Fig. 13), measuring 25×23 cm. The man is shown in a hunting posture, aiming his bow toward the Swamp Deer below. His body is drawn with thin, continuous lines that remain partly visible despite fading. Slightly above and to the right of the hunter is another ochre-painted animal figure (Fig. 14), measuring 16×12 cm. Its body outline is clearer than the Swamp Deer, but the form is not distinct enough to identify the species with certainty, and it remains unidentified. Taken together, these three figures create a coherent hunting scene, where the man appears to target the larger Swamp Deer, while the additional animal motifs add movement and context to the composition. The preservation varies across the group: the Swamp Deer is the most faded, the hunter is moderately preserved, and the unidentified animal is the clearest among the three.



Fig. No. 12: Hunting scene, Tapka



Fig. No. 13 & 14: Hunting scene, Tapka

Figure 15: A prominent ochre-painted, peacock-like bird motif appears in the central part of the panel, measuring about 30×25 cm. The body is drawn as a long oval filled with a neat cross-hatched pattern, giving the impression of stylized feathers. The bird has a curved neck, a small pointed head, and a clearly marked crest, all made with thin and continuous lines. Its legs are unusually long, which adds to its stylized appearance. Just below the bird, a sun-like circular element with radiating spikes can be seen; based on its shape and position, it may represent a trap or some symbolic marker.



Fig. No. 15: Stylized Peacock, Tapka

Figure 16: The figure is painted in ochre but is highly faded and much less clear than the other motifs in the panel. It measures about 28×20 cm, yet only faint patches of colour and a few unclear outlines are visible. The central area shows a blurry reddish form that may represent a human figure riding an animal, but the details are too eroded to confirm. Most of the original lines have blended into the rock surface due to heavy weathering, leaving only slight hints of the head, body, and legs. Because of this fading, the motif now appears more like a washed-out stain than a clear drawing.

Figure 17: A large stylized botanical motif occupies the central part of the panel, painted entirely in red ochre. The composition begins with a long rectangular base filled with neat cross-hatched lines, giving it the appearance of a railing or fenced platform. Below this base are several inverted arch or onion-shaped forms that likely represent roots or an underground part of the plant. From the upper edge of the base rise six long, S-shaped stems, each ending in a round flower head with radiating spikes that give them a sunflower-like look. The stems appear in pairs, and while most are plain, the fourth and fifth stems have small thorn-like projections along their length. Above the flowers, three small figures of birds are shown flying over the third, fifth, and sixth blooms, and on the right side of the panel a deer is depicted in moving posture, adding a sense of

movement and connecting the plant with surrounding fauna. In certain places, one motif overlaps with another, showing that Figure 17 is superimposed on Figure 16.



Fig. No. 16: An Animal and rider (?), Tapka



Fig. No. 17: Flower panel and birds, Tapka

Figure 18: Below the right corner of the floral panel, there is a faded ochre-painted figure measuring about 16×12 cm. The motif is heavily weathered, and much of its outline has blended into the rock surface, making the details difficult to recognize. A faint extension on the upper side suggests the presence of a rider or human figure, while the lower portion shows shapes that may belong to an animal beneath it. Although the clarity is poor, the remaining lines loosely give the impression of a horse rider facing east. Because of the extensive fading, this identification remains uncertain, and the figure is best described as an indistinct anthropomorphic–animal composition positioned below the right corner of the botanical panel.



Fig. No. 18: Rider with an animal (?), Tapka

Figure 19: The figure placed just to the right of Fig. 19 is a small ochre-painted animal measuring about 14×12 cm. It is better preserved than the nearby faded motifs, so its outline is still fairly visible. The animal has a short, slightly raised tail, thin legs, and a compact body, giving it the appearance of a young animal. The head is small and pointed, facing east, with a gently curved neck. Although its exact species cannot be identified with certainty, the proportions and posture suggest a young deer or some small mammal. The lines are thin and continuous, showing controlled brushwork, though light weathering has softened some edges.



Fig. No. 19: Young deer or a mammal, Tapka

Figure 20: The figure placed just above the right corner of the floral panel (Fig. 20) is an ochre-painted animal measuring about 17×16 cm. The motif is fairly well preserved compared to many nearby figures. It shows a swamp deer-like animal facing west, with antlers, a long neck, a short-raised tail, and slender legs drawn with thin, continuous lines. The body is filled with a solid red-ochre wash, though some areas appear slightly faded due to weathering. Even with this fading, the outline remains clear enough to recognize the posture of the animal and overall form.



Fig. No. 20: An animal figure, Tapka

Figure 21: The figure is depicted in red ochre as a stylized humanoid form. The head is rendered in a lotus-bud shape with an elongated profile. Inverted C-shaped linear motifs are present on both sides of the head. The figure has a long neck, and the body is filled with geometric designs including cross-hatching, triangular motifs, and circular patterns. The arms are drawn with double lines and filled with horizontal lines. The lower part of the body is covered with a dhoti-like garment, indicated by oblique linear strokes representing pleats. A rectangular band marks the lower border of the garment, and from below this border the feet are clearly depicted, suggesting that the legs themselves are concealed by the clothing. The hands are depicted in a stylized flower-like form, and the feet appear natural and human-like, indicating a standing posture. It seems to be a warrior or folk deity.

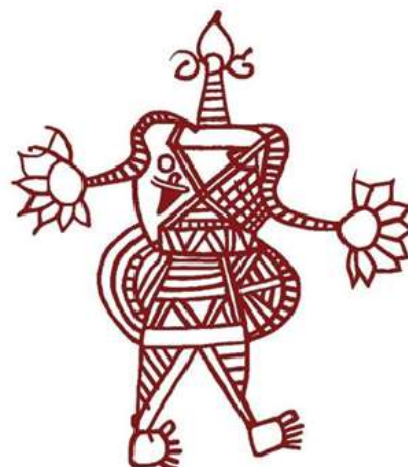


Fig. No. 21: A warrior or folk deity, Tapka (Drawing credit: Sarvesh Yadav)

Figure 22: Just to the right of the large supernatural figure (Fig. 22), there is a scene painted in ochre showing a man struggling with an animal. It seems the man is gripping the horns of the animal with both hands, suggesting an active fight or an attempt to control it. Behind the animal, a small child-like figure is shown standing close. The entire composition measures about 40×25 cm.



Fig. No. 22: A man struggling with an animal, Tapka

Figure 23: The rectangular panel, measuring about 60×20 cm, resembles a *kohbar* and contains eight human figures arranged in two rows. The upper row has five figures; the second figure appears to hold an arrow-like object, while the third figure carries a dagger-like weapon in the left hand. The lower row includes three more figures. All are painted in red ochre using thin, continuous lines. The figures share common stylistic features such as triangular torsos, elongated limbs, and raised arms that seem to hold objects or weapons. The first figure in the lower row is more elaborately decorated with geometric patterns, making it visually distinct from the others. At the bottom center of the composition, a large doorway-like rectangular form suggests an entrance or framed space. The figure placed near this entrance appears slightly superimposed on another figure, indicating multiple painting episodes.

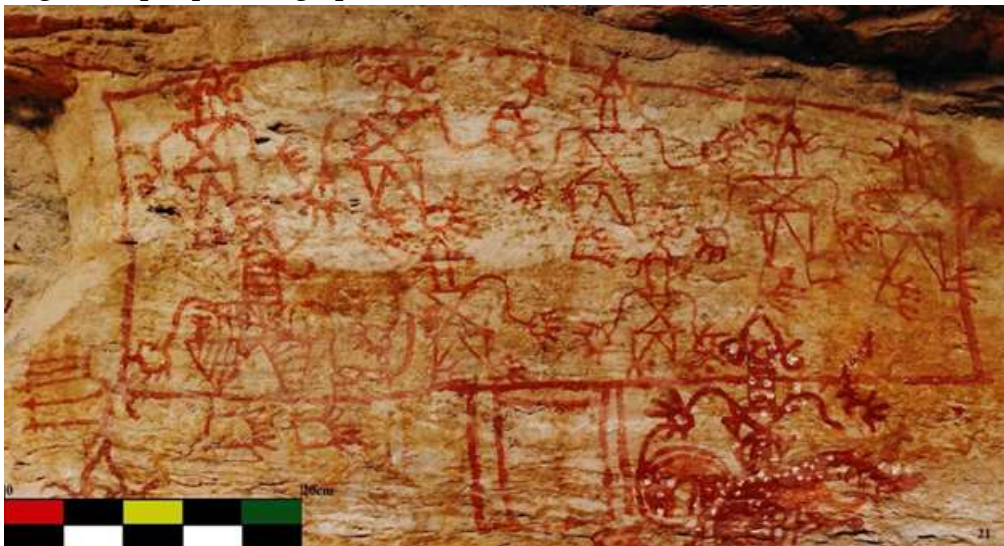


Fig. No. 23: Kohbar panel, Tapka

Figure 24: Just below the right side of the rectangular *kohbar* panel, a decorated male figure riding a horse is painted in red ochre, measuring about 22×22 cm. Both the rider and the horse are covered with clusters of white dots, which give the figure a ceremonial or symbolic look. The rider holds the reins with one hand, while the other arm curves outward in a stylized manner. His body is formed with geometric shapes like a triangular torso and long, thin limbs, matching the style of other human figures in the panel. The horse has a rounded body, bent legs, and a clearly marked head, all highlighted with the same white dotted pattern. Small arch-like strokes are drawn below the horse, possibly indicating movement.



Fig. No. 24: Ochre painted stylized horse-rider with white dots, Tapka

Figure 25: The motif consists of two small ochre-painted figures, measuring about 8×15 cm in total. The figure on the right appears to be a simple anthropomorphic form drawn with thin, straight lines. It shows a small round head, a vertical body line, and short arms and legs extending outward, giving the impression of a standing human figure. To the left of it is a short, curved mark or cup-shaped element, though its form is too simple to identify confidently. Both figures are lightly drawn and somewhat faded, but their outlines are still visible enough to recognize the standing posture of the humanoid figure.



Fig. No. 25: An Anthropomorphic figure, Tapka

Figure 26: A large horse figure painted in ochre appears in a dynamic stance, measuring about 36×30 cm. The horse faces west, with its front leg raised, giving the impression of forward movement or a rearing posture. The body is filled with a pale white wash, over which numerous small ochre dots are applied, creating a textured, patterned appearance. The outline of the horse, including the legs, neck, and head, is drawn with thin, continuous ochre lines. The reins are also visible, curving from the head toward the upper part of the image, indicating that the animal may originally have been part of a larger riding scene. Despite minor weathering, the figure remains well preserved, with the head, raised leg, and decorative dotted body clearly standing out against the rock surface.



Fig. No. 26: White horse with ochre outline and dots, Tapka

Figure 27: The figure depicts a horse rider facing west, painted in ochre and measuring about 29×20 cm. Although the motif is partly faded, the main posture remains clear. The rider is seated upright on the horse, with the right arm extended forward holding the reins and the left arm holding a sword-like weapon. The human form is drawn with thin, continuous lines, creating a simple stick-like figure. The body of the horse is filled with ochre and dotted with several white marks that are still visible despite weathering. The head and neck are better preserved than the rest of the figure, clearly showing the forward-facing posture and the connection between the reins and the hand of the rider.



Fig. No. 27: A horse-rider holding rein and sword-like weapon, Tapka

Figure 28: The figure shows a horse rider painted on the wall, with the horse in ochre and the rider in white. The motif measures about 22×26 cm. The body of the horse is outlined in white and filled with many white dots, and its front leg is slightly raised, giving the impression of running movement. The rider is drawn in thin white lines and is seated on the horse in an upright position. In his left hand, he holds an arrow-like weapon pointing toward the west. Although some parts of the rider are faded and the contrast between the white rider and the dotted ochre horse makes the figure stand out clearly on the wall.



Fig. No. 28: A horse-rider (Horse painted in ochre and rider in white), Tapka

Figure 29: The figure shows a horse outlined in white, with its body filled with ochre and covered with small white dots. It measures about 28×11 cm. The horse is shown in running condition, with its legs stretched out and the head turned slightly toward the west. The reins are also visible in white, connecting to the mouth of the horse. Although some portions are a bit faded, the overall form is clear enough to identify the movement and direction. The dotted pattern and light outline give the horse a lively, decorated appearance within the panel.



Fig. No. 29: A white outlined horse filled with ochre and white dots, Tapka

Figure 30: The figure measures about 28×30 cm and shows a horse painted in ochre, with its body covered in white dots. The horse is shown in a forward-moving posture, though parts of the outline are faded. A rider is seated on its back, drawn in red ochre using simple straight lines for the body and a small circular head. Much the form of the rider is faint, but the upright posture is still recognizable. The reins are represented by two straight lines extending from the head of the horse toward the hand of the rider. Although weathering has blurred some details, the overall scene remains identifiable as a horse with a mounted rider moving toward the west.

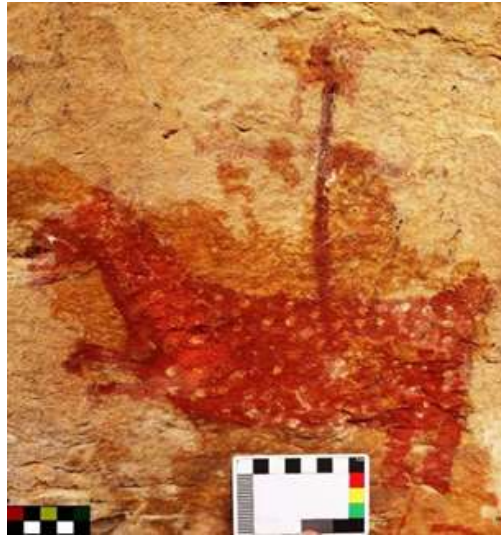


Fig. No. 30: A horse-rider, Tapka

Figure 31: Figure 29, which partly overlaps with Figure 28, measures about 35×22 cm and shows a stylized male figure painted in ochre. The figure has four arms, giving it a god-like or supernatural appearance. The head is a simple circular form with two short horn-like lines extending from the top, and the neck is drawn in a long, upright rectangular shape. The torso is lightly outlined, while the lower body is more prominent. The legs are thicker than those seen in most other figures and appear to be decorated or clothed, indicated by slanted lines inside each leg. Although parts of the motif are faded, the four arms, horn-like head features, and decorated legs make the figure stand out as an important or symbolic character within the panel.



Fig. No. 31: A stylized male figure, Tapka

Right Panel

Figure 32: The hunting scene panel, measuring about 47×47 cm, is painted entirely in ochre and shows a coordinated hunt involving four human figures with bows and arrows and four animals. One hunter stands in the top right corner, another in the lower right, a third in the lower left, and a fourth in the middle left, giving the impression that they are surrounding the animals from different sides. Near the mid-left hunter, a rhino-like animal is shown moving west, while at the center of the panel three other animals appear: two look like swamp deer with antler-like horns, and one resembles a young elephant, all moving toward the central hunter. The central hunter is shown aiming his bow at them, suggesting an active pursuit. The overall arrangement of the hunters around the animals indicates an encirclement or drive-hunt, where the group works together to trap the animals from all sides.

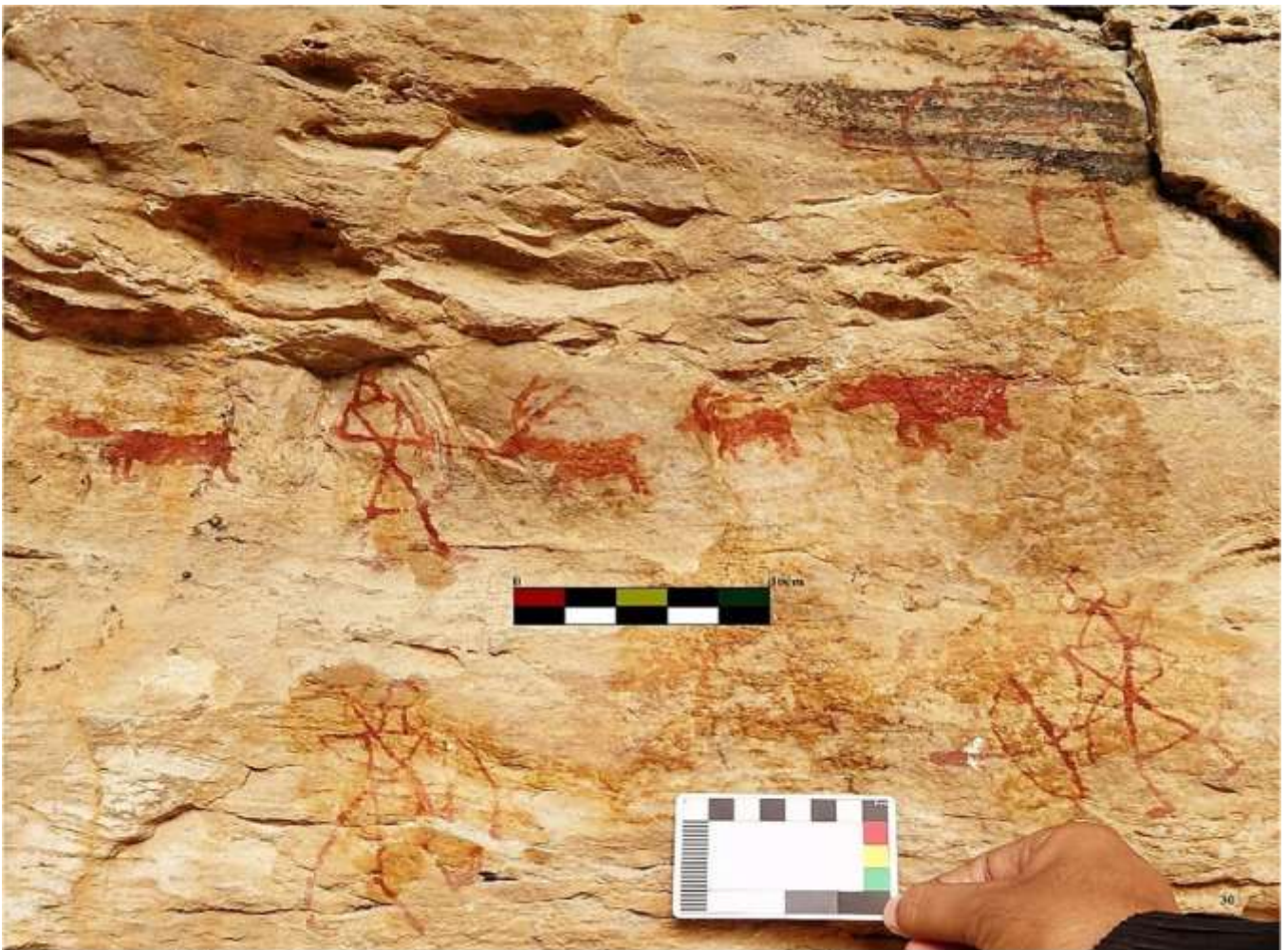


Fig. No. 32: Hunting Scene, Tapka

Figure 33: The motif painted on the ceiling, measuring about 37×18 cm, consists of four human figures rendered in light ochre. All four appear to be holding hands in a connected chain-like formation. The two central figures are slightly larger, while the smaller figures on either side give the impression of a family group. The bodies are drawn with thin, continuous lines, and each figure has a round head with short curved strokes that may represent hair or simple head adornments.



Fig. No. 33: Human-chain figure, Tapka

Figure 34: The figure is partly faded and is not easy to see when the rock surface is dry; however, its outline becomes much clearer when the surface is moistened. The motif has an oval-shaped body filled with cross-hatched and horizontal lines, which may indicate a patterned body or a wing-like feature. A long neck is visible, and two thin lines rise upward from it, giving the appearance of a crest. These details are drawn with thin, continuous strokes. The figure also shows four leg-like extensions and a long projection at the back that may represent a tail. Some features, such as the long neck and crest-like lines, are similar to the peacock motif seen elsewhere in the shelter (Fig. 13), but the presence of four legs makes the identification unclear. Because of this mixture of features, the figure cannot be identified with certainty.



Fig. No. 34: An Unidentified animal, Tapka

Figure 35: The figure, painted in ochre and measuring about 20×15 cm, is heavily faded and difficult to identify. Only a few curved and overlapping lines remain visible, making the original form unclear.

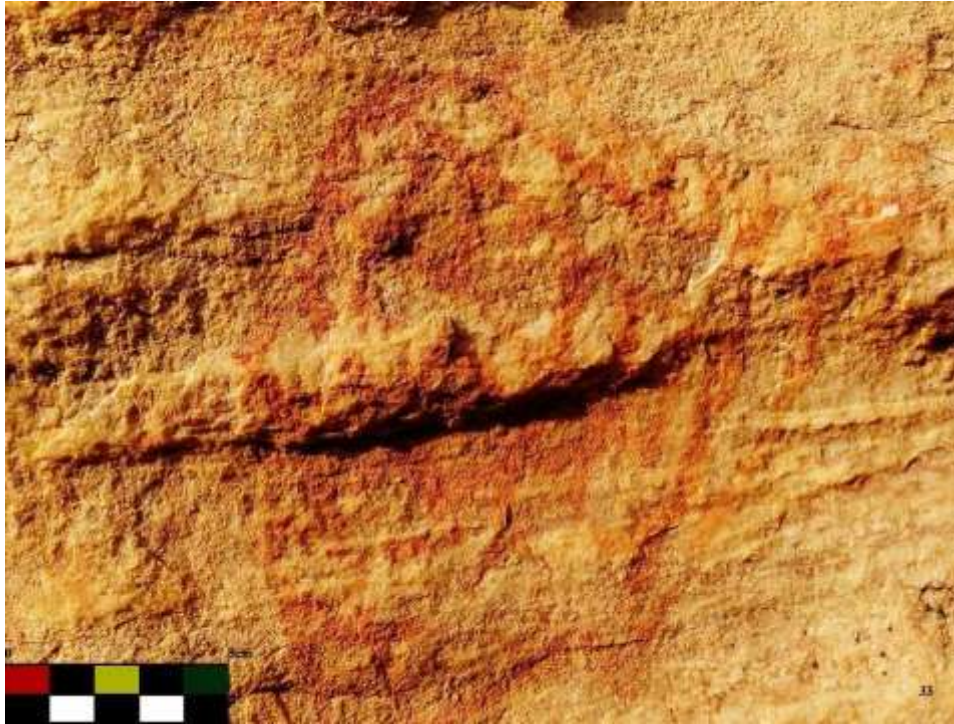


Fig. No. 35: Unidentified figure, Tapka

Figure 36: The painting visible on this surface is heavily faded and difficult to identify under normal conditions. Only faint traces of the original lines remain, and most of the body is no longer recognizable. The upper part of the figure suggests a human bust, with the head shaped like a lotus bud. On one side, a curved line resembling an ear is still visible, drawn with a thin, continuous stroke. Below the head, the rest of the body is almost completely lost due to weathering. The figure now survives mainly as a shadowy outline rather than a complete form.

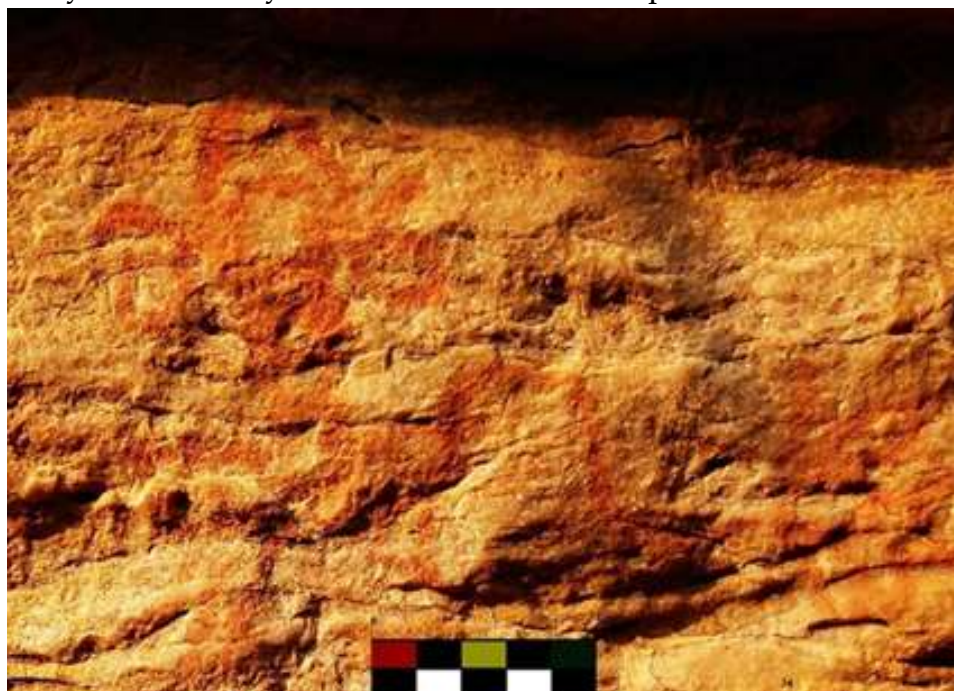


Fig. No. 36: Unrecognizable figure, Tapka

Fragmentary Motifs on the Right Panel: A few paintings are present on the right side of the rock shelter, located slightly away from the main painted panel. These motifs are relatively well preserved but occur in a fragmentary manner and do not form a continuous or integrated composition like those seen on the central and left panels. Among these are a few stick-style human figures, which appear faint and less prominent due to fading and their position at the extreme right of the shelter. These figures may belong to an earlier phase of painting activity. At the far-right end, the last identifiable motif of the shelter consists of four small figures of the birds, depicted moving toward the left. In addition, one or two other motifs are present between these figures, but their forms cannot be clearly identified due to fading. Notably, these fragmentary paintings are located slightly higher on the wall compared to the main panels, suggesting a different placement choice or painting episode.

Microlithic Evidence from Inside and Outside the Rock Shelter: Along with the rock art, a few lithic artefacts were noted from within the Tapka rock shelter and the area immediately outside it. These include blade cores and finished microlithic tools, primarily made on chert and chalcedony. While the artefacts were found on the surface and not in stratified context, their presence indicates prehistoric human activity in and around the shelter. This material evidence complements the rock art and suggests that the shelter formed part of a broader cultural landscape involving habitation or short-term occupation.

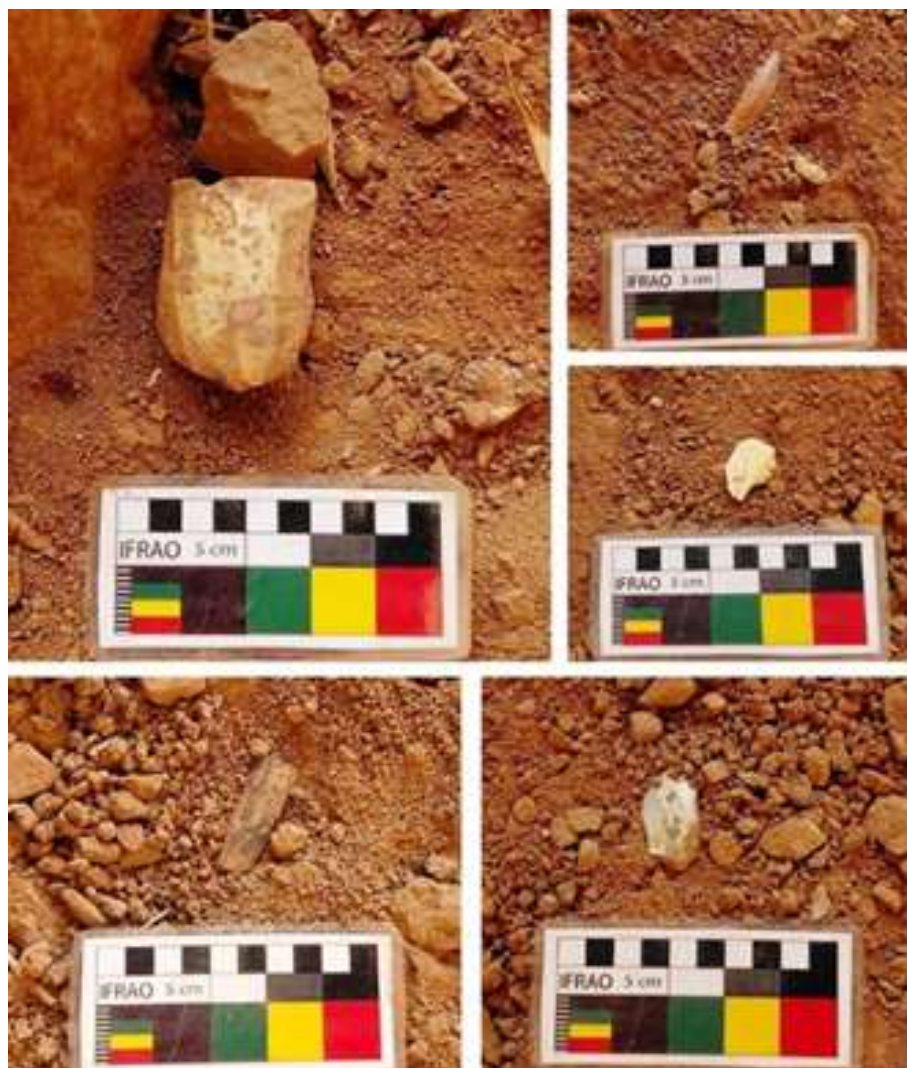


Fig. No. 37: In situ microlithic tools from Tapka rock-shelter

Chronology: In the absence of absolute dating evidence, the chronology of the rock paintings at the site has been established through relative dating methods. These include the study of superimposition, use of colour, subject matter, stylistic features, painting technique, and degree of weathering. This approach has been widely applied in rock art studies in India by scholars such as Wakankar, Brooks, and Mathpal, and particularly in the Sonbhadra region by R. K. Verma and Rakesh Tewari (Tewari, 1990; Verma, 2012). It helps in understanding the long-term sequence and development of painting activity at the site.

Based on the phase-wise classification proposed by R. K. Verma for rock shelters studied across central India, the paintings of the Tapka rock shelter can also be broadly divided into four phases. The earliest phase (Phase I) is represented by black-painted figures (Tewari, 1990), particularly the small archer and hunting scene, an anthropomorphic figure painted in ochre in a simple stick style. This phase from the right panel, which depicts a hunting scene with animals painted in flat wash, identified from left to right as a rhinoceros, two swamp deer, and an elephant, along with three human figures holding bows and arrows rendered in linear style. These figures are simple in execution, relatively small in size, and stylistically consistent with early hunting-related imagery.

The second phase (Phase II) includes stylised anthropomorphic and animal figures executed mainly in red ochre and related motifs. These paintings show improved control over line work, greater use of decoration, and more complex compositions compared to the earlier phase.

The third phase (Phase III) is marked by highly stylised and geometric representations. Human figures, bird motifs, floral designs, and dancing scenes can be placed within this phase. These paintings show increased abstraction, detailed costume elements (*vastra*), and symbolic features, suggesting a developed artistic tradition with possible ritual or social significance.

The fourth phase (Phase IV) consists mainly of white-painted figures, with motifs decorated with white dots. These appear to be later additions to the panel. Evidence of superimposition supports this sequence, as several paintings belonging to Phases II and III are overlain by Phase IV figures. This relative layering confirms that the white-painted figures represent the latest phase of painting activity at the site.

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Torana Art and Architecture

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Introduction: The term '*torana*' was used for both a gateway and an arch. According to Monier Williams it is an arch, an arched doorway, festooned decorations over doorways or a triangle supporting a large balance.¹ This word is used in the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Arthasastra*, *Matsya-Purana*, *Vayu-Purana*, *Kamikagama*, *Suprabhedagama*, *Mayamata*, *Silparatna*, *Manasara*, *Samarangana-sutradhara*, *Aparajitaprccha*, *Jayaprccha*, *Kasyapasilpa*, *Ksirarnava* and in several inscriptions meaning either a gate-way of a house or palace or city or *stupa* or temple or a decorated arch of a *mandapa* or niche.² It is an architectural member as well as an ornament to buildings, *mandapas*, palaces, thrones, niches, chariots and gate-ways.³ Describing the composition of a *Torana Mayamatam* states that it is a decorative structure which comprises two pillars or pilasters supporting an arched lintel above. It may be a frame of a door or a niche sheltering a divine image.⁴

It appears that before Mauryan period, the toranas were made of wood with a simple form using one or more horizontal beams as a super-structure supported on two vertical pillars. These were usually carved with various motifs and designs. Later on, the same form and designs were copied in stone as seen represented in Lomas Rishi cave of the Barabar hill during the Mauryan period and at Bharhut, Sanchi, and Mathura in the Sunga-Kushana and Gupta periods. After that more developed forms and designs of *toranas* appear in early and late medieval times.

The earliest known example of a *torana*-arch is noticed on the Lomas Rishi cave of the Barabar hill located in the Jehanabad district, about 24 km north of Gaya in Bihar. It has an arch-like shape façade (*nasika*) imitating the contemporary timber architecture. Between two sloppy pilasters its upper semi-circular face is elaborately carved with an archway (*gopanasi*) and the lower part is carved with a row of elephants coming out from the mouth of a *makara* (crocodile) proceeding towards, flanking both the sides of a *stupa* in the center, while the upper part is filled with perforated *jail-vatayana*, an imitation of timberwork. This is the oldest example depicting *makara* on the earliest *torana*-arch in rock-cut architecture imitating from wooden doorframe which might have become the model for the later *toranas*, popularly known as *makara torana*. Each and every part of the façade and interior of cave was highly polished, which was a speciality of Mauryan

period. As the cave was donated by Mauryan kings to Ajivika monks, it can be safely dated to 3rd – 2nd Cent. B. C.



Fig. No. 01: Lomas Rishi Cave, Barabar hill near Gaya, Bihar, Maurya period (272 B.C.-185 B.C)

During *Shunga*, *Kushana* and *Gupta* periods *Bharhut*, *Sanchi* and *Mathura* were important centers of art activities. Though, in mid-Ganga plains for the first time stone was used in the Mauryan period, it became more popular afterwards providing durability to art objects. At *Bharhut* (near Satna in M.P.) there were four *toranas* on four cardinal directions attached to the railing of a Buddhist *stupa*. The eastern *torana*, which is the earliest and only surviving example, bears an inscription stating that this entrance archway is a *torana*, which was built during the reign of *Sunga Dhanabhuti* (150 B.C.). The inscription states '*Dhanabhuti karitam toranam*'. Other three *toranas* were also raised during *Shunga* period (184-172 BC). The eastern *torana* has two tall pillars consisted of four octagonal shafts joined together, while the north and south *toranas* were composed of square shafts surmounted by four distinct bell capitals formed of two winged lions and two winged bulls. The upper structure of these *toranas* was consisted of three horizontal beams carved with open-mouthed crocodile (*makara*) figures with curved tails occupying the projecting ends, a remarkable feature. This is one of the earliest illustrations of *makara* on a *torana* which is variously repeated at *Mathura* and later on became an essential characteristic of *torana* architecture during medieval periods. On account of *Mahabharata* (*Adi Parva*, 176, 15) V. S.

Agrawal named them '*simsumarasirah*'. All these four *toranas* were embellished with Buddhist symbols like *triratna*, *dharma-chakra*, *stupa* etc. and many other decorative designs.⁵



Fig. No. 02: Eastern Gateway, Bharhut Stupa, 2nd Cent. B.C.

Sanchi (near Vidisha M.P.) has five *toranas*, four of them forming the entrance of the great *stupa* (No. 1), situated one on each cardinal direction and the fifth one is an isolated single member of another *stupa* (no. 3).⁶ Each *torana* is consisted of two upright tall pillars surmounted by a capitals, which supports a super structure of three horizontal architraves slightly bend upwards in the middle and separated from each other by square blocks as usual. A *salabhanjika* based on pillar capital supports the lowermost architrave as a bracket on both the outer sides.⁷ Some of these *toranas* are richly carved and decorated with Buddhist symbols and various scenes and designs.⁸

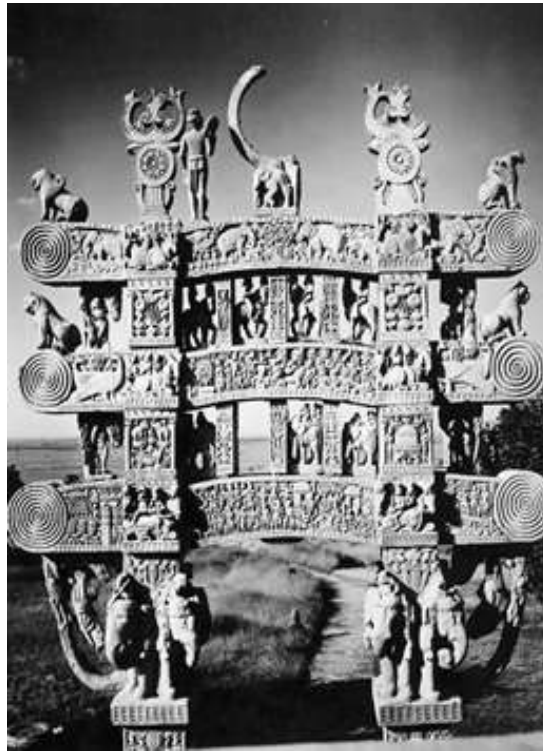


Fig. No. 03: Northern Gateway, Sanchi Stupa No. 1 (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)



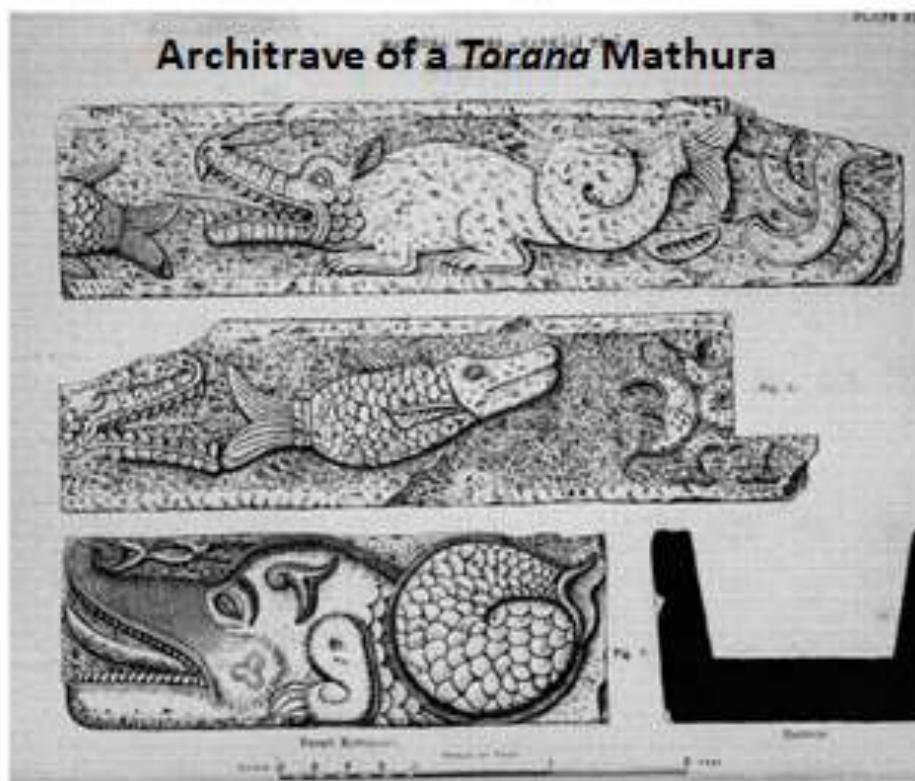
Fig. No. 04: Gateway, Stupa No. 3, Sanchi (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)

Mathura a great center of art also produced various forms of architectural buildings. *Toranas* or gateways were popularly built at Mathura attached with railings around *stupas* and shrines during the Sunga and the Kusana periods. Like Bharhut and Sanchi, Mathura was also one of the earliest centers introducing *toranas* in stone which were initially made of timber and later on were reproduced in lithic forms. The architectural forms and designs of *toranas* built at Mathura

are the same as Bharhut and Sanchi but there are some variations in the decorations. The other important feature is that while Bharhut *torana* has carving of open mouthed *makara* figures having curved tails on both the projecting sides of the beam, but no *shalabhanjikas* supporting beams based on pillar capital, as represented at Sanchi,¹⁰ Mathura artists represented both the architectural traditions of Bharhut and Sanchi. The illustration of the *makaras* on *torana* beams and the *shalabhanjikas* flanking upright pillars are variously repeated at Mathura.¹¹



Fig. No. 05: The Jain Stupa and Other Antiquities of Mathura, Allahabad, 1901 (Courtesy V. A. Smith)



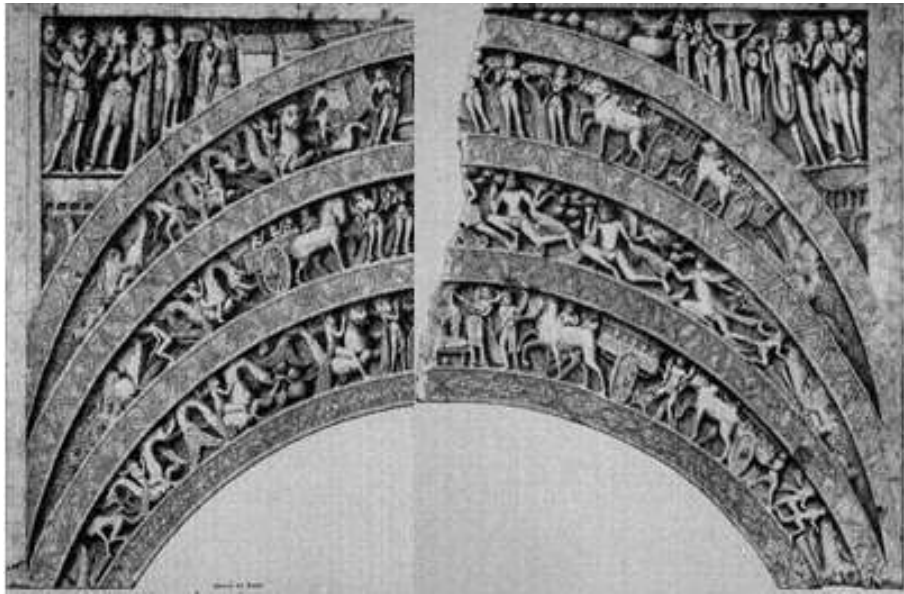


Fig. No. 06: A Toran depicting a group of standing worshippers heading towards ayagapattas and below a processional scene on carts flanked by makaras on the cornes, Mathura (Courtesy V. A. Smith *The Jain Stupa and Other Antiquities of Mathura*, Allahabad, 1901)

Though at present we have no trace of any complete *torana* from Mathura but the recovery of a large number of architectural fragments, such as upright pillars, architraves and *salabhanjika* figures show that *toranas* were being constructed either attached with *stupas* or temples.¹² A *stupa* carved on an *ayagapatta* of about first century A.D. from Mathura depicts a *torana* with three architraves supported on two upright pillars flanked by *salabhanjikas* as represented at Sanchi.¹³



Fig. No. 07: Torana, or gateway and railing of stupa, a fragment of a Jaina stupa, Kankali Tila, near Mathura (Government Museum, Lucknow) (Courtesy V. A. Smith *The Jain Stupa and Other Antiquities of Mathura*, Allahabad, 1901)



Fig. No. 08: Jain ayagapatta, Kankali Tila, Mathura, Dated: 1st century CE, The torana is adorned with two 'shrivatsa' symbol and flanked by two dancing girls (Courtesy V. A. Smith *The Jain Stupa and Other Antiquities of Mathura*, Allahabad, 1901)

A *salabhanjika* and remains of horizontal beams excavated at Sonkh near Mathura were the parts of a *torana* which was probably attached to a Naga temple of Kushana period.¹⁴ Here we have a western end of a top lintel depicting an elephant with a *makara* who carries a lotus stalk in his trunk. The other piece which is the western end of the bottom lintel shows a male *naga-purusa* figure stepping out from the open mouth of a *makara*¹⁵ having curved tail at the end. Several other *torana* fragments also show the spiral *makaras* as represented at Bharhut.¹⁶

Sonkh, Mathura, Kushan period, (c.2nd cent. A.D.), lintel of an apsidal brick built Naga temple, depicting makara with naga-purusha and another part showing Naga-raja and Naga-rani flanked by some fellow members.

A *shalabhanjika* from the southern gate of the same period



Fig. No. 09: (Courtesy Hartel, Herbert, 1976, Hartel, Herbert 1976) Some Results of the Excavations at Sonkh: A Preliminary Report, New Delhi, pp.97-98, figs, 43-44.)

The tradition of *torana* building extended to other parts of Central India, during Shunga-Kushana and Gupta periods and later on became popular in the medieval period. A few fragmentary examples of *toranas* are reported from Katar-Umaragadha and Musa Nagar in tehsil Ghatampur, district Kanpur and Jankhat near Kannauj in Uttar Pradesh. Remains of upright pillars surmounted with lion capitals, railing posts and other decorated stone pieces reported scattered around Katar-Umaragadha and Musa Nagar have greater resemblance with *torana* pillars of Bharhut. A *shalabhanjika* bracket and a pair of posts with an inscription of third century AD from Jankhat near Kannauj, which is at present housed in the Archaeological Museum, Kannauj, U.P. The Top of the *shalabhanjika* bracket and that of the door-jamb are joined with another piece of stone which indicates that it must have been inserted into a socket of an architrave. These architectural fragments must have been parts of a *torana* which was built on the style of Sanchi and Mathura.

From about ninth century onwards the *toranas* were elaborately ornamented. The composition of these *toranas* was recorded by the artists and the *acharyas* in the *vastu* and *shilpa*-texts which was followed as a rule by their successors. The North Indian texts of Nagar School and

the South Indian texts of the Dravida School, both have mentioned the types and decorative aspects of *toranas* in details. *Mayamatam* and *Silparatnam* describe four types of *torana*. These are *stambha-torana*, *patra-torana*, *makara-torana* and *chitra-torana* (*Mayamatam*, 21, 29-80; *Shilparatna*, 23, 10-32). *Manasara* classified these *toranas* into four categories namely *patra-torana*, *pushpa-torana*, *ratna-torana* and *chitra-torana* (*Manasara*, XLVI, 19). *Aparajitaprccha* describes *toranas* (gate-way) classifying them into five categories namely *uttunga-torana*, *maladhara-torana*, *vichitra-torana*, *chitrarupa-torana* and *makaradhvaja-torana* (*Aparajitaprccha* 194, 1-3)

The arch adorned with leaves and creepers is called the *patra-torana*. Here the crocodile and leaves should be ornamentally carved at the base and top of the arches while forepart should be furnished with leaves, demons and creepers etc. and on the both sides of the pillar should be carved *vyala* figures (*Manasara*, XLVI, 20, 23-25). The same arch adorned with various ornaments, jewels, flowers and with the demi-gods, the *Yakshas*, *Vidyadharas* and others, is stated to be the *chitra-torana*. (*Manasara*, XLVI, 26). The arch decorated with various flowers is known as the *pushpa-torana*. (*Manasara*, XLVI, 27). It should be furnished with the carvings of crocodiles and female *Kinnaras* but should be without any other carvings and lotuses, although all over decorated with *makaranda* (a kind of jasmine) flowers and various ornaments (*Manasara*, XLVI, 28). The *ratna-torana* should be ornamented with all jewels (*Manasara*, XLVI, 21). It should be decorated with the nine gems, with crocodiles and the *Kinnaras*, all the gems should be engraved on the tail and all other limbs of the crocodiles; the gems should be suspended like clusters of stars over the belly of the crocodiles; two serpent shaped pillars should be erected over the upper part of the arch; the extreme parts of the crocodile should be covered with all the gems placed in rows and it should be adorned with all other ornaments (*Manasara*, XLVI, 28-31). The lotus and the elephant should be made over the middle of the arch and the image of the *Lakshmi* should be made over the centre adorned with various ornaments (*Manasara*, XLVI, 32). These *toranas* may be also constructed quite plain that is, without any such carvings or decorations (*Manasara*, XLVI, 35-36).

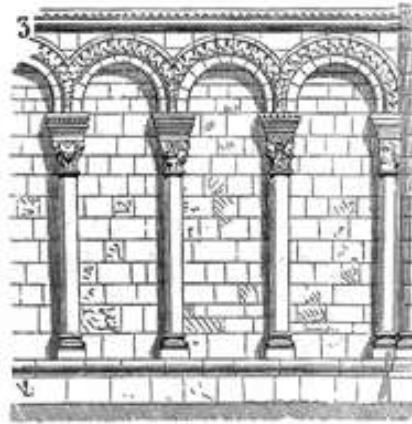
Uttunga-torana consists of *pitha*, *kumbhika*, *stambha* carved with *tilaka*, *bharana*, *shirah*, *gadavi*, *kutachadya* and *makara* supporting architrave decorated with *illika* having *Sadashiva* in the centre, *Brahma* in the south and *Vishnu* in the north (*Aparajitaprccha* 194, 4-9). If the same pattern is represented in a pair, it is called as *maladhara-torana*, and if above it there is square decoration of *illika* in all four directions, east, west, south and north, it is stated as *vichitra-torana*. (*Aparajitaprccha* 194, 10-11). *Chitrarupa-torana* has decorations of *mattavarana* and is flanked by a pillar on both the sides while *makaradhvaja-torana* has six pillars (*Aparajitaprccha* 194, 12-13).

Besides, above mentioned *toranas* in the texts, later on from eleventh century onwards many other kinds of *toranas* (arches) decorated with *illika* (caterpillar), *gajatalu* (coffered cusp), *tilaka* (with figure in the centre), *hindola* (swinging) and various other designs were also introduced in the art of central India, Rajasthan and Gujarat regions.

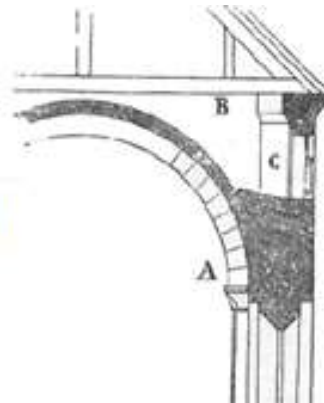
Thus, these were variously known as: *stambha-torana* (made up of pillars or pilasters), *patra-torana* (decorated with leaves), *makara-torana* (decorated with crocodiles), *chitra-torana* (decorated with figures), *pushpa-torana* (decorated with flowers), *ratna-torana* (decorated with diamonds and

jewels), *vaktra-torana* (decorated with lion faces-*Kirttimukhas*), *illika-torana* (decorated with caterpillar), *hindola-torana* (swinging) *tilaka-torana* (serpentine decoration with figure in the centre) and *gajatalu-torana* (decorated with elephant's palate-coffered cusp like design)¹⁷.

Stambha-torana is that decorative element which is made up of a pillars or pilasters topped by an arcature decorated with a band of lotuses, a groove and a fillet above that is a fish like arched piece ornamented with foliage and lotus stems. In all types of building it is to be placed between the pillars. (Mayamatam, 21, 29-32; Shilparatna, 23, 29-32.)



The *patra-torana* is in the shape of a crescent moon and is decorated with foliage. (Mayamatam, 21, 69; Silparatna, 23,11)



The arcature in which *Purima* (*Kirttimukha* or *Panca-vaktra*) is placed in the middle on the snouts of two *makara* with other various kinds of decorations is called *makara-torana*. (Mayamatam, 21, 69-70; Silparatna, 23,12-13)





Fig. No. 10: Citra-torana is where Purima at the centre, is flanked by a makara which he holds by the trunks and from the mouths of the makaras pour vidyadhara, dwarves, lions, vyala, hamsa, infants as well as garlands and festoons, jewels and ornaments for this arcature which is perfectly proper for gods and for kings.(Mayamatam, 21, 70-72; Silparatna, 23,14-16.)

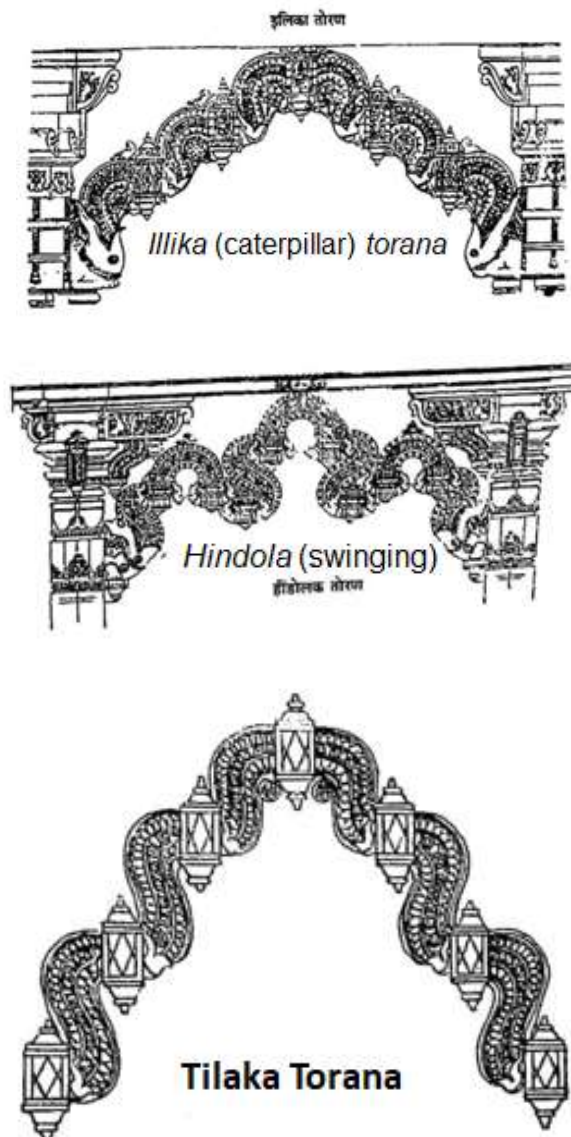


Fig. No. 11:

Many temples of early medieval and medieval periods are adorned with *Toranas*. In these temples the *torana*-gate or the *torana*-arch is represented from about late 9th century AD. Gadarmal temple (c.875 AD) at Badoh (Dist. Vidisha, M.P.) is remarkable for a huge *torana* on the northern side.¹⁸ The Ghatesvara temple (c.925 A.D.) at Baroli, district Kota in Rajasthan, is entered by a *makara-torana* of a simple bow like form.¹⁹ While Sasa-Bahu temples at Nagda, district Udaipur in Rajasthan are approached through a *makara-torana* which is not unlike that of the Ghatesvara temple at Baroli.²⁰ The closed hall of the larger temple at Nagda has four central pillars with *makara-toranas* thrown across them which are most richly ornamented.²¹ Kali temple (c. 10th cent.), locally known as Mahajamata temple at Terahi near Kadwaha, district Guna, M.P. also represented a grand *torana*.²² Ruins of a large Vishnu temple (c. 10th cent.) at Gyaraspur, district Guna, M.P. also has a ornamented *torana*, locally called *hindola-torana*, which is supported on a pair of majestic *bhadra* pillars decorated with various motifs. The space between the pillars is filled by a *makara-torana* of two complete loops springing from the top of the lower brackets. The loops, carved with figures of garland bearing *vidyadhara*s, touch the lower surface of the beam, which rests on the upper *bhuta*-brackets and is relieved by a register of scrolls and a frieze of deities in niches and devotees in the recesses. The crowning members of the *torana* are lost.²³



Fig. No. 12: Hindola Torana, Vishnu Temple, late 9th Cent., Gyaraspur, Guna

The 'Hindola Torana' or the 'Swinging Gateway' is an entrance gateway having two lofty pillars that support a double arched architrave. The pillars stand upright on a pedestal with its bases housing carvings that depict the ten incarnations or avatars of Lord.

The entrance porch of the Laksamana-temple (c. 10 cent.), the Kandaria-Mahadeva temple (c. 11th cent.) and the Javari temple (late 11th cent.) at Khajuraho, district Chhatarpur, M.P. is entered through an ornate *makara-torana* which is profusely carved with miniature figures resembling as a hanging tracery. The Laksamana temple shows a simple *makara-torana* of two loops, each coming out from the mouth of a flanking crocodile which has been forced open by a bearded gladiator carrying a sword in the right hand and a scarf-like object in the left. A handsome male figure is seen seated on the proboscis of the crocodile carrying a lotus flower in the left hand. The loops are decorated with a running frieze of dancing *vidyadhara* couples carrying a garland or playing on musical instruments. The meeting point of the loops is decorated with a large *gagaraka* pendant dropping from the mouth of a *Kirttimukha*.²⁴ The architrave of the *ardha-mandapa* of the Parsvanatha temple is surmounted by a frieze showing *makara-torana* of five loops in the centre and male and female attendants on the sides. The *makara-torana* rests on the two *Kirttimukha* projections and is preserved only in the east side.²⁵



Fig. No. 13: Kandariya Mahadeva temple - Mukha-mandapa, Makara Torana (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)

The Kandariya Mahadeva and the Javari temples have *makara-toranas* of four loops without flanking figures. The three junctions of the loops are decorated with pinecones. The upper edges of the loops are embellished with lotus scrolls and a frieze of *vidhyadhara*s or *vidyadhara* couples, dancing or carrying garlands or playing on musical instruments. While each junction of the loops is crowned by a *kirttimukha*. *Vidyadhara* couple also occur within the loops in Kandaria Mahadeva. The outer and inner faces represent niches on the flanks of the *makaras* containing figures of Siva-Parvati, Laksami-Narayana and Brahma-Brhmani²⁶



Fig. No. 14: Sun temple - a view of torana Modhera, temple, Modhera, Mehsana, Gujarat, ca 1027 CE (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)



Fig. No. 15: Pillars and tilaka torana, Mahavira temple, Kumbharia, Banaskantha, Gujarat, 1062 CE (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)

Later temples of Rajasthan and Gujarat, the temples of the Solanki style of Kumbhariya in district Banaskantha of Gujarat and Dilwara group of Jain temples in Rajasthan represent mainly three types of ornamental *torana* namely the *illika-torana* (crawling caterpillar), the *madala-tilaka* (serpentine) and the *makara-torana*. The pillars of the *sabha-mandapa* of these temples are surmounted by brackets with multi-bends *torana*-arches in between. The *rangamandapa* of the temples at Kumbharia has *toranas* in four directions between the *bhadra* pillars. The *rangamandapas* of the Dilwara temples show *toranas* between the pillars flanking the middle pair. As an exception the Mahavira temple at Kumbharia has *torana* in *trika-mandapa* between the side and the central columns and the *mandapa* of the Neminath temple has a *torana* in its fore-*bhadra*.²⁷



Fig. No. 16: (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)



Gajatalu Torana

Fig. No. 17: (Courtesy American Institute of Indian Studies)

The *illika-torana* and the *madala-tilaka-torana* are also known from the earlier Brahmanical temples at Modhera (district Mehsana in Gujarat) and Kiradu, (district Barmer in Rajasthan). But the double twisted *madala-tilaka* variety first known from the hall of the Luna-Vasahi temple (Abu, Sirohi, Rajasthan) seems the innovation of the architects who worked for the Jain temples. The *toranas* were used more frequently in Jain temples than the Brahmanical temples, but their rich beauty is fully expressed and seen at its best in the Jain *rangamandapas*.²⁸

**Madala Torana, Saas Bahu temple,
Nagda, near Udaipur, c. 11th Cent.**



Fig. No. 18:

The earliest illustration of *makara-mukh* (crocodile) on *torana* appeared at Bharhut in Sunga period. It also continued in Mathura art and later on gained popularity being essentially represented in most of the examples on both the sides of each *torana* projecting *madala* or other kind of figures from the mouth of the crocodile (*makara*). So it would not be proper to call each of them a *makara-torana* on the basis of a crocodile being shown on the sides. Other decorative factors should also be taken into account while naming a *torana*.

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Sacred Transformation: Religious Influence and Socioeconomic Dynamics in Ancient and Early Medieval Kashmir

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Introduction: Religion is a pervasive and universal institution deeply rooted in human beings. Throughout history, religion has greatly influenced societies. It is not just a strict institution but influences all other institutions. It has shaped individual beliefs, cultural norms, and values. Religion has also defined social groups, organisations, and political power.¹ Like other regions of ancient South Asia, the socioeconomic impact of religion in ancient and early medieval Kashmir was significant and influenced various aspects of daily life. Religious transformations in the region significantly affected socioeconomic changes, leading to transformations in the social and economic landscape for those practicing the religion. In this backdrop, analyses have been conducted to understand how specific social groups emerged distinctively through their faith and how these faiths gradually established and impacted the socioeconomic fabric during the specified period in the history of the region. Additionally, this effort will delve into the significance of temples and pilgrimage centers in early medieval Kashmir. This research aims to understand their roles in fostering cultural integration, stimulating economic development, and facilitating religious exchange within the region of Kashmir.

Religion and Social Transformations: Kashmir, during early medieval times, experienced a notable social transformation marked by the emergence of distinct social groups. A comparison between the *Nilamata Purana* and Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* reveals this shift. The *Nilamata Purana*, written anonymously in the 7th century CE, depicts a diverse array of tribes inhabiting Kashmir. The *Nilamata Purana* enumerates various tribal social groups dominant in the region, including *Nagas*, *Pisachas*, *Darvas*, *Abhisaras*, *Gandharas*, *Shakas*, *Khasas*, *Mandavas*, *Yavanas*, *Madaras*, and others.² However, Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* offers a different perspective on the social structure of the region, suggesting a significant evolution over time.³ The social geography apparent from the *Rajatarangini*

marked a complete transformation from the preceding phase. It has been evident that numerous distinct classes emerged in the landscape of the region. These social groups appear to have emerged considerably due to their socioeconomic and religious affiliations.

Tracing the origin of early sects of India in Kashmir is challenging, and the social structure before the early medieval period of the region is murky. However, the prominence of social groups linked to different sects became more evident from the early medieval period onwards. Its profound influence on the fabric of various social groups, particularly those involved in teaching and propagating its ideologies, is evident. During this period, the emergence and prominence of the Brahmins became apparent. This development can be attributed to the dominance of Brahmanism within the region. This has also facilitated the establishment and flourishing of Brahmins as priests influence of Brahmins within the social hierarchy of Kashmir. Over time, the Brahmins, who were the lineage of the Vedic priesthood, extended their religious assistance to other sects and region.⁴ They form distinct social groups, who were often portrayed in sources to have migrated towards Kashmir in different waves, sometimes brought by the ruling elite of the time.⁵ *Rajatarangini* mentions that the Brahmins migrated to Kashmir from earlier times and were bestowed with *agrahara* land grants and other privileges.⁶ These social groups brought the appellations they had acquired through the varna attributes in the Subcontinent.

Brahmins and their social titles came to Kashmir region. These migrants or those who were brought to the region for the propagation of their creed, brought with them rituals and customs, which increasingly dominated society. To accommodate these new factors, the social structure of the region got transformed. Though the region's social structure appeared to have followed South Asian traditions, it was also influenced by local conditions, influences, and historical events. This cultural adaptation and alteration were not specific to Kashmir but could be found in different regions, demonstrating the dynamic nature of cultural integration and change. Some of the Brahmins were seen to have arrived to Kashmir through migration, and some may have arrived out of their religious zeal. Kalhana mentions numerous waves of Brahmin migration in the region, implicitly making it apparent that these Brahmins maintained and consolidated their position in Kashmir.⁷ Sources indicate references to such migration during the time of different rulers in ancient Kashmir, starting with king Jaluka, Gopaditya, Mihirakula, etc.⁸ The migration of Brahmins into Kashmir highlights how the varna system, a fundamental aspect of the varna system, permeates the region.⁹ However, the varna system was adapted and interpreted differently in various regions of the Indian Subcontinent. The concept of acculturation, where cultures come into contact and exchange features, is central to understanding the social dynamics in Kashmir following the migration of Brahmins. This process wasn't one-sided; the Brahmins and the existing societal framework in Kashmir influenced each other. This mutual adaptation ensured that while the social system underwent considerable change, it didn't result in a complete overhaul of the existing structures. In this backdrop, a flexible social system seems to have emerged in Kashmir, which otherwise was rigid in the Subcontinent.

In Kashmir, historical sources of the period suggest a more fluid social hierarchy than the rigid caste division in other contemporary societies. However, like other regions, Brahmans emerged as a significant social group in Kashmir. Their prominence was intricately linked to their religious function. Caste rigidities often strictly defined social mobility and occupational roles. In Kashmir, Brahmans managed to transcend these traditional boundaries, providing services beyond their conventional religious duties. Besides this, the belief in their supernatural abilities and the fear of the consequences of *Brahman hatya* created a protective layer around them, reinforcing their elevated position.¹⁰ This phenomenon is not unique to Kashmir but can be seen in various forms across different cultures where religious or spiritual leaders were attributed with extraordinary powers. This resulted in the elevated status of Brahmans and the belief in their spiritual authority. They predicted the future by reading stars and bodily signs, and *abhicara* or *Kharkhoda* (sorcery) was their other important occupation.¹¹ Kalhana has described this sorcery as the cause of death for several rulers and others associated with the ruling elite.¹² The potency of Brahmanical sorcery highlights the deep intertwining of spiritual belief systems with the political machinations of the time. This further elevated their status and cemented their influence over spiritual and temporal domains.

The early medieval period in Kashmir witnessed the consolidation and flourishing of Brahmanism in the region, which profoundly impacted the socioeconomic fabric. The predominance of the different Brahmanical cults in the belief system led to the consolidation and flourishing of the Brahman community, which smoothed their access to the royal courts. The Brahmans, who were well versed in the religious scriptures, were known to get their earnings from the religious ceremonies and the *Dakshina* (sacrificial fee and other offerings) given to them by the devotees.¹³ They received sacrificial offerings and fees from the people, which consolidated their position. *Nilamata Purana* delineates diverse ceremonies where devotees were emphasized on presenting gifts to the Brahmins.¹⁴ *Rajatarangini* details instances where kings and queens magnanimously offered gifts to Brahmins. Additionally, prosperous merchants made substantial contributions to the Brahmins. They were bestowed with numerous land grants in the region mainly because of their religious beliefs.¹⁵ The special favours extended to the Brahmans in the region seem to have increased the migration of Brahmans towards the region for their economic gains. Their growing influence over time led them to engage in the political affairs of the region, with many rising to high ministerial positions.¹⁶ Additionally, some Brahmins adopted professions in the military services, a prerogative not typically afforded to them in other contemporary societies. The crucial question is whether migration to the region encompassed all varnas or mainly Brahmins. Literary sources barely discuss migration from lower varnas during the period. Assuming migration from all varnas seems speculative, lacking solid literary evidence.

Sacred Spaces as Symbols of Religious and Economic Power: The early medieval period in Kashmir is also known for its various colossal sacred spaces. Though in ruinous states, these structures offer us glimpses of the time to which they belong. The temple ruins scattered across

Kashmir serve as silent witnesses to the rich religious history of Kashmir. These temples seem to have acted as public architecture, as they contained markets and employed numerous officials maintaining the administration and recording transactions of these sacred spaces. Temples often reflect the generosity of the ruler who constructed them, and these structures also contain a medium of information about the social relations associated with power. Power in human societies seems to have been expressed and exercised through recognizing and accepting symbols of legitimacy.¹⁷ These sacred spaces highlight the predominance of various faiths over time and underscore the cultural and religious dynamism of ancient and early medieval Kashmir. This religious architecture was a ritual instrument that integrated individuals and communities into a cultural fabric.¹⁸ The architecture and iconography of these temples offer invaluable insights into the religious practices, artistic expressions, and socio-political contexts of the period.¹⁹ These ancient sites implicitly show the appropriateness of the space by the various religious traditions in ancient Kashmir. Temples emerged as a pioneering focal point and a principal instrument of integration in other parts of the Subcontinent during the early medieval.²⁰ This assumption appears to be true in the context of Kashmir. Many temples in the region were elaborate and monumental, serving as a testament to the prosperity of the region. These structures also reflected the royal patronage of various rulers to diverse religious traditions. An analysis of these edifices in an economic context indicates the high level of prosperity during this period.

The construction and administration of temples in early medieval Kashmir significantly impacted the local economy and society. These temples, often described in literary sources as recipients of large land grants from rulers, played a central role not just in the religious but also in the economic life of the people. Land grants supported the temples' religious activities and created various employment opportunities for the common people.²¹ The construction of temples required skilled and unskilled labour, thus employing craftsmen, artisans, and construction workers. Beyond construction, the day-to-day administration of these temples required a wide range of staff, from priests to administrators, creating a stable source of income for many individuals. This policy of religious inclusivity and the economic benefits derived from the construction of temples illustrate the multifaceted role of religion in early medieval Kashmir. Temples served not just as spiritual centres but also as hubs of economic activity and social integration, contributing to the overall development and prosperity of the region. King Lalitaditya Muktapida patronised Brahmanism and Buddhism, and his capital, Parihaspur, was adorned with the structures of these faiths.²² The construction of numerous temple complexes during this period reflects the substantial investment of resources, underscoring the intertwining of religious and economic structures.

The rulers of Kashmir were seen to have resorted to temples to finance their wars and upon their success they return their loan amount along with the interest.²³ However, it has been apparent that these religious institutions were amassing huge wealth. During the later phase of the early medieval period, it became the pretext for the subsequent rulers to loot these temples for the wealth they possessed.²⁴ These temples also reveal the important deities common during the period and acted as catalysts for economic activities. Religious institutions patronised the arts, architecture, and

education. Temples and monasteries became centres of learning and artistic expression. Religion was often used in the region to legitimise the ruling authorities of the time, which in turn may have provided legitimacy to the ruling authorities.²⁵ The construction of grand temples in the region of Kashmir and the creation of religious art reflected the rulers' devotion and the avenues created for the employment of artisans, architects, and scholars.

The religious traditions of ancient Kashmir indeed have a deep interconnectivity with the broader Indian Subcontinent. The religious landscape of the region was shaped by myriad influences, reflecting a rich fabric of beliefs and practices shared across regions. This cultural and religious exchange was pivotal in establishing Kashmir as a spiritual centre and a hub for pilgrimage and trade. The influx of pilgrims from various parts of the Subcontinent underscores the region's significance in the religious imagination of other regions.²⁶ This cultural exchange facilitated the influx of pilgrims from various regions, fostering trade relations and increasing pilgrimage-related activities. The flourishing conditions of Buddhism in Kashmir seem to be the cause, which often proved to be the important factor that pushed the people from different regions into Kashmir. The people associated with this faith visited the region mainly for religious places to acquaint themselves with the cultures of other peoples inhabiting different regions. The travels of Hiuen Tsang and Ou-k'ong to Kashmir are pivotal in the history of cultural and educational exchange between Kashmir and China. Hiuen Tsang's journey in the 7th century, motivated by his quest for knowledge and understanding of Buddhist teachings, indicates Kashmir's significance as a centre of Buddhist learning. His desire to learn from Kashmiri scholars highlights the region's esteemed position in the Buddhist world. This further confirms that Kashmir emerged as a focal point of various cultural practices during the early medieval period. Yigal Bronner further elaborates on this, indicating that Kashmir garnered recognition as the principal cultural epicentre.²⁷

The sources of the period highlight the important aspect related to the economic role of different religions that were common in Kashmir. These religions were often associated with certain places in the region, which were considered sacred until now. This resulted in the emergence of pilgrimage centres, an important aspect of the Puranic religion. This fact has been emphasised by Kalhana while mentioning 'Kashmir as a country where there was not a space as large as a grain of sesamum without tirtha.'²⁸ Suman Jamwal suggested the emergence of *tirthas* took place mainly as a result of the presence of priestly community, and the appropriate reason she attributed to this was the decline of trade.²⁹ This economic downturn led to a situation where trading communities could not support the increasing number of temples and *mathas*. In response, the Brahmans in the region sought to capitalise on the sentiments of those who adhered to the worship of Nagas and created numerous *tirthas*. These pilgrimage sites elucidate the function of the *tirthas* in promoting connectivity within and among regions, both intra- and inter-state. It scrutinizes inquiries regarding the actors involved in pilgrimages, their facilitators, and the underlying rationale motivating pilgrimage, as portrayed in the textual narrative.

The naming patterns of *tirthas* (sacred pilgrimage sites) in Kashmir reflect a cultural and religious continuity across the Indian Subcontinent. The replication of *tirtha* names from other parts

of the Subcontinent in Kashmir suggests a deliberate effort by the followers of the Brahmanical faith to recreate familiar sacred landscapes in their new environment. This practice of naming places after well-known *tirthas* underscores the deep-rootedness of pilgrimage traditions and the desire to maintain spiritual connections with the broader Hindu cultural sphere. Moreover, the similarity in nomenclature and the reverence for these replicated *tirthas* highlight the interconnectedness of religious sites across the Indian Subcontinent. It shows how pilgrimage and the sanctity of place transcend geographic boundaries, creating a pan-Indian religious landscape that is both diverse and unified. As a result, they revered Prayaga, the sacred confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna, as the Vitasta and Sindhu rivers. They also regarded the area from Trikritisangama to Har and the confluence of the Pavana and Rajovinirmala to Ciramocana as holy, similar to Varanasi.³⁰ The ritualistic establishment of *tirthas* along the banks of rivers revered as goddesses represents a complex interplay of geography, religion, and culture. This process not only sanctifies the landscape but also serves as a means of cultural integration and religious expansion, particularly in regions like Kashmir and Chamba, where the Brahmanic tradition sought to establish its presence amidst a diverse religious milieu.³¹

Furthermore, the names of various *tirthas* in Kashmir, such as *Sarasvati*, *Rsikulya*, *Ramabhadra*, *Mundaprastha*, *Bhrgutunga*, *Citrakuta*, *Bharatagiri*, and *Kamatirtha*, were similar to those found elsewhere in Indian Subcontinent.³² The creation of *tirthas* within Kashmir, influenced by Brahmanism, signifies a strategic adaptation of religious practices to suit regional geographical and socio-economic contexts. By establishing a microcosm of the other sacred sites within their landscape, the people of Kashmir not only made pilgrimage more accessible but also stimulated internal economic activities. This localization of pilgrimage sites served dual purposes: fulfilling spiritual needs and fostering economic development. This phenomenon also highlights the role of religious institutions in ancient economies. Temples and other religious institutions near *tirthas* accumulated wealth through donations and endowments. This could be reinvested in the community or used to support religious activities. This economic model, driven by faith and pilgrimage, contributed significantly to the prosperity of the region during the ancient and early medieval periods.

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Metal Icons of Assam: Tracing the Sculptural Tradition

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Introduction: For thousands of years, people around the world have created metal sculptures, each region developing its own distinctive styles, techniques and cultural significance (Chandra 1985, Agrawal 2000). In ancient Egypt, metal sculptures made of bronze, gold and copper were commonly made through hammering and casting techniques, primarily for religious and burial usages. Greek and Roman artists in the Mediterranean World made astounding strides in bronze casting to create life-sized statues that could be reproduced in great detail and in vast quantities by using the indirect lost-wax method (Wang 2022). Later on, the artists like Donatello (c. 1386 – 1466) and Benvenuto Cellini (1500 – 1571) revived ancient bronze methods throughout the Renaissance, producing highly lifelike sculptures with exquisite anatomy and emotional touch (Lange 2021).

In West Africa, especially among the Yoruba and Benin peoples of Nigeria, bronze and brass sculptures were created using the lost-wax technique. The result was exquisite royal portraits and plaques that functioned as both historical documents and symbols of divine kingship (Odiahi 2017). Even in pre-colonial South America, cultures like the Moche and Inca, metalworkers made figures of deities and ritual artefacts out of copper, silver, and gold using sophisticated metalworking methods like alloying and repoussé (a metalworking method involving hammering a malleable metal from the back to form a low-relief design) (Schorsch 1998, Hörz and Kallfas 2000). Methods including hammering, etching, repoussé, chasing, inlaying and alloy casting have evolved independently and across cultures in various places, contributing to the global legacy of metal

sculptures (Wyatt 1852). Even though these diverse traditions are geographically and chronologically apart, they nonetheless have a regard for metal as a medium that can communicate both spiritual transcendence and worldly workmanship.

In China, the Shang (1600 to 1046 BCE) and Zhou (1046 to 256 BCE) dynasties developed elaborate bronze casting techniques to produce ritual containers and figurines, often embellished with elaborate patterns and inscriptions, as an alternative to the lost-wax method (Veira 2022, Liu 2023). Similarly, Southeast Asia has a rich artistic and spiritual tradition of crafting metal sculptures of gods and goddesses dating back over a thousand years. For the production of bronze images of Buddha and religious icons, Southeast Asian countries like Thailand and Cambodia have appropriated and modified Indian traditions, often including local artistic elements. Buddhism and Hinduism, which originated in India, had an enormous impact on this age-old tradition in Southeast Asian regions. Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, and Indonesia have rich metal sculpting traditions, particularly in making the images of Buddhist and Hindu deities such as Buddha, Vishnu, Shiva, and Lakshmi, as well as regional variations on these figures (Kossak and Watts 2001). Typically, lost-wax casting is utilised to make these sculptures, allowing for the delicate and realistic depiction of divine shapes, facial expressions, symbolic gestures or *mudras* and intricate adornment. By the third century CE, devotional images of the Buddha which were made of copper alloy had undoubtedly started to be produced in northern India. Beginning with the oldest known images from Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Hindu Kush areas, the skill for making Buddha sculptures of copper alloy was subsequently transmitted throughout Asia and eventually made its way throughout northern India. Through China, Korea, Japan, and western China, it proceeded northward. Along with the spread of Buddhism and Hinduism, the demand for sculptures also moved southward from India, passing via Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia (Behrendt 2007, Strahan 2023).

Bronze and gilt-metal images of Buddhas are commonly found in Thai temples, usually in serene meditation positions. Their flame-like halos and carved robes blend regional and Indian Gupta art styles (Behrendt 2007). Artists in Cambodia produced elaborate bronze statues of Hindu deities like Shiva and Vishnu, especially during the Khmer Empire (9th - 15th centuries CE). Like those from Angkor, these statues are often characterised by their exquisite diamonds, divine serenity and keen sense of proportion. In Myanmar, metal Buddha figures, especially those from the Pagan (Bagan), usually include a stylised flame on top of the head, symbolising enlightenment and softer facial expressions (Guy 2014). Myanmar, Thai and Cambodian sculptures were predominantly hollow cast, with iron armatures in the cores, in keeping with Indian tradition. After examining the majority of the metal sculptures it is confirmed that sculptors use copper, tin and lead alloys with varying amounts of tin (Strahan 1997).

The sculptures in the early Cambodian group are very different from one another and from other sculptures of the same era in Southeast Asia. Almost all of the sculptures are very small in size. With the exception of iron, most metals must have been imported due to the insufficient sources of metal ore in Cambodia and the Mekong Delta (Bunker and Latchford 2011). However, an

old copper mine in northern Cambodia has been discovered at Chhaep mining district of Preah Vihear province (Clouet *et al.* 2022).

Indonesian metal sculptures are dominated by solid castings (Mechling *et al.* 2018, Mechling 2020). The unique blend of Hindu-Buddhist sculptural art is found in Indonesia, particularly on the islands of Java and Bali. Generally gods like Ganesha, Durga and Buddha are shown in bronze with dynamic poses and complicated symbolic nuances. The art reflects both Indian influence and indigenous culture. Often located around temple grounds or royal courts, metal casting techniques were run by skilled hereditary craftspeople. To ensure the sacredness of the procedure, certain ritualistic procedures were observed. Before beginning the casting process, offerings, prayers and astrological timing were usually observed because the sculptures were not merely works of art but rather sacred expressions of celestial energy. Metal sculptures are still vital to temple architecture, religious devotion and cultural identity in a number of Southeast Asian countries, where traditional methods are being employed (Mechling 2020).

Gilt-bronze Buddhist sculptures are made by first casting the desired image in bronze and then putting a thin layer of gold on the surfaces. Since at least the first century CE, gilt-bronze Buddhist sculptures have been consistently produced throughout Asia, including Central and Southeast Asia, India, China, Korea and Japan. Depending on the place and time of production, the casting and gilding procedures, as well as the copper alloy components and proportions, differ. The gilt-bronze Buddhist sculpture is regarded as one of the most important subjects in the study of ancient Buddhist sculpture (Byoungchan 2021). Bronze casting was done in ancient times using two main methods, namely lost-wax casting, early evidence of which has come from various regions and piece-mould casting, and was mostly utilised in East Asia (Davey 2009).

Metal Sculptural Traditions in India: Metal objects have been produced in India since very early times (Chandra 1985, Agrawal 2000). These appeared right in Harappan culture (Bandyopadhyay 1987). Examples of the widespread use of bronze as a casting medium in Harappan period include the famous bronze icon of a dancing girl, a small figure of a bull from Mohenjo-Daro, and a model of a bullock wagon from the Harappa site (c. 3000 BCE). The Daimabad Bronzes, discovered in 1974–75 at the Chalcolithic site of Daimabad in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra, represent one of the most remarkable assemblages of metal sculptures from prehistoric India. Comprising four major bronze figures, namely a chariot drawn by bulls, a water buffalo with a rider, an elephant with a rider and a standing human figure, the bronze collection demonstrates an advanced understanding of metal casting techniques, possibly employing the lost-wax method (Dhavalikar 1982). The anthropomorphic figures from Copper Hoard culture are some examples of the early portrayal of human figurines from India. These are copper human-like forms with a head, curved arms and outstretched legs, often found in large hoards in Uttar Pradesh (Yule 1985, Frembgen 1996, Shukla 2023-24). Apart from the anthropomorphs, a good number of harpoons and swords have been discovered from several sites across the Gangetic basin and parts of northern Rajasthan. These finds are associated with the Copper Hoard or Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP) culture, which dates to the

mid third millennium BCE. In Eastern India, where Chalcolithic metal icons are rare, copper alloys have been found in locations like Senuwar, Golbai Sasan, Bahiri, Mangalkot, Pandu Rajar Dhibi and Chirand. Accordingly, from the Neolithic-Chalcolithic transition onward through the early historic period, from the medieval period to the pre-industrial age, when traditional processes persisted, copper, bronze and brass goods and metal objects were frequently seen in eastern India (Chattopadhyay and Sengupta 2010).

Ancient Indian temples show the artistry and fine precision that went into each sculpture and casting of alloy metals. There are several places in India that are specialised in creating statues made of brass and bronze, particularly depicting non Buddhist Indian deities. During the early medieval era, the practice of creating metal icons and images increased. It expanded beyond the confines of art to an industrial level. A sense of an affluent state of economy, where the feudal desire for permanence increased dramatically, leading to a preference for metals over previously popular mediums like terracotta, stone, wood, or clay, among others, is conveyed by the literature available during this period on metallurgical science and alchemical practices, as well as the actual finds of metal sculptures, primarily from the dynastic states of Bihar and Bengal under the Palas (8th to 12th centuries CE) and Madhya Pradesh under the Rajputs (7th to 12th century CE) (Srivastava 2023-24).

The South Indian artists are known to have employed the lost-wax casting process, known locally as *madhuchistha vidhana*, to manufacture beautiful bronze images of Shiva, Vishnu, and Parvati. This technique was refined during the Chola dynasty (9th to 13th centuries CE). Although the Buddha metal sculpture from Sultanganj in Bhagalpur district of Bihar, dated to 6th to 8th century CE seems to be unique in terms of its size and substantially completeness of the copper statue (Thapar 1961), a large number of statues were created by the Palas of eastern India and Cholas of southern India beginning in the ninth century CE, as noted above. An example of a bronze mother goddess figurine from the Chola period comes from Adichanaullar in Tamil Nadu (Nagaswamy 2003).

Typically, the direct lost wax procedure was used to produce those solid castings (Udayakumar 2011). Bronze sculptures and figures made with the lost-wax technique have been discovered in various places across South India and are believed to have been made between 750 and 1100 CE (Sivaramamurti 1963). To make early copper or bronze figurines, trace amounts of tin and lead were added. According to Chattopadhyay and Sengupta (2010), southern India has been using bronze for a far longer time than the north, and zinc still makes up a very small percentage of the alloy together with lead.

Bronze Sculpting in India: Literary and Archaeological Sources: The tradition of bronze sculptures in India is richly documented in various literary sources, which provide valuable insights into the techniques, symbolism and cultural contexts associated with the art form. According to the *Yajurveda*, the metal worker, also known as the *Kamara*, "assumed the form of the Lord himself." He was a very important artisan in ancient India, and his name dates back to the Vedic era (Sivaramamurti 1962, Sanjay 2023). According to the ancient Indian writings known as the

Silpasastras, 'astadhātu' (eight metals) is the formal term used to describe bronze, an alloy of eight metals. Acclaimed Indian historian, archaeologist, and epigrapher N.K. Bhattashali (1929) termed this eight-metal alloy an 'octoalloy'. This alloy is made up of eight metals, including copper, tin, iron, lead, zinc, antimony, gold and silver, in varying proportions. The primary element was unquestionably copper, while gold and silver were either nonexistent or extremely insignificant. Numerous evidences from literature indicate that metal sculptures existed during the Mahabharata, Ramayana, Dharmasutra and Jataka periods. Kautilya's Arthashastra talks of factories and centres producing bell metal, brass and bronze objects (Garola 1984). Pure copper was probably too malleable for artists to work with, so they mixed it with other metals to make bronze or brass that could be used to cast statues (Thapar 1961, Krishna 2020: 846).

It is crucial to understand the methods used by the artisans to cast the bronze statues in the early period. Solid casting and hollow casting are the two main methods of casting. There are not many references to metal casting in India in the early texts. Numbers of early Vedic Sanskrit texts in India contains a brief reference to hollow casting of figures. Both hollow and solid casting of metal sculptures is mentioned in *Vishnudharmottara Purana*, a literature from the 6th century CE, that is likely the oldest known work on Indian painting and image production (Krishna 2020: 846–847).

Early medieval metal sculptures exhibit extraordinary skill in the art of metalworking. Fantastic craftsmanship is complemented by the skilled technological stamp metalworking of that era. Some of the renowned experts in the field were Sushrut (6th century BCE), Charak (4th century BCE), and later the renowned alchemist Nagarjuna (10th century CE). Nagarjuna's contemporaries, Yawan-Jatak of Yawaneshwar (Pingree 1978) and Angvijja of Pubbariya, discuss groups of various metals and their characteristics. The Angvijja (Muni 1957, cited in Srivastava 2023-24), made a categorisation of two groups, (a) *Manidhatu* (gems) and (b) *Loha* (metals), with the Dhatu group including gold, silver, iron, copper, lead and tin. Bronze is referred to here as '*Kans-loha*', and '*Harkut*' refers to a gold-like metal called brass (Srivastava 2023-24).

In India, metal statues and icons were created using the "Cire Perdue" technique, a French term meaning "lost wax process". Early in the 12th century, the Sanskrit text known as the *Manasollasa* (also known as *Abhilashitartha Chintamani*) covered a wide range of topics, including art. Art historian S.K. Saraswati (1957) interpreted the relevant portion of the *Manasollasa* that explains the lost wax method of creating solid metal figurines. The casting process has been used to create portions of enormous figures, such as the copper Buddha of Sultanganj. The copper made Buddha was 2.1 meters tall and weighed more than a ton. This statue is presently housed at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in the United Kingdom. The image is a noteworthy example of eastern Gupta art, demonstrating the grand level of metal-smithing skill (Reeves 1962).

The presence of a mould at an archaeological site is one of the strongest indicators of metal-casting activities. Among the earliest types is open terracotta or sand moulds made using the lost-wax technique. However, no definite example of a metal-casting mould has yet been discovered from the Indus Valley sites. The only reported specimen is a stone mould from Lothal in Gujarat,

where S.R. Rao (1979) found two grooved stones that may have served as open casting moulds (Pigott 1999, Udayakumar 2014).

Bronze casting techniques and the production of bronze representations of traditional icons were highly advanced in South India throughout the medieval period. Evidences of casting and modelling of bronze sculptures were prevalent during the rule of Pallavas in the 8th and 9th century CE. Some of the most exquisite and majestic bronze images were produced during the Chola period (11th - 12th century CE) in Tamil Nadu (Sivaramamurti 1962, Mehta 1971). The depiction of Lord Shiva seated in the *ardhaparyanka mudra*, which involves one leg dangling down, is seen in the Pallava period bronzes from the 8th century CE. His right hand is in the *achamana mudra*, giving the impression that he is about to swallow poison. The well-known dancing image of Shiva known as *Nataraja* was fully developed during the Chola period, and several models of this elaborate bronze image have subsequently been produced (Edgar *et al.* 1913, Balasubrahmanyam 1966, 1973). The Chola period saw the greatest flourishing of Indian metal art in southern India. The Cholas are considered to have produced some of the most celebrated artistic advancements in metal sculpting in Southern India throughout the medieval period (Udayakumar 2014).

With the advancement of metallurgy over the past millennium, Indian metalworkers have produced brass that resembles gold. To do this, copper and zinc were mixed or alloyed (Swarup and Agrawal 2010). In a number of ancient scriptures, the craftsman who produces sacred icons and images is called a "*sthapathi*". They belong to the *Kammalar* or *Viswakarma* community, which practiced a number of different crafts, including blacksmithing, gold smithing, copper smithing and stone carving (Krishna 1976, Udayakumar 2014). Traditional bronze sculptures in Tanjore District of Tamil Nadu are considered as a legacy of the *Viswakarma* group of families. At the time of casting bronze, the metalworkers prefer to use tin as an alloy to harden copper (Srinivasan 1998). The descendants of ancient sculptors continue to use the same technique and methodology. They have upheld traditions and work hard to create images of exceptional artistic worth and expertise. They achieve this by adhering to the conventions and styles established in the ancient scriptures while also using their own imagination and ingenuity. Studying the traditional methods of casting bronze is crucial for archaeologists because it helps them interpret the processes from artefacts and features discovered in the archaeological record. It is crucial for detecting particular kinds of manufacturing tools as well as differences in the sorts of furnaces and trash that are produced, among other things (Udayakumar 2014).

In Eastern India, since the fifth century BCE, copper and its alloys have been used. In order to create bronze, brass, and eventually gunmetal (an alloy of copper, zinc, tin, and lead), local metal-smiths were skilled in alloying copper with arsenic, tin, zinc and lead (Lal 1956). The 9th century witnessed encouraging experiments with artificial copper making. (Mishra and Mishra 2011). To create the original wax, beeswax and camphor are combined with oil and kneaded in the "lost wax" method. After that, the model is cooked in an oven and covered with clay until the mould is thick enough. There is still the hollow clay model after the wax melts and runs out. After heating, bronze which is an alloy that contains a significant amount of copper poured into the empty mould. Once

the metal has cooled and filled all the gaps, the mould is broken off. Before it can be used, the image is revived through procedures that erase blemishes and smooth the surfaces (Srinivasan 1998). The usage of more complicated alloys in ancient India, such as *Panch-loha*, *Varta-loha*, and *Ashta-dhatu*, where base and precious metals were mixed in varying amounts, sheds light on the long-run tradition of metal sculpting. Aside from other reasons, it added a new dimension to the image casting process by using many techniques for large-scale production depending on metal composition (Savrikar and Ravishankar 2011).

According to Donaldson (2001), the majority of early metal sculptures of Odisha were religious in nature, featuring a variety of Hindu deities like Vishnu, Shiva, Parvati, and Ganesha as well as Buddhist icons like Avalokiteshvara and Tara, particularly from the Buddhist sites of Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri, and Udayagiri. Notably, a number of magnificent bronze and brass statues of Ganesha and Vishnu from Puri and Bhubaneswar show excellent crafting skill of the traditional metalworkers (Patnaik 2002). The Dokra (Dhokra) craftspeople of western Odisha, especially in areas like Kalahandi, Dhenkanal and Sambalpur, continue this age-old metal-casting tradition today. These artisans continue to use the age-old lost-wax technique, creating ornamental, ceremonial items and icons of Gods and Goddesses that evoke archaic shapes and patterns (Tripathy 2010). Archaeological findings from sites like Sisupalgarh and Jaugada show that the practice of metal casting in Odisha has a long history and demonstrates the early mastery of metallurgy in the area (Mishra 1997).

The Odisha State Museum in Bhubaneswar houses a rich collection of ancient metal sculptures that reflect the region's artistic and religious traditions of the region from the 8th to the 12th centuries CE. Among the most notable examples is the bronze image of Varaha, the boar incarnation of Vishnu, which exemplifies the refined craftsmanship of the medieval Odishan metal sculptors. The metal image displays remarkable iconographic detailing typical of Odishan Vaishnavite art (Mishra 1997, Patnaik 2002). Another important specimen preserved in the museum is the bronze image of the Buddhist goddess Tara, representing the influence of Vajrayana Buddhism in the region from 8th to 12th century. The figure of Tara is portrayed in a graceful posture with symbolic attributes in her hands, embodying compassion and salvation. This sculpture, along with other Buddhist bronzes like Manjusri and Yamari, originally discovered from the Buddhist sites of Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri, and Udayagiri, illustrates the sophisticated bronze-casting techniques prevalent in Odisha (Behera 1993, Donaldson 2001).

The Post-Gupta era, feudal lords' desire for luxury in their daily lives was well satisfied by affordable, rust-resistant, shiny 'New-Age Metals' such as bronze and brass, which became a vital substitute for gold and silver in social life usage in general. The widespread usage of copper and its alloys altered people's perceptions of recognised metals for religious purposes and the creation of religious images, as well as their value as personal adornment (Srivastava 2023-24). The bronze treasure recovered at Akota near Vadodara established that bronze casting was practiced in Gujarat or western India between the sixth and ninth centuries. Most of the images depict Jain tirthankaras such as Mahavira, Parshvanath and Adinath (Talesara *et al.* 2023).

Metal Sculptures of Assam: Over the centuries, metal has been an important raw material for the production of a wide range of artistic and useful artefacts in Assam and throughout Northeast India. There are many metal objects from different cultural contexts in the area that are made of bell, brass, iron, copper, gold, silver and their alloys. Unintentional or accidental archaeological discoveries from multiple sites of Assam have revealed objects of aesthetic value and domestic utility. A hoard of metal items including a good number of iron swords has been recently unearthed in Gojapara Kali Mandir in Goalpara district of Assam (Misra *et al.* 2022-23). Additionally there is frequent reporting of such accidental discoveries of metal items like coins, sculptures, implements etc. while digging earth and construction activities. A large number of these have historical significance and demonstrate the rich technological legacy of ancient metallurgy in this region. The archaeological remnants of the early sculptural tradition of temples in Northeast India offer important shards of proof of a rich cultural heritage of India (Mazinder 2020: 962-972).

The history of manufacturing metal sculptures and figures of gods and goddesses in Assam is a rich and ancient cultural heritage that symbolises the region's deep spiritual ethos, artistic excellence, and historical continuity. From ancient times to the present, Assam has had a thriving metal-craft heritage, mainly in the form of bronze and bell-metal sculptures, which are largely employed for religious and ritualistic purposes (Kalita 2019). This tradition dates back to the early centuries CE and was inspired by the spread of Vajrayana Buddhism, Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and Shakta cults in the region. In addition to traditional Hindu deities, metal sculptures of Buddha, Tara and other Buddhist icons have also been found in many areas of Assam, reflecting the historical presence of Buddhism and the region's cultural exchanges with Tibet, Bengal, and Southeast Asia.

In his book *Sculpture of Assam*, Dutta (1990) explains that accessible and connecting routes were possible from the western side of Assam during the ancient period which helped in the migration and expansion of culture from rest of India. Based on the surviving remnants, the growth of the Gupta Empire marked the beginning of tradition of making a variety of sculptures in Assam (Dutta 2012). However, there are a few evidences of terracotta sculptures and other artefacts from Ambari dated to the Sunga-Kushana period, unearthed in the most recent excavation (IAR 2008-09).

Remains of sculptures from the late 5th and 6th centuries CE found at Da-Parvatia, Mikir-Ati, Barganga, Kamakhya, and Dudhnoi suggest that tradition of making sculptures in Assam flourished at that time (Dutta 1990). A number of medieval archaeological remains were found in the historical sites such as, Madan-Kamdev, Kamakhya, Pingaleswar, Sukresvar and Malinithan. All these remains demonstrated a consistent artistic evolution in sculptural art in this region. Kamakhya, Hajo, Garhgaon, Rangpur, Jaysagar, Kalugaon, and Sibsagar were the primary hubs of making sculptures throughout the later era. Sibsagar, Sadiya, Dimapur, Khaspur and Jaintiapur (now in Bangladesh) are also abundant in sculptures and reliefs (Mazinder 2020).

Numerous lost-wax bronze images of Buddhist and Hindu deities from the early medieval period have been discovered as stray finds in Assam. Currently, the Assam State Museum in Guwahati houses a few of these collections. According to Chattopadhyay and Sengupta (2010), the

typical medallion-like bronze item, which dates to the 10th to 11th centuries and measures between 17 and 21 cm in diameter, which is one of the most fascinating artefacts in the Assam State Museum. The Doiyang-Dhansiri valley have yielded a variety of materials and antiquities, including stone, wood, and metal sculptures, inscriptions, inscribed stone pieces, terracotta, clay seals, metallic pots and implements such as bronze-coated iron architects, plummets, manuscripts, and other objects indicating widespread metal use in this region (Dutta 2012). Archaeological excavations in the Barpathar region of Golaghat yielded a number of small copper sculptures including depictions of King Digalekh Barma and Maharajadhiraja Jibora, inscribed in Kamarupi script (Chaliha 1998).

Among the notable archaeological discoveries made in Assam, the metal hoard from Narakasura Hill at Kahilipara, Guwahati, is of exceptional significance. The Narakasur Hill lies about five miles south of Guwahati in Assam. In 1964 a resident of a village known as Kahilipara or Odalbakra, on the southern slope of the Narakasura hills, discovered a group of antiquities in a cavity formed by three large granite blocks. P.C. Choudhury, then Director of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, soon inspected the spot and published a brief report, noting thirty-seven objects. The assemblage includes a *mukhalinga*, two bronze bells, a conch, miniature shells, and twenty-two sculptures of various deities, almost all of bronze except a small basalt image of Manasa and four of the bronzes were cast on round plates. These are tentatively dated to the 8th to 9th centuries CE (Chutia 1988: 48-56, Choudhury 2004) and presently housed at the Assam State Museum. Although the exact reason for findings these metal objects as a hoard in Kahilipara is not known, however, these might have been intentionally buried for safekeeping, particularly during times of conflict, invasion or political instability, with the intention of later recovery. Guwahati or ancient Kamrup was under constant invasion of foreign powers in the late medieval period.

R.D. Chaudhury (2014) in his book *Sculpture Masterpieces from Assam* summarises the development of sculptural tradition of Assam. The evolution of stone, metal, and terracotta sculptures is traced from the Sunga-Kushana period to the late medieval era. In the present day, the metal workers of Assam continue to uphold the age-old tradition of crafting metal sculptures, combining traditional methods with modern tools to create a wide range of religious, decorative, and utilitarian objects. One of the most well-known centres of metalwork in Assam is Sarthebari in Barpeta district and Hajo in Kamrup district, which has earned a wide reputation for its expertise in bell metal and brass craftsmanship. These artisans are skilled in making metal sculptures of gods and goddesses, along with items like traditional utensils, prayer lamps, gongs, conch stands, and ritual plates used in religious ceremonies (Baishya 1989, Deka 1995). The metal sculpting tradition in Assam represents a remarkable continuity from the ancient to the modern period rooted in religion, enriched by royal patronage, and sustained by generational craftsmanship. It serves as evidence for placing Assam in the larger Indian and Southeast Asian artistic landscape, where religious art is still practiced now rather than as a holdover from the past. Thus, even in the modern era, metal workers of Assam continue to produce a wide variety of metal sculptures from traditional idols for temples and homes to modern artistic pieces using a harmonious blend of ancestral techniques and contemporary innovations.

Select Metal Sculptures from Assam: The metal sculptures of Assam represent a distinctive artistic tradition that reflects the rich cultural heritage, religious influences and advanced metallurgical craftsmanship of the region. Some of the important metal sculptures, discovered from various parts of Assam and presently housed at the Assam State Museum are discussed below.

Vishnu from Odalbakra, Kahilipara in Guwahati: Metal sculptures of Vishnu from various sites of early medieval Eastern India illustrate the delicate craftsmanship and spiritual passion of metallurgists and craft workers of this region. Sculptures of Vishnu are often represented in his conventional four-armed form, holding the conch (*shankha*), discus (*chakra*), mace (*gada*) and lotus (*padma*), which represent his great powers. Several sculptures of Vishnu in stone and metal have been found at a number of localities in the Brahmaputra valley.



Fig. No. 01: Vishnu image from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Out of these, the Vishnu image (Fig. 1) found at Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati dated to 8th - 9th centuries CE is a stunning bronze sculpture. In this sculpture, Vishnu is shown standing on a double inverted lotus pedestal, a feature commonly associated with Pala-period Vishnu images. He is flanked by his consorts on either side. Lakshmi stands to his right holding a *chamara* and a

lotus signifying prosperity. On his left stands Saraswati, identifiable by the lute (*veena*) she holds representing knowledge and learning. Vishnu stands in *samapada* with both legs firmly planted and no bending of the body. This frontal and stable posture is a characteristic almost pan-Indian convention for Vishnu images. Below the lotus pedestal of Vishnu attached to the rectangular base is Garuda, Vishnu's *vahana* (celestial mount), depicted with folded hands in *anjali* mudra expressing devotion. A very similar sculpture has been found in Bogra District of Bangladesh and is now kept in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Huntington 1984). This similarity shows that artists and ideas were closely connected across eastern India during the Pala period.

Sculptures of Vishnu in stone also constitute an important segment within the region's early medieval sculptural tradition. A large number of stone sculptures of free-standing stone icons of Vishnu are found at Ambari (Dhavalikar 1973, Dutta 1990, Hazarika *et al.* 2022b). Additionally, Vishnu is also depicted in the form of rock-cut images, primarily dating from around the 9th to the 12th centuries CE. The most prominent example is the Vishnu Janardana rock-cut sculpture, near Panbazar at Guwahati and Manikarneswar in North Guwahati, carved on granite outcrop along the Brahmaputra, which depicts Vishnu in a seated posture (Sanathana and Hazarika 2019a). Additional Vishnu sculptures occurs at sites such as Deopahar in Golaghat district, where fragmentary stone reliefs and sculptural panels indicate the presence of Vaishnava elements within a broader religious landscape dominated by Shaiva and Shakta themes. In later phases, particularly during the Ahom period, Vishnu worship continued through temple complexes such as the Vishnu Dol at Sivasagar, where stone was used mainly for architectural components and decorative reliefs rather than large independent icons.

Vishnu from Hahara in Kamrup: This bronze sculpture of Vishnu (Fig. 2) is heavily eroded, making its precise identification challenging. The figure is standing upright in a serene or majestic pose, in *samabhanga* posture. The deity is depicted with four arms, though the *ayudhas* in the rear hands are broken and missing. The upper hands appear to have held the *padma* and *chakra* while the attributes of the lower hands are missing. The sculpture is dated to the 9th – 10th century CE and was collected from the Hahara area in Kamrup district.



Fig. No. 2: Sculpture of Vishnu from Hahara area in Kamrup (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Vishnu from Laruwa Mouza in Dibrugarh: This particular bronze made Vishnu sculpture (Fig. 3) collected from Laruwa Mouza in Dibrugarh district, is tentatively dated to the 16th - 17th century. This is an exquisite bronze artifact, belonging to Ahom period (a kingdom of the Brahmaputra valley, spanning from 1228 to 1826 CE). The Ahoms are well known for their involvement with religious and cultural patronage. This type of metal sculptures are considered as a significant clue to the growth and integration of Vaishnavism in the Brahmaputra Valley during the Ahom rule. It is a unique example of religious bronze sculpture from this region and time period. The deity is depicted standing frontally and is four armed, however all four hands are presently empty. It is most likely that the conventional attributes of Vishnu such as the *chakra*, *shankha*, *gada* and *padma* were originally made as separate attachments and temporarily affixed during ritual worship, a practice attested in several regional centers of worship. This artwork illustrates the skilled metalworking traditions of Ahom artisans and combines local styles with larger Indian religious art traditions.



Fig. No. 03: Vishnu sculpture from Laruwa Mouza in Dibrugarh (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Vishnu from Laukhowa Gaon in Nagaon: The worship of Vishnu gained renewed social and devotional prominence in Assam with the emergence of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in the 15th century, a major socio-religious reform led by the saint-poet Srimanta Sankardeva. However, a numbers of archaeological findings confirm that the deity was already widely worshiped in Assam as early as the 8th century CE, as evident from a number of stone sculptures and temple ruins all around the state. Vishnu-Vasudeva worship is described in depth in the *Kalika Purana* (Ch. 78/80, 88), composed around the 10th - 11th century which also lists several significant Vishnu worship sites in Assam (Boruah 2007). A large number of stone sculptures of Vishnu have been unearthed at Ambari in Guwahati. The specific image (Fig. 4) from Laukhowa Gaon in Nagaon district is crafted of bronze. Stylistically, the elongated face, broad smile and almond-shaped eyes, along with the high conical crown and the short lower garment tied with a girdle, mirror the regional aesthetics of early medieval bronzes from Assam. The sculpture subtly expresses the regional sensibilities of Northeast Indian craftsmanship through its form, attire and execution.



Fig. No. 04: Vishnu sculpture from Laukhowa Gaon in Nagaon (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Surya sculptures from Odalbakra near Kahilipara in Guwahati: Worship of the sun god Surya was started in India in the Vedic era. Surya is the giver of life, warmth and light. He is frequently portrayed as a radiant figure riding a chariot drawn by seven horses, which can represent the seven days of the week or the colours of the rainbow. As the primary solar deity, he is revered during various Hindu festivals. In Hindu astronomy, he is a significant member of the *Navagrahas* or Nine Planets of the cosmos (Sanathana and Hazarika 2020). Two notable examples of metallic Surya sculpture include a bronze sculpture from the 7th century from Kashmir and one from the 13th century from the Eastern Ganga period, which may have been from Konark in Odisha. Both pieces show the Sun God on his chariot carried by seven horses, frequently clutching lotus buds (Siudmak 2013, Mohapatra 2023).



Fig. No. 5a and 5b: Surya sculptures from Odalbakra near Kahilipara in Guwahati (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Available archaeological evidence and literature indicate the presence of a strong Sun cult in the Brahmaputra valley since 7th – 8th centuries CE (Santhana and Hazarika 2019b). Although, stone sculptures of Surya are extremely common, there are a few of them in metal. Important examples include two bronze sculptures of Surya from Odalbakra in Guwahati, dated to 8th - 9th century CE. One of these is shown wearing a pair of long boots, a common attribute of Surya (Fig. 5a). The richly ornamented deity is holding the celestial lotus flower in the left hand while the right arm is damaged. The other image is in a better state (Fig. 5b). In this, he is shown standing on a chariot drawn by seven horses and with his charioteer Aruna. The deity is flanked by Danda or Danda and Pingala standing on either side.

Indra image from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati: An extremely powerful Vedic deity, Indra is associated with storms, rain, lightning and thunder. He is considered the ruler of the sky and the king of the *Devatas*. He uses the *vajra*, a weapon composed of lightning thunderbolts, and rides the white elephant Airavata. Even though he was the most significant god in the Vedic period, his importance decreased in later texts, yet he is still a notable character who is occasionally shown with flaws like hedonism and conceit.

This particular metal sculpture (Fig. 6) identified as Indra and discovered in Odalbakra, near Kahilipara, Guwahati dates from the 10th to 11th centuries. This is the largest image in the Narakasur Group of images (Choudhury 1985). In this image, the deity is depicted riding his *vahana* Airavata. In *varadahasta mudra*, the god's right hand rests on the right thigh, while the left in the *abhaya* mudra resting on the left thigh. The deity is adorned with a *karanda mukuta*, *kundalas*, *haras*, *upavita*, *keyuras*, *valayas* and *nupuras*. On either side of him, two female *chauri* (fly whisk) bearers stand on *padmas*. Behind the deity, there is a spherical *prabha* placed on an *adhara* (frame). Above the *prabha*, a *chhatra* is visible. It is an excellent example of Pala period sculpture.

This remarkable image represents a rare and exceptional work of art. Although the *prabha*, *adhara* and *chhatra* exhibit stylistic features reminiscent of Pala sculptures, no comparable Indra image of this type is known from Bengal or Bihar. Moreover, authoritative publications on Indian bronze sculpture do not illustrate such an image. The stone image of Indra from Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu provides the closest comparison, particularly in the seated posture, though that example is four-armed. On stylistic grounds, this bronze may be dated to circa 10th – 11th century CE (Choudhary 2004).



Fig. No. 6: Indra image from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Harihara image from Golaghat: This bronze image (Fig. 7), identified as Harihara, was found in the Golaghat district of Assam and may be dated to the 15th century CE. Harihara (also known as Shankaranarayana) is a syncretic deity combining aspects of Vishnu (Hari) and Shiva (Hara), reflecting the theological reconciliation of Vaishnava and Shaiva traditions (Nayar 2017–2018; 2022). A Harihara sculpture is usually depicted splitting vertically down the middle, representing the unity of these two major gods as aspects of the ultimate reality. It shows Shiva on one side (often with matted hair, tiger skin and a third eye) and Vishnu on the other (with a tall crown and jewellery). The bronze image discussed here is in a damaged and weathered condition. Parts of the halo and some attributes are broken or missing and the surface shows signs of corrosion. Despite this, the main form of the deity is still visible and identifiable.



Fig No. 07: Harihara image from Golaghat (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Mahishamardini sculpture from Maghnowa Doul of Lakhimpur: Mahishamardini is considered as the *Ugra* (fierce or fearful) form of goddess Durga. A detailed description of the goddess can be found in the text like *Devi Mahatmya* or *Devi*. There are many sculptures of this form of Mahishamardini in Assam, both carved as rock-cut sculpture and on stone slabs. Depending on the number of hands, the goddess Mahishamardini is named. For example, the eighteen-handed image is called Ugrachanda, and the ten-handed picture is called Katyayani in the *Matsya Purana* and *Agni Purana* (Barpujari 1990).



Fig. No. 08: Mahishamardini sculpture from Maghnowa Doul of Lakhimpur (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

This particular bronze image of Mahishamardini (Fig. 8) from Maghnowa Doul in Lakhimpur is battling the demon Mahishasura in her typical stance. The figure of Mahishasura is fragmentary and not clearly visible though a small buffalo head can still be discerned. It was possible to trace the lion's figure. The ten-armed deity's face is mutilated. The bronze image is in a damaged and weathered condition. The face of the deity is corroded and several arms and subsidiary figures have vanished. Surface corrosion and minor damage to the pedestal are visible, though the overall form and iconography of Mahishamardini can still be identified.

Mahishamardini sculpture from Hahara of Kamrup: Another image of Mahishamardini form of Goddess Durga (Fig. 9) is found at Hahara in Kamrup district. The *dasha-bhuja* (ten handed) sculpture is shown defeating the buffalo demon Mahisha with her weapons (Sharmah 2021-22). This particular bronze image belongs to 15th to 18th century CE.



Fig. No. 9: Mahishamardini sculpture from Hahara of Kamrup (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Mahishamardini sculpture from Tinsukia: This exquisite bronze sculpture (Fig. 10) of Devi Mahisamardini was found in Tinsukia during the excavation of an old well and confiscated by the Government of Assam in 1938. On stylistic grounds the sculpture may be dated to the 18th century CE. The goddess is depicted in a dynamic combat posture subduing the buffalo demon Mahishasura with the aid of her lion mount. She is represented as a multi-armed deity with ten arms a form that was particularly popular in eastern India (Bhattacharya 1983). The goddess stands in a vigorous *alidha* stance with one leg firmly placed on the lion and the other engaging the demon. Although her weapons are missing the pose and overall composition clearly identify the figure as Mahishamardini.



Fig. No. 10: Mahishamardini sculpture from Tinsukia (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

The iconography of the Mahishamardini form of the goddess is described in the *Brahmanda Purana*, *Markandeya Purana*, *Matsya Purana*, *Agni Purana* and other Puranic texts (Choudhury 1985). Numerous names for the various goddess forms and their iconographic descriptions have been compiled by T.A. Gopinath Rao (1977). Two, four, eight, twelve, sixteen, eighteen, twenty and even thirty-two hands are used in the sculptures of the goddess (Rao 1997). In Bengal and Assam, numerous eight and ten handed representations of the war goddess Mahishamardini have been found.

Bronze medallion from Narakasura hill of Guwahati: Assam has a long history of metalwork and iconography influenced by its regional art schools. Among the bronze hoards from Narakasura hill of Guwahati, two circular medallions (Fig. 11a and 11b) representing a female deity along with a buffalo either fully or partially are noteworthy. These medallions are the representations of the regional art form of the Brahmaputra valley. The female figure is shown as multi-armed and appears to hold various attributes or weapons, though several details are indistinct due to surface wear and minor damage. The presence of the buffalo, interpreted as a *vahana* or associated with the deity as vehicle or mount, suggests that the deity may represent a local or regional manifestation of Mahishasuramardini. Such imagery points to the adaptation and localisation of the pan-Indian Mahishasuramardini iconography within the indigenous religious traditions of Assam.



Fig. No. 11a and 11b: Bronze medallions from Narakasura hill of Guwahati (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

While Nirode Boruah (2007) in *Early Assam*, identified the figure as Yami the iconographic elements visible in the medallions more convincingly support an association with a martial goddess assimilated into the broader Durga–Mahishasuramardini tradition. Both medallions show signs of minor damage and surface corrosion, yet the central figures remain clearly legible and significant for understanding early regional goddess worship in the Brahmaputra valley.

Tara sculpture from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati: Buddhism had some influence on sculptural art of Assam. The goddess Tara is frequently depicted in sculptural art in Assam. She received the same level of veneration as any other god in the Mahayana pantheon between the 8th and the 12th century CE (Getty 1914). There are various fierce forms of Tara in the Buddhist Tantric faith, which represent the five colours of red, yellow, blue, white and green (Getty 1914).



Fig. No. 12: Tara sculpture from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

This particular sculpture of Tara (Fig. 12) displayed at the Assam State Museum, is assumed to have been created during 10th - 11th century CE (Choudhury 1985). The goddess is seated on the lotus pedestal in *lalitasana* posture. Her right hand displays *varada mudra* holding lotus stalk and rests on the right knee and the left hand holds a lotus stalk with *abhaya mudra*. The deity is decorated with a *karanda mukuta*, *kundalas*, *haras* etc. and wears a long lower garment.

Panchamatrika sculptures from Barjhar of Kamrup: The five mother goddesses are known as *Pancha Matrika*, but the most well-known group is called *Sapta Matrikas* (Seven Matrikas), which contains the five plus Indrani and Chamunda, who are also occasionally regarded as being the same as *Pancha Matrikas*. These are considered as the feminine energies or Shaktis of the male deities such as Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, Kartikeya, Varaha, and Indra. Two Shaktis of Shiva namely

Chamunda and Maheshwari are included in this group. The bronze sculpture found at Barjhar of Kamrup (Fig. 13) depicts five female figures in seated posture, with Ganesha and Kartikaya on either side. With *Padma*, *Gada*, *Chakra* and *Sankha* in her hands, the primary figure can be recognised as Vaishnavi. The female figure on the far right is designed to hold a *ghat* or *kalash*, who is depicted as a member of Matrikas, and could be recognised as Lakshmi. The figure to the left of the Vaishnavi, is designed to carry a child in her lap figure might be Parvati. The identity of the other two figures is unknown. Since none of the deities in the panel has a vehicle, it has become difficult to correctly identify them. It has the sculptural characteristics of the 10th century art. In Assam, *panchamatrika* panels are not very common (Choudhuri 1985).



Fig. No. 13: Panchamatrika sculptures from Barjhar of Kamrup (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Tripura Bhairavi sculptures from Hahara of Kamrup: Tripura Bhairavi is the fifth among the *Dasha Mahavidyas* (Great Wisdom Goddesses), a group of ten Tantric goddesses representing different manifestations of the Divine Mother or Adi Shakti. Two bronze images (Fig. 14a and 14b) of Tripura Bhairavi were collected from Hahara in Kamrup district and are dated to the 10th –11th centuries CE (Choudhuri 1985). In these images, the goddess is depicted as a four-armed deity seated in *padmasana* upon a corpse (*shava*), a characteristic feature of Tantric iconography symbolising transcendence over death and worldly illusion. The seated posture, compact proportions and restrained ornamentation are consistent with early medieval bronze traditions of Assam. A sculpture of Tripura Bhairavi on granitic rock belonging to 10th century CE was found at Jogijan in Nagaon of Assam and is currently in display in the Assam State Museum. These sculptures reflect

the spread and localisation of Tantric goddess worship in the Brahmaputra valley during the early medieval period.



Fig. No. 14a and 14b: Tripura Bhairavi sculptures from Hahara of Kamrup (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Bhuvaneswari sculpture from Hahara of Kamrup: Goddess Bhuvaneswari, also known as the 'Queen of the Universe' is one of the Ten Mahavidyas. She represents the divine feminine energy (*Shakti*), is associated with creation, abundance, and success, and is believed to embody the entire cosmos. Her name is a combination of 'Bhuvana' (universe) and 'Ishwari' (ruler), and she is worshipped to gain blessings for success, spiritual liberation and confidence. This sculpture (Fig. 15) of Bhuvaneswari seats in *padmasana* posture mounted on a pedestal and her *vahana* lion portrayed next to it. The upper right hand holds a lotus, two lower hands in *abhaya* and *varada mudras*. This bronze sculpture was collected from Hahara in Kamrup and can be dated to 10th - 11th Century CE. Mention may be made of an ancient Bhuvaneswari temple located atop the Nilachal Hill in Guwahati.



Fig. No. 15: Goddess Bhuvaneshwari sculpture from Hahara of Kamrup (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Avalokiteshvara / Avalokiteswar sculpture from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara: Avalokiteshvara is well known in the Mahayana pantheon of Buddhism. Among the numerous bodhisattvas, Avalokiteshvara is especially recognised as the personification of compassion and, in this capacity, has been widely venerated across Buddhist Asia (Yu 2012). In eastern South Asia, during the Pala period, the importance of Vajrayana (Tantric Buddhism) led to the development and complexity of metal art depicting Avalokiteshvara. The gilt-bronze Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara images kept in the Bihar Museum, dated to 12th century CE belongs to the Pala period. A beautiful bronze Avalokiteshvara image is also displayed in the National Museum, New Delhi, dated to 8th century CE (Kumari 2024). Various esoteric forms of Avalokiteshvara, including Arya, Sahasrabhuja-Sahasranetra, Ekadashamukha, Hayagriva, Chundi, Amoghapasha, and Chakravartincintamani originated and spread from India via sea routes to Southeast Asia, as well as land routes through the Himalayan regions to China, gaining popularity during the Tang Dynasty (late 6th to early 10th century CE) (Suebsantiwongse 2025). Avalokiteshvara was portrayed in China during this period

as Water-moon Kuan Yin, Guiding Kuan Yin, Eleven-faced Kuan Yin, Thousand-armed Kuan Yin, and other variations. There are 108 different forms of Avalokiteshvara represented in Nepal. The Lotus Sutra, which is the translation of the *Saddharma Pundarika*, describes how Avalokiteshvara can change into a variety of forms in order to end all of the suffering of the sentient person. In the *Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography*, Lokesh Chandra (1999) provides detailed descriptions, attributes and forms of the deity depicted in different part of Asia with two, four, eight, ten, eight and twelve arms.



Fig. No. 16a and 16b: Avalokiteshvara sculptures from Odalbakra, near Kahilipara of Guwahati (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

Two bronze images (Fig. 16a and 16b) of Avalokiteshvara were collected from the Odalbakra area of Guwahati and are dateable to the 10th – 11th century CE (Choudhury 1985). One image depicts the deity seated on a lotus pedestal in a relaxed posture, likely *lalitasana*, holding a lotus and other attributes that are no longer clearly visible due to surface wear. The figure is attended by two female attendants on either side. The second image shows Avalokiteshvara standing on a pedestal, holding an indistinct object, possibly an attribute or subsidiary element and adorned with simple jewellery.

Early medieval period saw the rise of the Avalokiteshvara cult in the eastern India. Significantly, Avalokiteshvara representations have proliferated throughout Bengal and other parts of eastern India in a variety of shapes and facets. Several bronze and stone sculptures of Lokanatha (also known as Avalokiteshvara or Lokeshvara) have been found in various locations in the state of

Tripura. A bronze sculpture of Lokanatha is presently kept in the Tripura Government Museum in Agartala. The sculpture was found in Pilak in South Tripura, and depicts the deity with a somewhat broad face standing slightly bent on the pericarp of a lotus that is perched atop a simple pedestal. The deity is adorned with ear jewels, a short *hara* or neckpiece, and *valayas* or armlets. The lotus stem is held in his left arm, which is slightly lifted, while his right palm is in *varada mudra*. There is another mutilated bronze sculpture of Lokanatha form of Avalokiteshvara housed in the same Museum in Agartala. This metal sculpture is shown on the pericarp of a double-petalled lotus that is perched on a two-tiered pedestal; the deity is standing in *samapada* pose (Chakraborty 2024). These bronze statues of Avalokiteshvara from Tripura have striking resemblance to those in the Assam State Museum in Guwahati.

It is to be mentioned that a significant number of sculptures of the pensive or meditative figure of Avalokiteshvara have been reported from eastern India, particularly Mainamati, Comilla, and Bangladesh. During the aforementioned time, Mainamati most likely prospered as a centre of the cult of this kind of Avalokiteshvara (Bhattacharya 2002, cited in Chakraborty 2024). These images are stylistically very similar to the bronze sculptures from Kurkihar, particularly in their proportions, modelling of the body, treatment of ornaments and overall compositional scheme (Bagchi 2022–23: 487–496).

Sculpture of the Buddha from Golaghat: Terracotta and metal sculptures of the Buddha have been discovered from various sites across Assam and other parts of Northeast India. Several ancient temple complexes in Assam contain Buddhist sculptures alongside Brahmanical deities, reflecting a period of religious coexistence. In most depictions, the Buddha is represented in isolation; however, in a few instances from Assam, he appears in association with other figures (Chattopadhyaya 1990). Historical sources also point to the deep-rooted presence of Buddhism in ancient Assam. Archaeological findings indicate that Buddhist art in the region may have originated during the Hinayana phase. Numerous Buddhist remains, including monolithic votive stupas and other relics, have been unearthed, along with stone and metal images of the Buddha and associated deities such as Tara (Shakespeare 1914).



Fig. No. 17: The Buddha image in lead from Golaghat (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

One of the images (Fig. 17) kept at the Assam State Museum is of the Buddha made of lead. Lead is a heavy, post-transition metal with a bluish-white colour when freshly cut, and it is soft, malleable, and corrosion-resistant, though it tarnishes to a dull gray upon exposure to air. This particular image of Buddha shows him seated in an *ardhapadmasana* and in *bhumisparsa mudra*. The half-closed eyes are beautifully depicted. The *uṣṇīṣ* and the elongated earlobes are clearly shown. On stylistic grounds, this lead image may be dated to the 18th – 19th century CE and Southeast Asian elements are clearly noticeable.

Larua Gopal and Banshidhar sculptures: Both Larua Gopal (Laddu Gopal) and Banshidhar are another names for Lord Krishna. The name Larua Gopal is derived from Krishna's liking for *laddus* or *Laru* in Assamese, a sort of Indian sweet, and Gopal, which means "one who looks after cows". To foster a parental attachment, worshippers undergo daily *seva* rituals such as bathing, dressing and offering food to the deity. The name Banshidhar means "the bearer of the flute" and alludes to Krishna's well-known function as the celestial flute player. There are several sculptures of Larua Gopal and Banshidhar displayed at the Assam State Museum (Fig. 18a and 18b), collected from

different parts of Assam. Mention may be made of two bronze miniature bronze icons from Samdhara Gaon in Lakhimpur, dated to the 18th to 19th centuries CE.



Fig. No. 18: Sculptures of (a) Larua Gopal and (b) Banshidhar from Samdhara Gaon in Lakhimpur (Photo courtesy: Assam State Museum)

There are frequent reportings of such miniature metal sculptures from various parts of Assam, such as the one found while working in a paddy field near Barukota, or Ghagua, a locality near Mayong. This was a bronze image of Bala-Krishna (baby Krishna) eating a ball of butter (Hazarika *et al.* 2022a). Another image of baby Krishna was recorded in a personal collection in a family in Bhatipara area of Goalpara (Barman 2017). Similar images have been reported from Orissa, Bengal, and Assam, indicating that depictions of Bala-Krishna were popular in eastern India during the 17th and 18th centuries CE.

These types of miniature bronze sculptures of Lord Krishna can also be seen in many of the Satra institutions of Assam. The Satras, established by the saint-reformer Srimanta Sankardeva, serve as centres of Vaishnavite faith, art and culture. These delicate bronze figures, often depicting Krishna in various forms such as Balgopal (child Krishna) or Nritya Krishna (dancing Krishna), are used in daily rituals and devotional performances. Crafted with fine detailing and spiritual expression, the sculptures reflect the devotion and artistic excellence of the Satra artisans. They also symbolise the integration of Bhakti (devotion) with traditional Assamese metal craftsmanship, preserving an artistic legacy that continues to thrive within the Satras of Assam.

Discussion and Conclusion: The ancient bronze sculptures of Assam represent a significant aspect of the region's artistic and technological heritage. Rooted in the wider metal sculptural traditions of India, the artefacts discussed above demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship and a deep religious symbolism. The sites of Odalbakra near Kahilipara in Guwahati and Hahara in Kamrup hold considerable archaeological significance as important find spots of bronze hoards in Assam. These discoveries provide crucial evidence of the region's early metallurgical tradition and artistic development. The bronze hoards from these sites include images of deities and ritual objects that display stylistic affinities with the Pala-Sena School of Art, yet also reflect distinctive local craftsmanship. Their presence indicates that Assam might have been an active centre of bronze casting and religious art production during the early medieval period, although not much is known about the provenance of these craft production centres. However, these findings contribute to our understanding of the spread of Buddhist and Brahmanical iconography in the Brahmaputra valley, emphasising Assam's vital role in the wider network of metal sculptural traditions in Eastern India.

The presence of a few Buddhist icons of metal and stone, apart from structural ruins and Stupas also indicate the spread of early Buddhism in Assam and Northeast India which must have developed within a dynamic cultural landscape shaped by trans-regional contacts, trade networks and local belief systems. From at least the early centuries CE, the region formed an important corridor linking the Gangetic plains with Southeast Asia, facilitating the movement of monks, merchants and ideas. Archaeological evidence, in the form of Stupas, caves, terracotta plaques, structural remains and portable bronze images, suggests the presence of both Hinayana and later Mahayana Buddhist traditions, particularly in the Brahmaputra valley and adjoining areas. Sites like Sri Surya Pahar in Assam (Chauley 2003) and Bhaitbari (also known as Vodagokugiri) in Meghalaya (Sharma 1993), along with discoveries from Tripura (Sarmah 2021), indicate Buddhist practices often coexisting with Brahmanical and indigenous cults. The preference for metal icons in several contexts reflects both ritual mobility and strong metallurgical traditions in the region.

The metal sculptures from Assam range in height from small to medium. The sculptures, which are primarily made of bronze reflecting the syncretic religious traditions that thrived in ancient Assam feature a variety of Hindu and Buddhist deities, including Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, Mahishamardini, Tara and Avalokiteshvara. As movable symbols for worship in temples, monasteries and household shrines, their primary function was most likely ritualistic and devotional. It is to be noted that metal casting tradition and their use rose to prominence in Assam during the early medieval era, particularly during the Pala and post-Pala regimes. Metal sculptures of gods and goddesses have been worshipped and housed at various temples, sacred shrines and Satras of Assam. The miniature size of those sculptures implies that their purpose was private devotion rather than extensive temple installation, enabling devotees to employ them in private rites or carry them on pilgrimages and sacred sites. The presence of a good number of larger and smaller stone sculptures of various Brahmanical deities at sites like Ambari (Hazarika *et al.* 2022b) and a variety of metal sculptures in smaller size also explain different ritual contexts which

demanded different raw materials for production of icons for various uses. The stone sculptures were preferred for fixed temple installations because of their permanence and ritual stability, whereas the metal sculptures of bronze, brass or their alloys were essential for processional worship, household rituals and festivals, as they were portable and easier to handle. Both media coexisted during the early medieval period in the Brahmaputra valley as elsewhere in India within the same religious traditions, such as Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakti and Buddhist practices. It can be also emphasised that the royal and temple patronage might have commissioned large and durable stone images, whereas the monastic institutions, local elites and household donors preferred metal icons due to their lower cost, portability and ritual versatility.

Based on archaeological evidence, there are parallels between the bronze and brass sculptures from Assam and those made in the Pala-Sena art hubs of Bengal and Bihar (8th - 12th centuries CE) (Bishwas 2024). Iconographic elements like drapery treatment, decoration and deity postures, as well as metallurgical techniques like the lost-wax casting procedure, demonstrate the close creative linkages and common craftsmanship traditions throughout these areas. Because it was a vital route that connected Northeast India with the Gangetic plains, the Brahmaputra valley made it easier for pilgrims, religious leaders and artists to travel as well as trade in metals and completed icons. For example, the spread of Buddhism and, subsequently, Tantric Hinduism promoted the exchange of religious ideas and sculptural art tradition between Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Bangladesh (Kumar and Badar 2022). According to numbers of stone and metal inscriptions and various literary sources, these cultural and commercial links were further reinforced by the trading of copper and other metal resources from Assam to nearby kingdoms.

In this context, it may be noted that the museums in Odisha house several smaller bronze icons of Ganesha, Lakshmi and Parvati, which were likely used for domestic worship and ritual practices (Tripathy 2010). These ancient metal sculptures, with their graceful modelling and intricate ornamentation, not only demonstrate Odisha's metallurgical expertise but also provide insight into the syncretic religious and artistic milieu of the period. As discussed above, the Assam State Museum has a rich collection of metal sculptures of Vishnu, Mahishamardini, Tara, Ganesha and other icons of gods and goddesses whereas the Odisha State Museum has bronze statues of Varaha, Ganesha and Tara. Similarities in these figures' smooth modelling, intricate decoration and elegant body poses demonstrate the influence of Pala - Sena art traditions, which flourished in Bengal, Odisha and Assam from the 8th century AD to 12th century AD. The similar iconographic conventions, like Durga or Mahishamardini in her warrior form or the four-armed Vishnu holding his attributes, show a shared theological lexicon that has been adapted to local artistic idioms. While the metal sculptures of Assam display a more restrained yet equally elegant execution influenced by the Kamarupa School of Art, the bronzes of Odisha display the unique Kalinga style with elaborate jewellery and temple-inspired themes.

Metal icons from early medieval eastern India, including Assam are characterised by balanced proportions, stylistic elaboration and regionalisation, with high ornamentation, complex jewellery and intricately detailed crowns and garments. There is greater emphasis on dynamic

postures, expressive gestures, and narrative elements, reflecting the growing influence of Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakta, and Vajrayana Buddhist traditions. Technological advances must have allowed for thinner castings, hollow forms and more intricate detailing.

As we have noticed, many of these sculptures discussed above are tentatively dated to 10th-11th century CE. Under the Pala dynasty, a distinctive regional artistic tradition flourished in Bengal, later recognised as the Eastern Indian School of Medieval Art (EISMA), characterised by its refined aesthetic and iconographic innovations. This artistic movement significantly influenced the art of Assam, which was under Pala rule or suzerainty at various times, resulting in the diffusion of stylistic and cultural elements across the region (Sharmah 2021–2022). Furthermore, exquisite craftsmanship of the metal figures, intricate embellishments and stylistic influences show that they were not simply religious artefacts but also representations of cultural identity and artistic brilliance.

Acknowledgements: The study has been carried out as part of a research project titled “*Traditional Metal Technologies in Assam: A Study in Archaeological, Historical and Ethnographic Perspectives*”, sanctioned by the Indian National Commission for History of Science of the Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi. We would like to thank the Indian National Science Academy for sanctioning a research grant. We express our gratitude to the authorities of the Assam State Museum for permitting the study of the metal sculptures and for supplying the high-resolution photographs incorporated in this paper. We are grateful to Dr. Sanathana, Y.S. of Pleach India Foundation, Hyderabad and Miss Shreya Sarmah of the Department of Archaeology of Cotton University for going through the manuscript and offering valuable inputs.

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Translation of Manuscript Describing the Reigns of Early Sultanate Period titled “*Ahad Nama Salāṭīn-i-Ghorī wa Khilji*”- Presently Kept in Rampur Raza library, district Rampur

Vijay Kumar

Chief Editor

Indian Journal of Archaeology

Introduction: Manuscript titled “*Ahad Nama Salāṭīn-i-Ghorī wa Khilji*” which has Rampur Raza Library call no. 2055, was copied from the original manuscript by the order of Prince *Mīrzā Muhammad Babur* (1796 – 13 February 1835) the fifth son of Akbar II (the nineteenth Mughal emperor) and was given to *Raqamullah Khan* for keeping in library in August/September 1819 AD. The original manuscript was kept in the royal treasury of the palace in Red Fort, Delhi. The copy made by the order of the prince was kept in the library of the palace.

This manuscript gives the portrait and details of the reigns of kings starting from *Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Zāfar Sultān Mu‘izz al-Dīn @ Muḥammad Ghorī* to *Qutb-ud-Dīn Mubārak Shāh @ Mubārak Shāh Khiljī*. This covers the following 14 kings:

1. *Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Zāfar Sultān Mu‘izz al-Dīn @ Muḥammad Ghorī*
2. *Sultān Qutb al-Dīn Aibak @ Qutb-ud-Dīn*
3. *Ārām Shāh*
4. *Sultān Shamsh-ud-Dīn Altamash @ Altamash*
5. *Rukn al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh @ Rukn al-Dīn*
6. *Rāziyā Sultāna Begam @ Rāziyā*
7. *Mu‘izz al-Dīn Bahrām Shāh @ Bahrām Shāh*
8. *Sultan Ala-ud-din Mas‘ūd Shāh @ Mas‘ūd Shāh*
9. *Sultān Naṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh @ Sultān Naṣir al-Dīn*
10. *Anā Khan al-maklab-bih Sultān Gyāsuddīn Balban @ Balban*
11. *Mu‘izz al-Dīn Kaikabad @ Kaikabād Sultān Shams-al-dīn*
12. *Jalāl al-Dīn Fīroz Shāh Khiljī @ Jalāl al-Dīn Khiljī*
13. *Sultān ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khiljī @ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn*
14. *Qutb-ud-Dīn Mubārak Shāh @ Mubārak Shāh Khiljī*

Translation of Manuscript Describing the Reigns of Early Sultanate Period titled "Ahad Nama Salāṭīn-i-Ghorī wa Khilji"- Presently Kept in Rampur Raza library, district Rampur

Manuscript page numbers from 3 to 31 give the portrait of the king, name of the king, fathers name, ethnicity, date of Birth, Place of enthronement, capital, date of accession, reign, date of death and place of burial. The first page the gives the title of the manuscript and last page explains the circumstances of the making of this manuscript.

Ahad Nama *Salāṭīn-i-Ghorī wa Khilji* (A chart of *Ghauri & Khilji* rulers) by Abbas Khan son of Shaikh Ali, Dated 1236.H/1821 A.D., **Call No.** = 2055

[Manuscript Page no. 1]



[Translation of Page no. 1 of manuscript]

786

Silsilah

Description of reign (Ahadnama)

(Seal of) Riyasat, Rampur

Salāṭīn Ghorī wa Khiljī

(Seal of) Riyasat, Rampur

Āghāz – C. 587 H., Intihā

C. 716 H.

[Manuscript Page no. 3]



[Translation of Page no. 3 of manuscript]

Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Zāfar Sultān Muizz al-Dīn

Alias – *Muḥammad Ghorī*

Son of *Bahauddin*, Ethnicity- *Ghorī*

Date of Birth –

Place of Enthronement -*Ghaznī*

*Mahal-i Julūs, Mahal-i Fateḥ,
Mauza Nārāyan*

Date of accession – C. 587 H.

Reign – 32 years

Death – C. 602 H.

Place of Burial - *Ghaznī*

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 3 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 5]



[Translation of Page no. 5 of manuscript]

Sultan Qutb-ud-Dīn Aibak

Alias – Qutb-ud-Dīn

Son/Gulam - Şihāb-uddīn Ghorī , Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth –

Place of Enthronement - Lahore

Capital – Delhi, Qila Rai Pithora

Date of accession – 17 month Zēqād Sah-šamba C. 602 H.

Reign – 4years and few months,

Death – C. 607 H.

Place of Burial - Lahore

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 5 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 7]



[Translation of Page no. 7 of manuscript]

Ārām Shāh

Alias –

Son of Qutb-ud-Dīn Aibak, Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth –

Capital – Rowan

Place of Enthronement - Lahore

Date of accession – C. 607 H.

Reign – Few months

Death –

Place of Burial -

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 7 of manuscript]



Manuscript Page no. 9]



[Translation of Page no. 9 of manuscript]

Sultān Shams-ud-Dīn Altamash

Alias – Altamash

Son /Ghulam/ Son in law of – Qutub-ud-deen Aibak, Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth –

Place of Enthronement – Kasre Safed,
Qila - Rai Pithora

Place of Enthronement – Kasre Safed,
Qila - Rai Pithora

Date of accession – C. 607 H.

Reign – 26 years

Death – 20 Sha'bān, C. 633 H.

Place of Burial – Masjid Quwwatul-Islām

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 9 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 11]



[Translation of Page no. 11 of manuscript]

Rukn al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh

Alias – *Rukn al-Dīn*

Son of *Shams al-Dīn Altamash*, Ethnicity- *Turk*

Date of Birth –

Capital - Delhi

Place of Enthronement – Qila Rai
Pithora

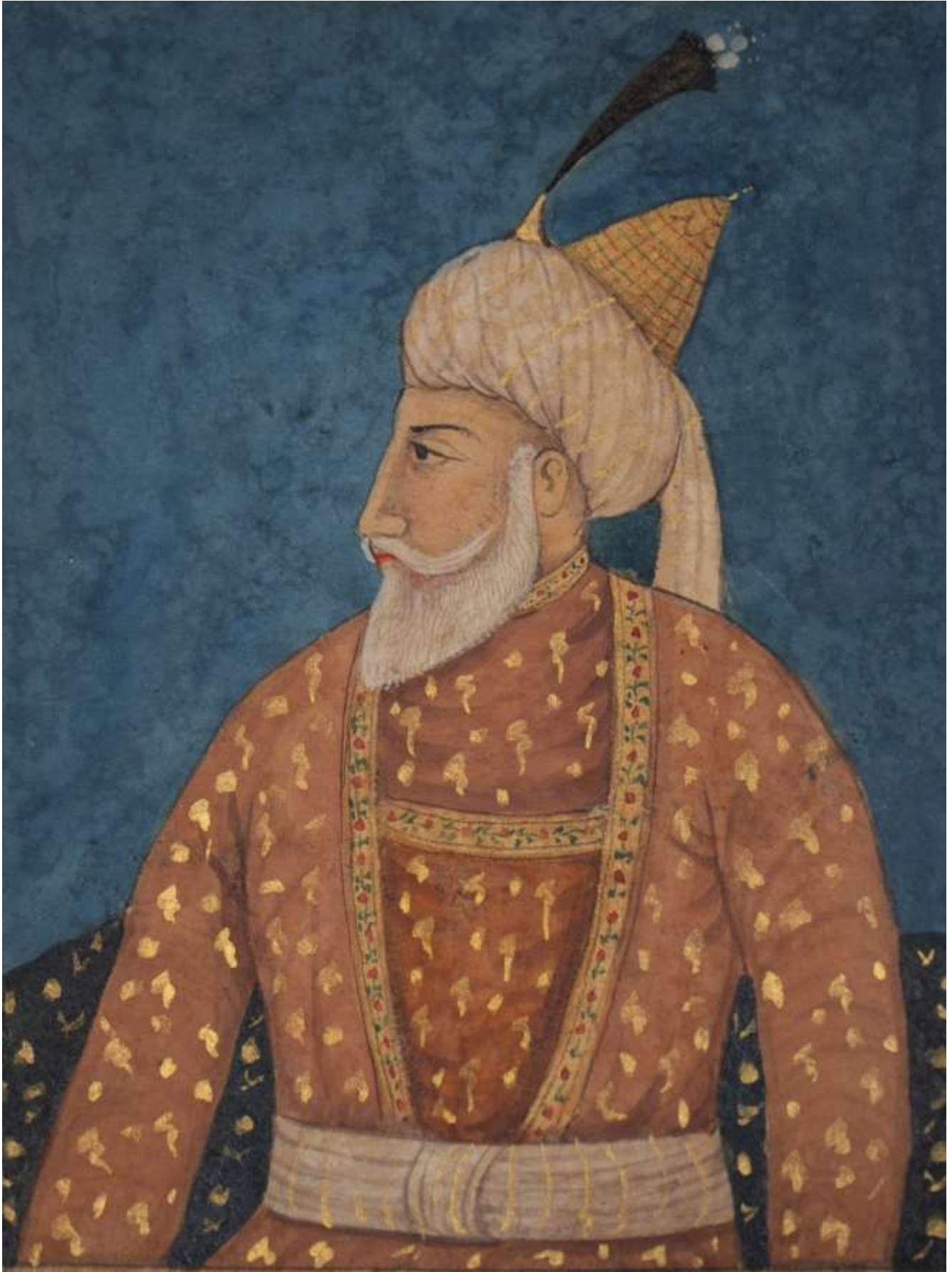
Date of accession – *Month Shaban Sah-šamba* C. 633 H.

Reign – 1 year, 6 Months and 8 days

Death – C. 635 H.

Place of Burial - *Malakpur*

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 11 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 13]



[Translation of Page no. 13 of manuscript]

Rāziyā Sultāna Begam

Alias – Raziya

Daughter of *Shams al-Dīn Altamash*, Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth –

Capital - Delhi

Place of Enthronement – *Qila Rai Pithora*

Date of accession – C. 634 H.

Reign – 3 year, 6 Months and 6 days

Death – 25 *Rabi' al-Awwal* C. 638 H.

Place of Burial – *Shāhjahānābād, Bulbulī Khāna, Kāzar*

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 13 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 15]



[Translation of Page no. 15 of manuscript]

Mu'izz al-Dīn Bahrām Shāh

Alias – *Bahrām Shāh*

Son of *Shams al-Dīn Altamash*, Ethnicity- *Turk*

Date of Birth –

Capital - *Delhi*

Place of Enthronement – *Qila Rai Pithora*

Date of accession – *Baroz Shambah Ramazān C. 637 H.*

Reign – *2 years, 2 months and 10 days*

Death – *6 Zīqada, Baroz Shambah C. 639 H.*

Place of Burial - *Malikpur*

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 15 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 17]



[Translation of Page no. 17 of manuscript]

Sultan Ala-ud-din Mas'ud Shāh

Alias – Mas'ud Shāh

Son of Rukn al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh, Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth –

Capital - Delhi

Place of Enthronement – Qila Rai
Pithora

Date of accession – Zīqād C. 643 H.

Reign – 4 years, 1 month and 1 day

Death – C. 647 H.

Place of Burial - Delhi

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 17 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 19]



[Translation of Page no. 19 of manuscript]

Sultān Naṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh

Alias – *Sultān Naṣir al-Dīn*

Son of *Shams al-Dīn*, Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth –

Capital - Delhi

Place of Enthronement – *Kasre Safed, Qila Rai Pithora*

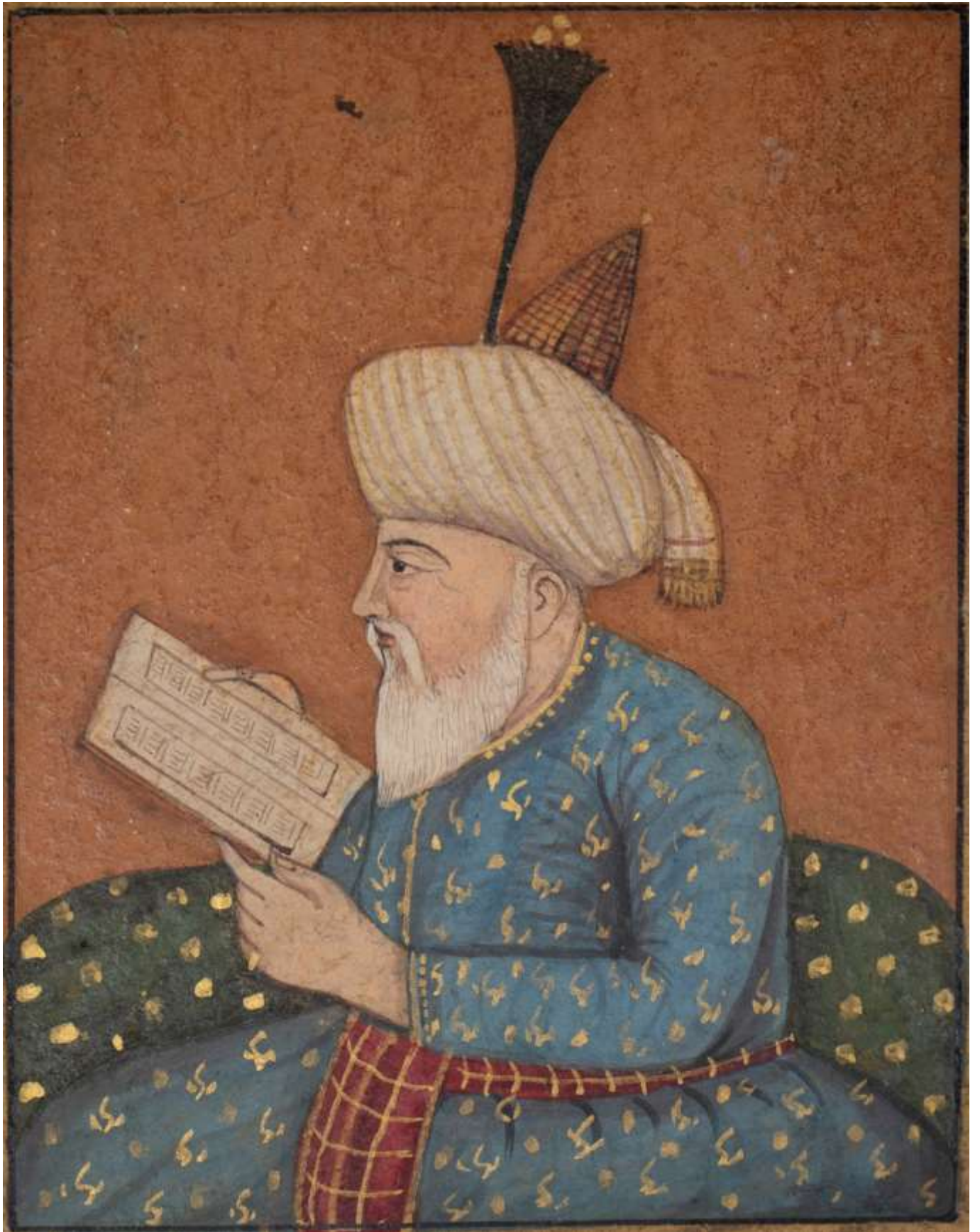
Date of accession – *Jilhājā C. 643 H.*

Reign – 9 years, 2 months and 7 days

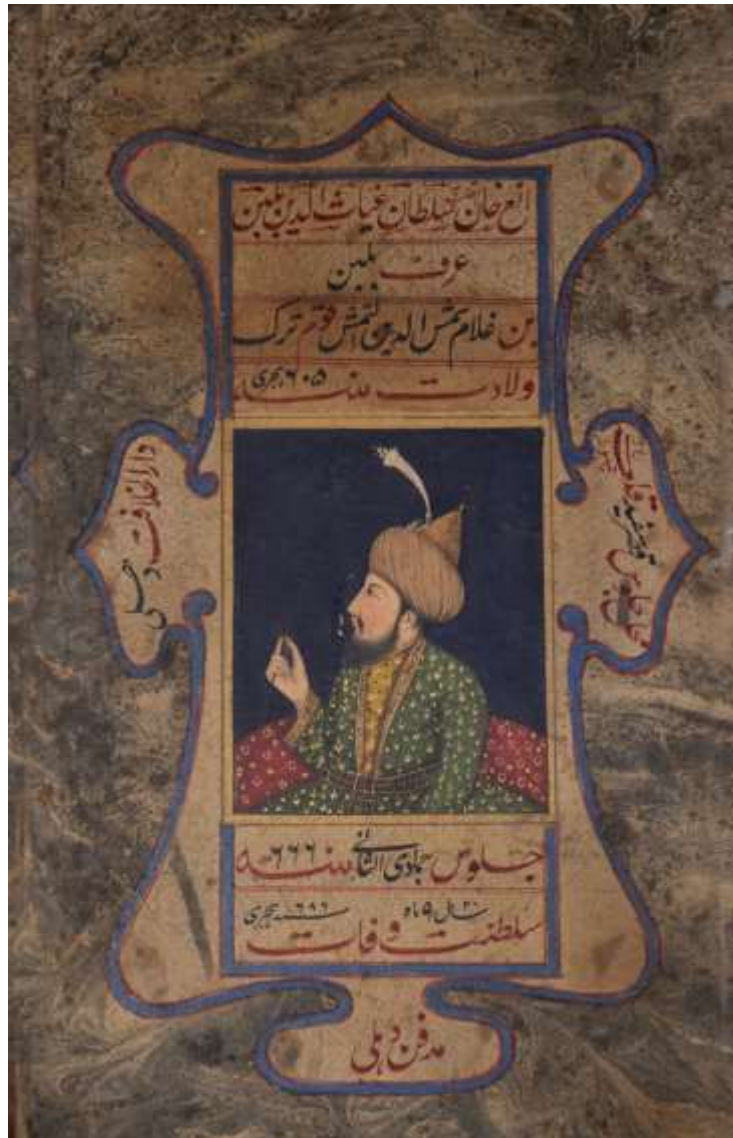
Death – 11 *Jamādī al-Awwal C. 664 H.*

Place of Burial - Delhi

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 19 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 21]



[Translation of Page no. 21 of manuscript]

Anā Khan al-maklab-bih Sultān Gyāsuddīn Balban

Alias – *Balban*

Son/Ghulam of *Shams al-Dīn Altamash*, Ethnicity- *Turk*

Date of Birth – C. 605 H.

Capital - Delhi

Place of Enthronement – *Kasre Safed*,
Qila Rai Pithora

Date of accession – *Jamadi-ul-shani* C. 666 H.

Reign – 20 years and 9 months

Death – C. 686 H.

Place of Burial - Delhi

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 21 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 23]



[Translation of Page no. 23 of manuscript]

Mu‘izz al-Dīn Kaiqabad

Alias – *Kaiqabād Sultān Shams-al-dīn*

Son of *Naṣīr al-Dīn Buġrā Khān*, Ethnicity- Turk

Date of Birth – 667,686

Capital – Delhi, Kilo Kehri (?)

Place of Enthronement – *Kasre, Qila Rai Pithora*

Date of accession – C. 686 H.

Reign – 3 years and 3 months

Death – *Jamādī al-Sānī* C. 689 H.

Place of Burial -

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 23 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 25]



[Translation of Page no. 25 of manuscript]

Jalāl al-Dīn Fīroz Shāh Khiljī

Alias – *Jalāl al-Dīn Khiljī*

Son of *Buqrās Makānām Khān*, Ethnicity- *Turk Khiljī*

Date of Birth – C. 618 H.

Capital – Delhi

Place of Enthronement – *Kelu Kahri*

Date of accession – *Jamadi-al-Sani* C. 690 H.

Reign – 7 years 1 month and 20 days

Death – *Jamadi al-Sāni* C. 699 H.

Place of Burial -

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 25 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 27]



[Translation of Page no. 27 of manuscript]

Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Khiljī

Alias – 'Alā' al-Dīn

Son of Sahabuddin Mas'ūd, Ethnicity- Khiljī

Date of Birth –

Capital – Delhi, Qila-e-Siri

Place of Enthronement – Rai Pithora

Date of accession – 22 Zī al-Ḥajj C. 695 H.

Reign – 23 years and 3 months

Death – 26 shawwāl C. 715 H.

Place of Burial – Masjid Quwwat-ul-Islam

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 27 of manuscript]



[Manuscript Page no. 29]



[Translation of Page no. 29 of manuscript]

Qutb-ud-Dīn Mubārak Shāh

Alias – *Mubārak Shāh Khiljī*

Son of *Sulṭān 'Alā' al-Dīn*, Ethnicity- *Khiljī*

Date of Birth –

Capital – *Delhi*,

Place of Enthronement – *Qila Alai*

Date of accession – *Muḥarram C. 716 H.*

Reign – 2 years and 4 months

Death – *Rabī' al-Awwal C. 721 H.*

Place of Burial -

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 29 of manuscript]



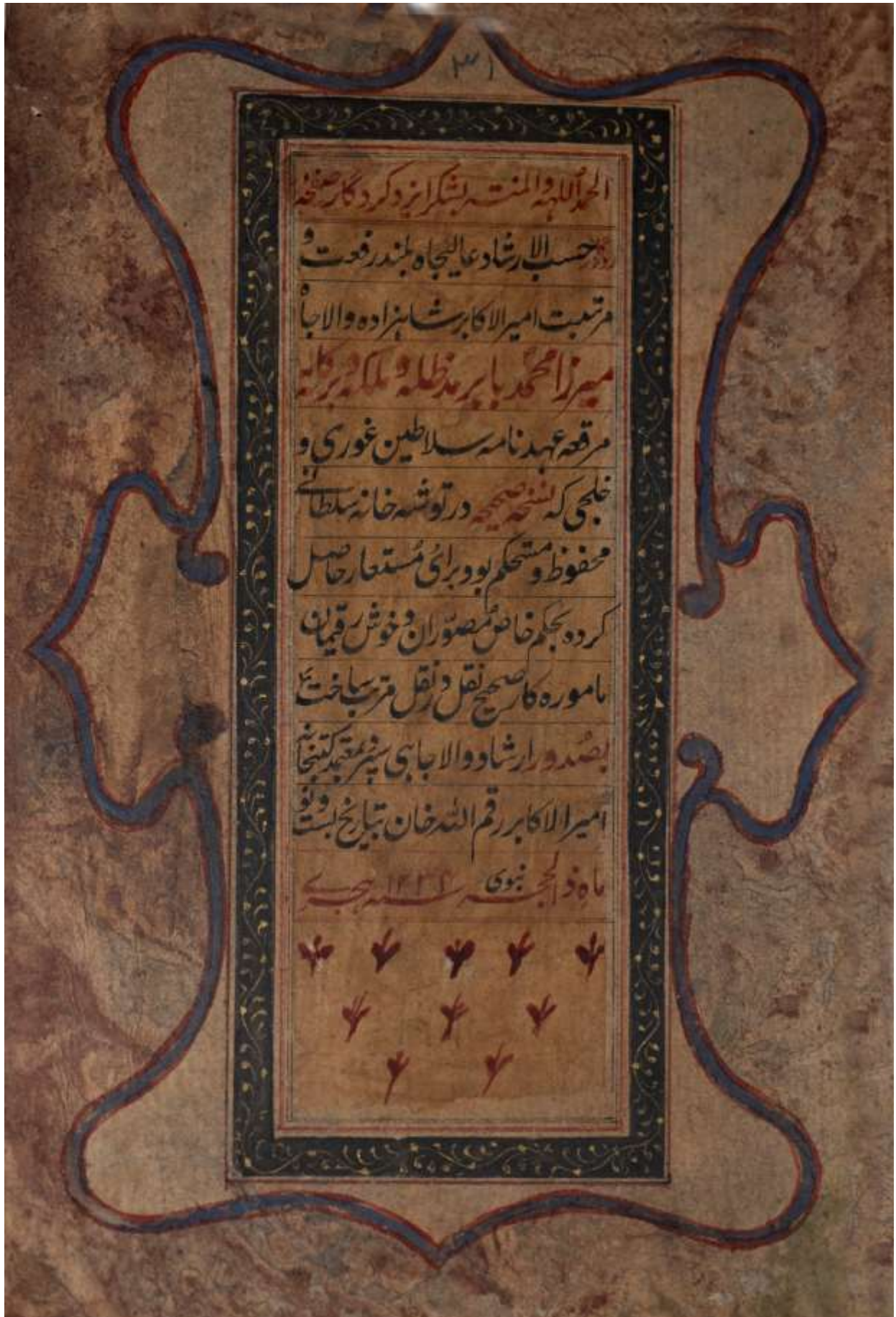
[Manuscript Page no. 31]



[Translation of Page no. 31 of manuscript]

1. All praises are for god, and gratitude is owed to God, the Creator.
2. And provider of livelihood as directed by great, exalted, generous and
3. Who has high rank and is chief of great people, Prince, close companion (of king)
4. Mīrzā Muhammad Babur— may his shadow be prolonged and his kingdom blessed.
5. A compiled album of the reins of the Sultans of the Gauri and Khilji dynasties, consisting of authentic
6. copies kept at Sultan’s treasury,
7. was securely and firmly preserved for reference obtained
8. by the great order, the royal painters and calligraphers,
9. assigned for accurate copying, copied meticulously all the pages.
10. It was handed over to the librarian
11. By the chief of great people, Raqamullah Khan.
12. Date: the month of Dhū-l-Hijjah, Nabwī 1234 H (August – September 1819 AD).

[Larger image of portrait in page no. 31 of manuscript]



Paintings of Awadh School, Company School and ivory paintings and Pencil Sketches kept in State Museum Lucknow, district Luknow

Vijay Kumar

Chief Editor

Indian Journal of Archaeology

&

A. K. Singh

(Retired)

Director State Museum Lucknow

Introduction: This article gives the details of 78 painting/sketches of Awadh school, 77 paintings/sketches of company school and 21 ivory paintings presently kept in State Museum Lucknow, district lucknow. This collection is inetresting because it has large number of sketches and paintings of Nawabs of Awadh and their officials. The Awadh school of paintings is influenced by Mughal miniature paintings. The pencil sketches on paper and deer parchment are realisitc and betray the influence of company style paintings. This collection also has company style paintings of British officers, soldiers, floral designs, animals and flora. A large sketches and some paintings depict day-to-day life of Nawabi period. It also contains the details of the activities of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. It also has sketches of kings and high officials related to kingdom of Sikhs and Afghans. The most interesting painting of this collection is by John Ruskin [Fig no. 122], it gives the details of a half finished arch. John Ruskin was the author of the famous book 'Unto This Last' which had great infuence across the world and was inspired by the parable of workers in wine yard narrated by Jesus Christ himself. This is the most important book written in 19th Century AD which propounded humanism. This book clearly laid down the idea that efforts should be made for the upliftment of the last man in the society because the best leader in any field is likely to come from common men. Those who have achieved the position of leadership just by manipulation are likely to be the worst leaders in that area of life. This idea was in total contrast with the methodology of political change and empowerment of common men as propounded by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 'Communist Manifesto'.



Fig no. 1: Painting of Nawāb Ḥasan Razā Khān

Accession no.	-	13.35
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1820 AD
Description	-	<i>Nawāb Ḥasan Razā Khān @ Mukhtar ud-daula</i> Served as chief minister of <i>Āṣaf ud-Daula</i> from 1775 to 1797. He started his career as a <i>Khān-e-sāmān</i> (steward/supritendent of the household) for the third nawab, Shuja-ud-daula. During his time, the seat of administration was shifted from Faizabad to Lucknow.



Fig no. 2: Sketch of Ganga dacoit

Accession no.	- 27.207
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1950 AD
Description	- Sketch of Ganga dacoit. He was sentenced to death during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah.



Fig no. 3: Painting of a nobleman

Accession no.	- 13.51
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century AD
Material and Size	- Paper, 27.5x21 cm
Description	- A nobleman seated on a chair.



Fig no. 4: Painting of Raja Nawal Rai

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Accession no. | - 32.240 |
| School | - Awadh |
| Description | - Portrait of Raja Nawal Rai Kayasth. He was Bakshi of The army of Awadh. He was killed in August 1750 in Battle of Khudaganj, near Farrukhabad. |



Fig no. 5: Portrait of Nawab Saadat Khan

Accession no.	- 28.215
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century AD
Material and Size	- Charba, 11x8.5cm
Description	- This is the portrait of Nawab Saadat Khan Nishapuri whose real name was Mir Muhammad Amin and he was son of Muhammad Nasir. He was the first Nawab of Awadh from 26 January 1722 to 1739.



Fig no. 6: sketch of *Mīrzā Chahāl Naqqāl*

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Accession no. | - 37.268 |
| School | - Awadh |
| Period | - 19 th Century AD |
| Description | - This is the sketch of <i>Mīrzā Chahāl Naqqāl</i> a famous actor who lived in the reign of <i>Badshah Ghazi-ud-din Haider</i> , who ruled Awadh from 1819 to 1927. <i>Badshah Ghazi-ud-din haider</i> built the <i>Chattar Manzil</i> palace and the tombs of his parents, <i>Sadat Ali Khan</i> and <i>Mushir Zadi Begum</i> . |



Fig no. 7: Portrait of Nawab Wazir Saadat Ali Khan II

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | 30.222 |
| School | - | Awadh |
| Period | - | Mid 18 th Century AD |
| Description | - | Nawab Wazir Saadat Ali Khan II @ Yameen-ud Daula (1752 – c. 11 July 1814) was the sixth Nawab of Awadh from 21 January 1798 to 11 July 1814, and the son of Shuja-ud-Daula. Saadat Ali Khan succeeded his half-nephew, Mirza Wazir `Ali Khan, to the throne of Awadh. |



Fig no. 8: Painting of Saadat Khan with his son in law Mansur Ali Khan

Accession no.	-	13.18
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 18x15 cm
Description	-	Saadat Khan with his son in law Mansur Ali Khan. Saadat Khan was founder nawab of Awadh and ruled from 1722 to 1739. His capital was at Faizabad in district Ayodhya.



Fig no. 9: Portrait of Roshan-ud-daula

Accession no.	- 28.214
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century AD
Material and Size	- Charba, 12.5x6.5 cm
Description	- Roshan-ud-daula, whose real name was Mohammed Hussain Khan was the Wazir of Nasir-ud-din Haider, The second king of Awadh. He held this position from 1832 to 1837. He built Roshan-ud-daula kothi. It is said that he poisoned Naseer-ud-din haider with the help of Dhaniya Mehri.



Fig no. 10: Portrait of Amin-ud-Daula

Accession no.

- 22.167

School

- Awadh

Description

- Portrait of Amin-ud-Daula who was chief minister of Amjad Ali Shah from 1842-1847.



Fig no. 11: Portrait of Tahawwur Ali

Accession no.	-	30.220
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 20.5x12 cm
Description	-	Tahawwur Ali Daroga of Wajid Ali Shah



Fig no. 12: sketch of Nawab Safdar Jang

Accession no.	- 28.216
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1850 AD
Material and Size	- Paper, 17x12 cm
Description	- This is the sketch of Asaf Jah Jamat-ul-Mulk Shuja-ud-Daula Nawab Abul Mansur Khan Bahadur Safdar Jang Sipah Salar popularly known as Safdar Jang. In 1739, he succeeded his father-in-law and maternal uncle, Burhan-ul-Mulk Saadat Ali Khan I to the throne of Awadh and ruled from 19 March 1739 to 5 October 1754. The Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah gave him the title of "Safdar Jang". He was Mughal Grand Wazir from 1748 to 1753.



Fig no. 13: Portrait of Kundan Lal munshi

Accession no.	-	28.209
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 20x15 cm
Description	-	Portrait of Kundan Lal who worked as munshi during the reigns of Nawab Muhammad Ali and Wajid Ali Shah. He was Amil (Revenue Incharge) of Nawab Safdar Jung and Shuja-ud-Daula.



Fig no. 14: Painting of two European Ladies

Accession no.	-	57.13
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1825 AD
Description	-	Two European ladies. Right one is title firangi mahal the wife of Fakir Muhammad Kazim and her sister painted on the left side.



Fig no. 15: Portrait of Makka Daroga

Accession no.	- 28.210
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1850 AD
Material and Size	- Paper, 19x12 cm
Description	- Makka Daroga, also known as Makka Jamadar or Makka Darzi (tailor). He was a highly skilled royal tailor and close confidant of Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haider. He built an Imambada, Masjid and Kadam Rasul in Khairabad district Sitapur.



Fig no. 16: Portrait of a dancing girl

Accession no.	- S-2658 (XV)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1800 AD
Description	- Portrait of a dancing girl.



Fig no. 17: Sketch of attendants

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Accession no. | - S-2658(VIII) |
| School | - Awadh |
| Period | - 1850 AD |
| Description | - Line drawing of attendants on a torn piece of paper. |



Fig no. 18: Portrait of Badshah Ghazi-ud-din Haider

Accession no.	- S-2658 (XII)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1914 AD
Description	- Portrait of Ghazi-ud-din Haider (c. 1769 – 19 October 1827). He was the last nawab wazir of Awadh from 11 July 1814 to 19 October 1818, and first King of Awadh from 19 October 1818 to 19 October 1827. He was the third son of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan and Mushir Zadi.



Fig no. 19: Tracing of portraits

Accession no.	- S-2658(XIII)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1914 AD
Description	- Tracing of portraits.



Fig no. 20: Portrait of Nawab Wazir Ali Khan

- Accession no.** - S-2658 (XIX)
- School** - Awadh
- Period** - 1850 AD
- Description** - Portrait of Wazir Ali Khan (19 April 1780 – 15 May 1817). He was the fourth Nawab of Kingdom of Awadh from 21 September 1797 to 21 January 1798 and the adopted son of Asaf-Ud-Daulah. After the death of his surrogate father in September 1797, he ascended to the throne with the support of the British. Within four months they accused him of being disloyal. Sir John Shore (1751–1834) then moved in with 12 battalions and replaced him with his uncle Saadat Ali Khan II. Ali was granted a pension of 300,000 Rupees and moved to Benares. The government in Calcutta decided that he should be removed further from his former realm. George Frederick Cherry, a British resident, relayed this order to him on 14 January 1799 during a breakfast invitation at which the resident was killed. He fled from Banaras but later on surrendered to Britishers and remained in Calcutta as prisoner of Britishers.



Fig no. 21: Line drawing of Cavalry officer

Accession no.	- S-2658 (XXI)
School	- Awadh
Period	- late 19th Century AD
Description	- Cavalry officer line drawing.



Fig no. 22: Portrait of Nawab Amjad Ali Shah

Accession no.	- S-2658 (X)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1915 AD
Description	- Portrait of Amjad Ali Shah the fourth King of Awadh from 7 May 1842 to 13 February 1847. He built the Hazratganj and Aminabad Bazar, major shopping markets in Lucknow



Fig no. 23: Portrait of Nawab Amjad Ali Shah

Accession no.	-	S-2658 (XI)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Portrait of Amjad Ali Shah.



Fig no. 24: Portrait of Mohsin-ud-Daula

Accession no.	- S-2658 (I)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1850 AD
Material	- Charba
Description	- Portrait of Mohsin-ud-Daula He married one of the sisters of Amjad Ali Shah, the 4th King of Awadh, making him an uncle of Wajid Ali Shah, the last King of Awadh.



Fig no. 25: Partially finished painting of Nasir-ud-din Haidar

Accession no.	-	S-2858 (VI)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Partially finished painting of Nasir-ud-din Haidar.



Fig no. 26: Protrait of english man probably Dalhousie

Acc Accession no.	-	S-2658 (VI)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Some english man probably Dalhousie.



Fig no. 27: Portrait of Nawab Asgar Ali Khan

Accession no.	-	S-2658 (IX)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Portrait of Nawab Asgar Ali Khan.



Fig no. 28: Portrait of Ali Naqi Khan

Accession no.

- S-2658 (XIV)

School

- Awadh

Description

- Ali Naqi Khan was Chief Minister and influential figure in the court of Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Awadh. His daughter Raunaq Ara was married to Wajid Ali Shah.



Fig no. 29: Portrait of Resident, Mordaunt Ricketts

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Accession no. | - S-2658 (II) |
| School | - Awadh |
| Period | - 1850 AD |
| Description | - Portrait of British Resident, Mordaunt Ricketts. Mordaunt entered the Foreign and Colonial Civil Service and was Resident (envoy of the East India Company) at the court of Lucknow, Awadh, from 1723-29. |



Fig no. 30: Portrait of Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula

Accession no.	-	45.108
School	-	Company
Period	-	1800 AD
Description	-	Portrait of Shuja-ud-Daula Nawab Wazir of Awadh. He was buried at Faizabad in Gulab Bari. This portrait was made by some artist named Home.



Fig no. 31: Portraits of Mehrdo Khan Risaldar of Ghazi-ud-din Haidar and Mirza Doin Beg

Accession no.	-	30.224
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Description	-	Portraits of (A) Mehrdo Khan Risaldar of Ghazi-ud-din Haidar and (B) Mirza Doin Beg.

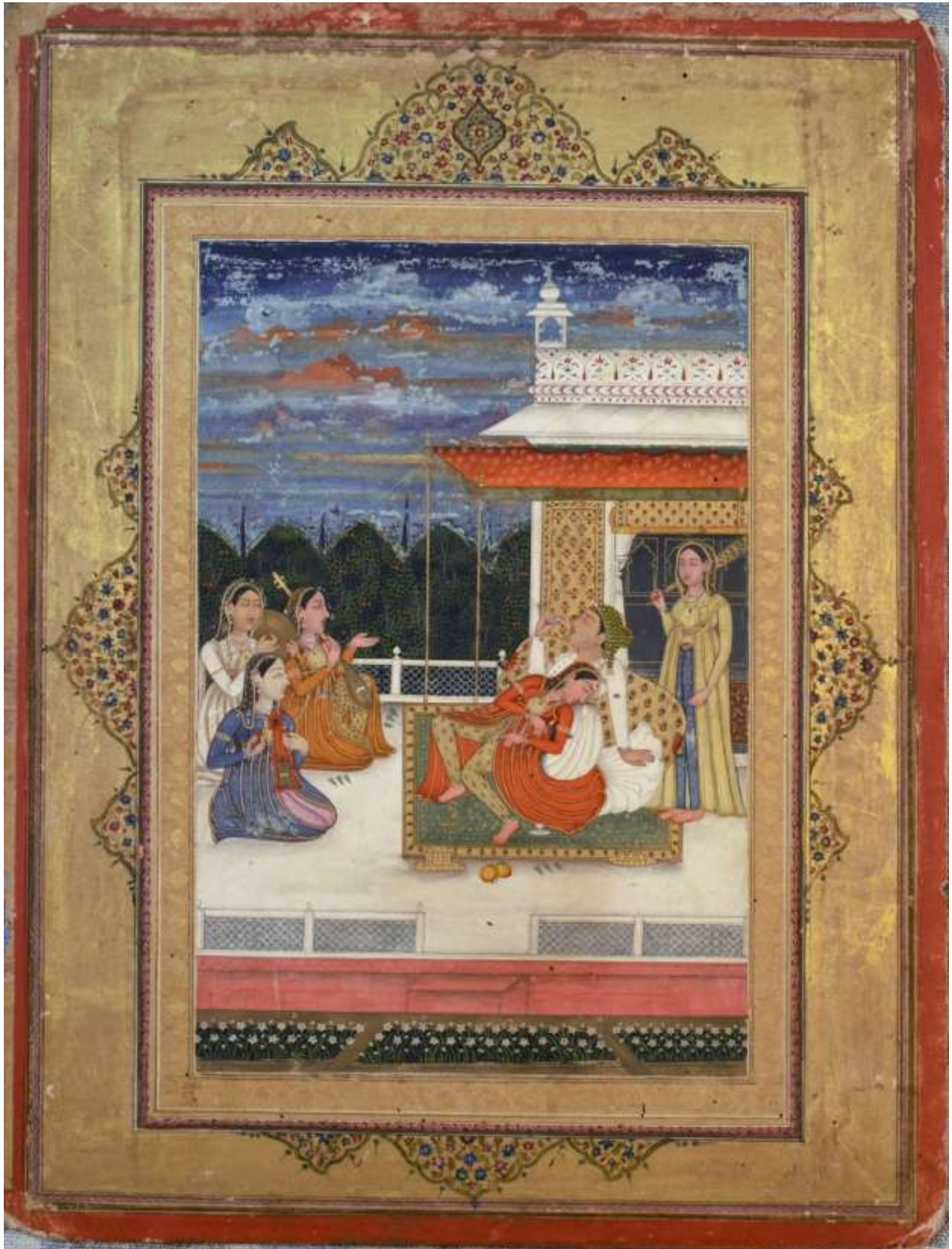


Fig no. 32: Painting showing lovers on terrace

Accession no.	- 57.163
School	- Awadh
Period	- Early 19 th Century AD
Description	- Painting showing lovers on terrace.



Fig no. 33: Painting showing Harem scene

Accession no.	-	32.241
School	-	Awadh
Description	-	Harem Scene.



Fig no. 34: Line drawing depicting male and female dancers

Accession no.	-	S-2658 (XVIII)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Line drawing depicting male and female dancers.



Fig no. 35: Thugs about to strangulate their victim.

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | S-2658 (VIII) |
| School | - | Awadh |
| Period | - | 1850 AD |
| Description | - | Line drawing showing thugs about to strangulate their victim. |



Fig no. 36: Painting showing camel rider

Accession no.	- 59.123
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1850 AD
Description	- Painting showing a camel rider.



Fig no. 37: Painting showing a meeting between Ram and Shiva

Accession no.

- 21.133

School

- Awadh

Description

- This Mythological scene shows meeting between Ram standing on the left side and Shiva standing on the right side. Ram is accompanied by his brothers Laxman and Bharat (?) and ascetics ladies standing behind him. Brahma Stands behind Shiva, he is accompanied by one goddess, Ganesh and nine unidentifiable gods. The meeting is taking place in front of a large throne behind which nine ladies are standing with folded hands. Every body is standing with folded hands. Two boys are shows with backs facing throne, they are probably Luv and Kush. A guard stands at the opening of railing shows in foreground. A canopy is places above the throne.



Fig no. 38: Sketch showing fight between tiger and a dog

Accession no.	-	60.298/3
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	Early 19 th Century AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 14.5x12.5 cm
Description	-	Sketch showing fight between tiger and a dog.



Fig no. 39: Sketch showing tiger hunt by Raja of *Balrampur*.

Accession no.	-	21.116
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Description	-	Sketch showing tiger hunt by Raja of <i>Balrampur</i> .



Fig no. 40: Painting on thin Mica Sheet showing a washer man ironing clothes

Accession no.	-	76.100
School	-	Awadh
Description	-	Painting on thin mica sheet. It shows a washer man ironing clothes.



Fig no. 41: Painting on thin Mica Sheet showing a soldier

Accession no.	-	76.99
School	-	Awadh
Description	-	Painting on thin mica sheet. It shows a soldier in standing posture holding a spear.



Fig no. 42: Drawing

Accession no.	-	86.220
School	-	Awadh
Description	-	Wild dogs attacking an elephant.



Fig no. 43: Painting of butterfly by Avanindranath Tagore

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | 39.275 |
| School | - | Awadh |
| Description | - | A black butterfly. The painting shows the name of the painter on the lower right side, it reads: Avanindra. This painting is by famous artist Avanindranath Tagore. |



Fig no. 44: Painting of a pigeon

Accession no.	- 43.34
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1800 AD
Description	- A pigeon (<i>Columba livia domestica</i>).



Fig no. 45: Painting of a sparrow

Accession no.	- 43.35
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1800 AD
Description	- A sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>).



Fig no. 46: Painting of flower bouquet on deer skin

Accession no.	-	40.263
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Bouquet drawn on <i>Charba</i> (deer skin).



Fig no. 47: Floral design

Accession no.	-	62.54
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1825 AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 16x20.5 cm
Description	-	Floral design.



Fig no. 48: Floral design on a decorative vase

Accession no.	-	59.156
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 21x22.5 cm
Description	-	Floral design on a decorative vase.



Fig no. 49: Floral design

Accession no.	-	62.53
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Material	-	Paper
Description	-	Floral design.



Fig no. 50: Drawing of flower pots

Accession no.	- 60.298/6
School	- Awadh
Period	- Early 19 th Century AD
Material and Size	- Paper, 18.5x5 cm
Description	- Flower pots.



Fig no. 51: Drawing of two twigs

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Accession no. | - 60.298/7 |
| School | - Awadh |
| Period | - 19 th Century AD |
| Material and Size | - Paper, 9x10.5 cm |
| Description | - Drawing of two Twigs |



Fig no. 52: Florary design

Accession no.	-	60.298/2
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	1850 AD
Material and Size	-	Paper, 12.5x8.5 cm
Description	-	Floral design.



Fig no. 53: Line drawing of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | S-2658 (XVI) |
| School | - | Awadh |
| Period | - | 1850 AD |
| Description | - | Line drawing of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in standing posture and holding a sword. |



Fig no. 54: Line drawing of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah

Accession no.	- S-2658 (XVII)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 1850 AD
Description	- Line drawing showing Nawab Wajid Ali Shah dancing with ladies.



Fig no. 55: Line drawing of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah

School

- Awadh

Description

- This sketch shows Begums of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Dancing.



Fig no. 56: Wajid Ali Shah Conforting a fainted Begum.

Accession no.	-	60.58 (i)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch showing Wajid Ali Shah Conforting a fainted Begum.



Fig no. 57: Wajid Ali Shah feeling the pulse of a Begum.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | 60.58(ii) |
| School | - | Awadh |
| Period | - | 19 th Century CE |
| Description | - | Sketch showing Wajid Ali Shah feeling the pulse of a Begum. |



Fig no. 58: Wajid Ali Shah receiving a Begum in the garden.

Accession no.	-	60.58(iii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah receiving a Begum in the garden.



Fig no. 59: Wajid Ali Shah witnessing the performance of a dancer

Accession no.	-	60.58(iv)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah witnessing the performance of a dancer. Another lady is fanning him with <i>morchhal</i> (bunch of tail feathers of peacock).



Fig no. 60: Wajid Ali Shah performing drama with his begums and courtiers

Accession no.	-	60.58(v)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah performing drama with his begums and courtiers.



Fig no. 61: Wajid Ali Shah witnessing a dance performance.

Accession no.	-	60.58(vi)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah witnessing a dance performance.



Fig no. 62: Wajid Ali Shah appreciating music

Accession no.	-	60.58(vii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah appreciating music.

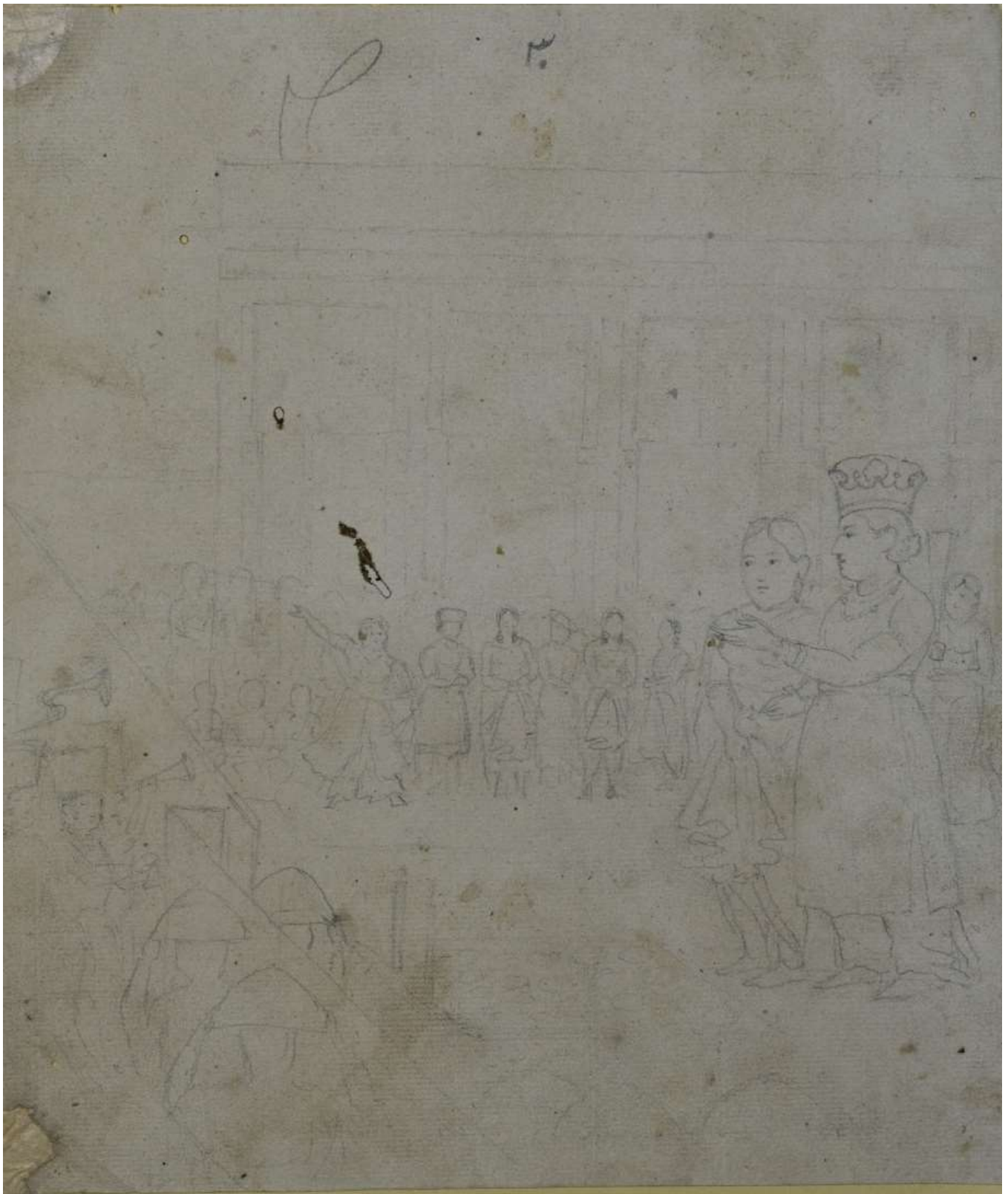


Fig no. 63: Wajid Ali Shah inspecting the Band

Accession no.	-	60.58 (viii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah inspecting the Band.

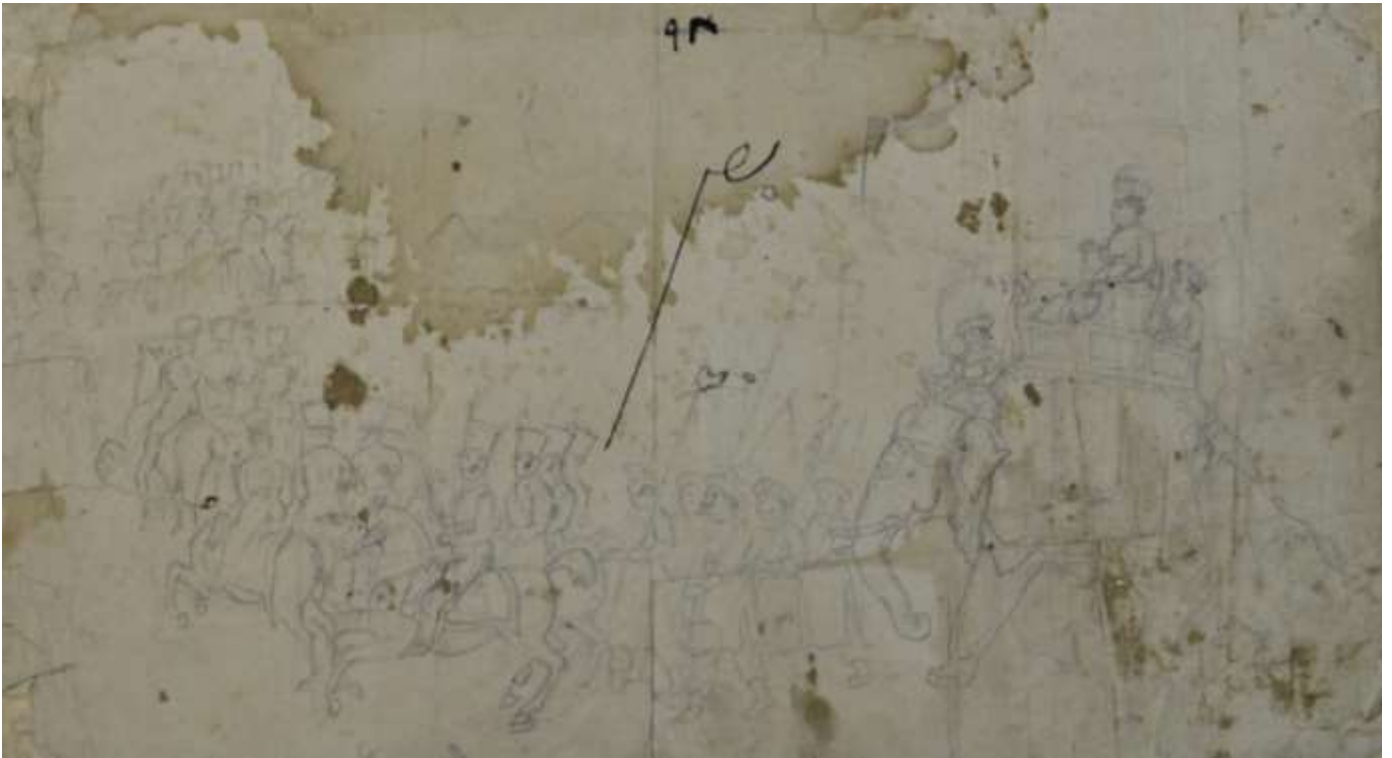


Fig no. 64: Wajid Ali Shah in a procession

Accession no.	- 60.58(ix)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century CE
Description	- Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah in a procession.



Fig no. 65: Wajid Ali Shah in his harem

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Accession no. | - 60.58(x) |
| School | - Awadh |
| Period | - 19 th Century CE |
| Description | - Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah in his harem. |



Fig no. 66: Wajid Ali Shah playing Sitar

Accession no.	- 60.58(xi)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century CE
Description	- Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah playing Sitar.



Fig no. 67: Wajid Ali Shah chatting with Begum

Accession no.	-	60.58(xii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah chatting with Begum.

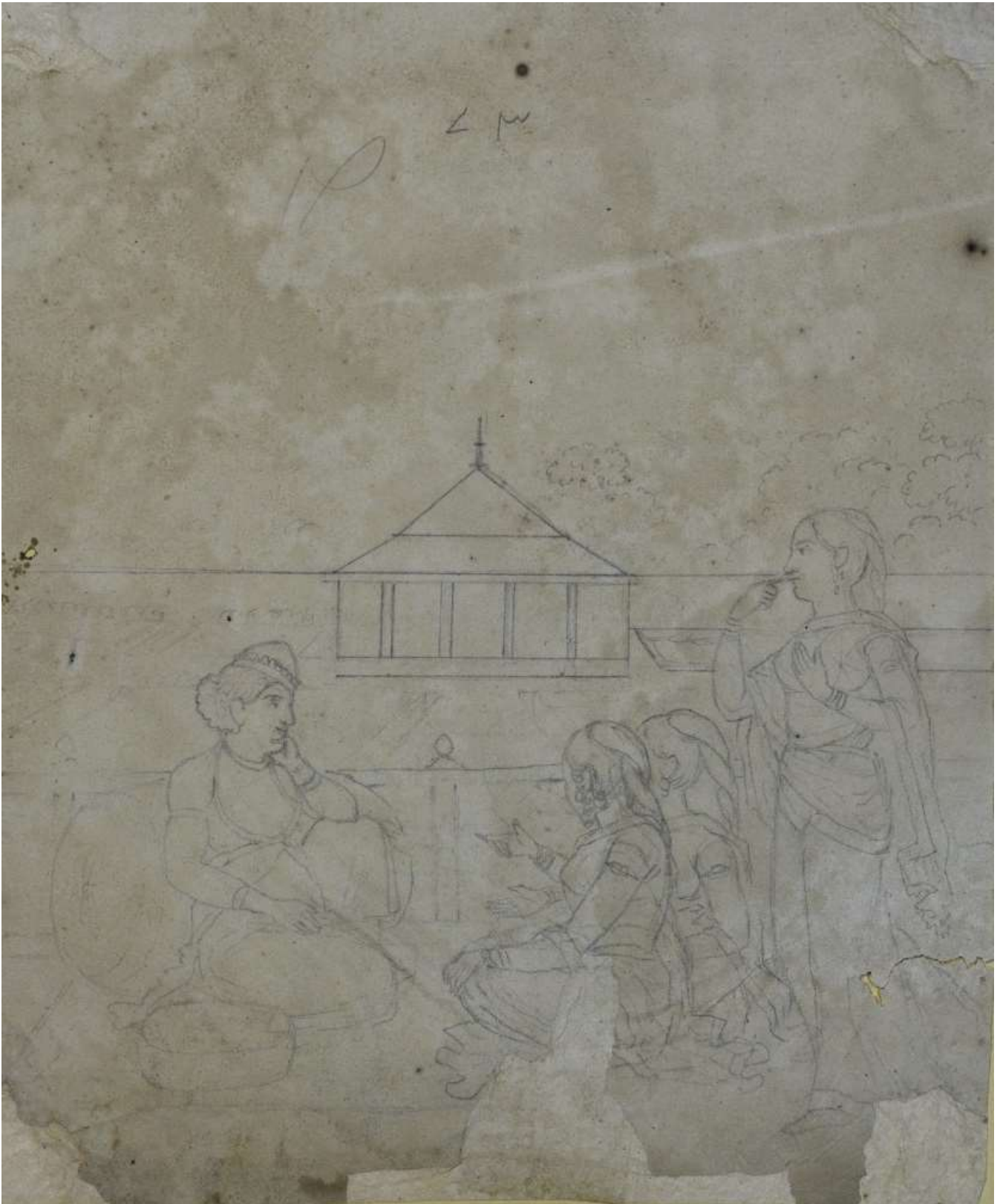


Fig no. 68: Wajid Ali Shah discoursing with Begums

Accession no.	-	60.58(xiii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah discoursing with Begums.



Fig no. 69: Wajid Ali Shah playing with a cat

- Accession no.** - 60.58 (xv)
- School** - Awadh
- Period** - 19th Century CE
- Description** - Sketch shows Wajid Ali Shah playing with a cat. A yunak is sitting on his right side and four courtiers are watching him. Their names are: Mehtad (?), Razi, Anees and Waheed as we move from right to left.

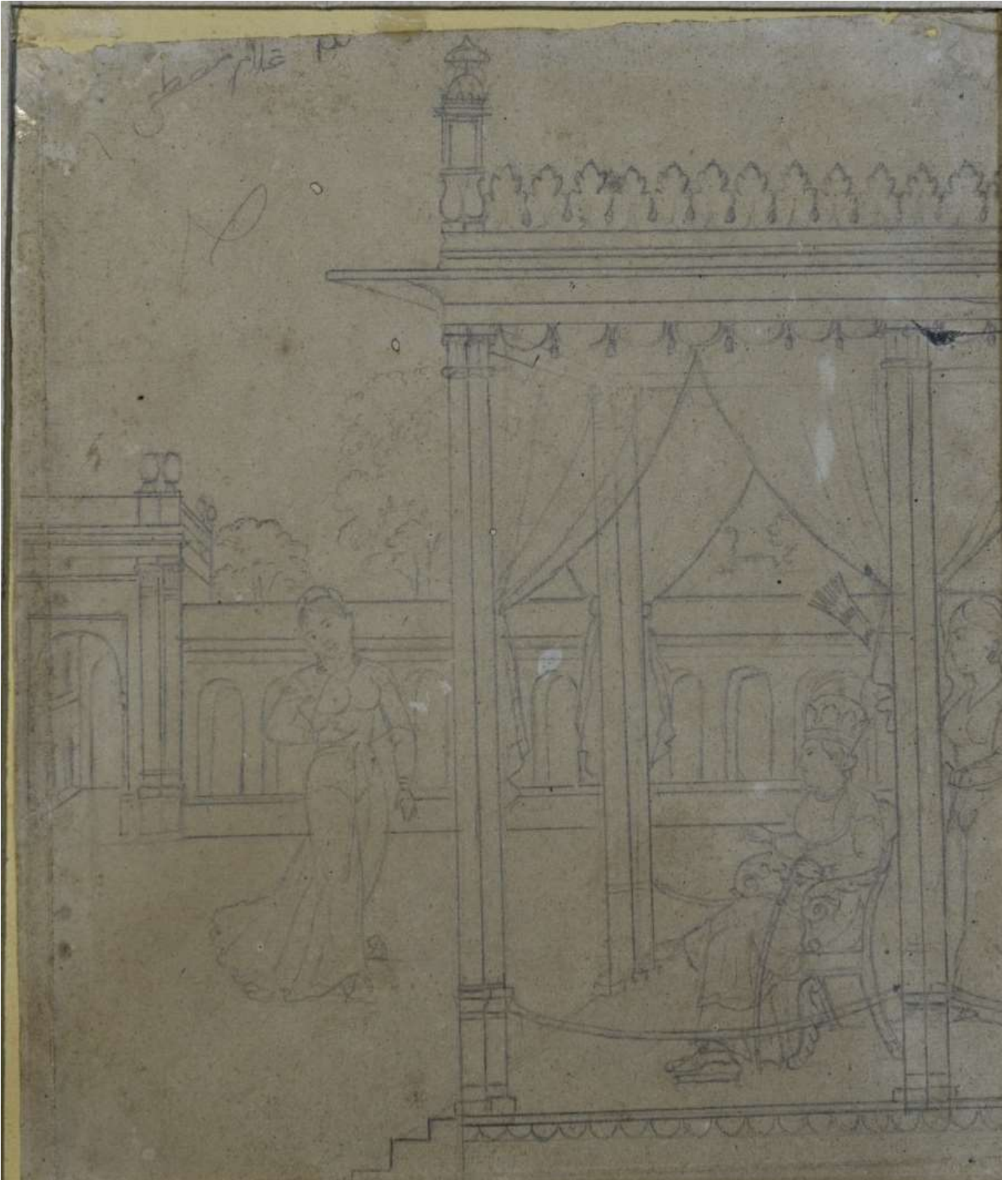


Fig no. 70: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah watching a dance performance

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xvi)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah watching a dance performance. A lady is fanning him with a <i>morchhal</i> .

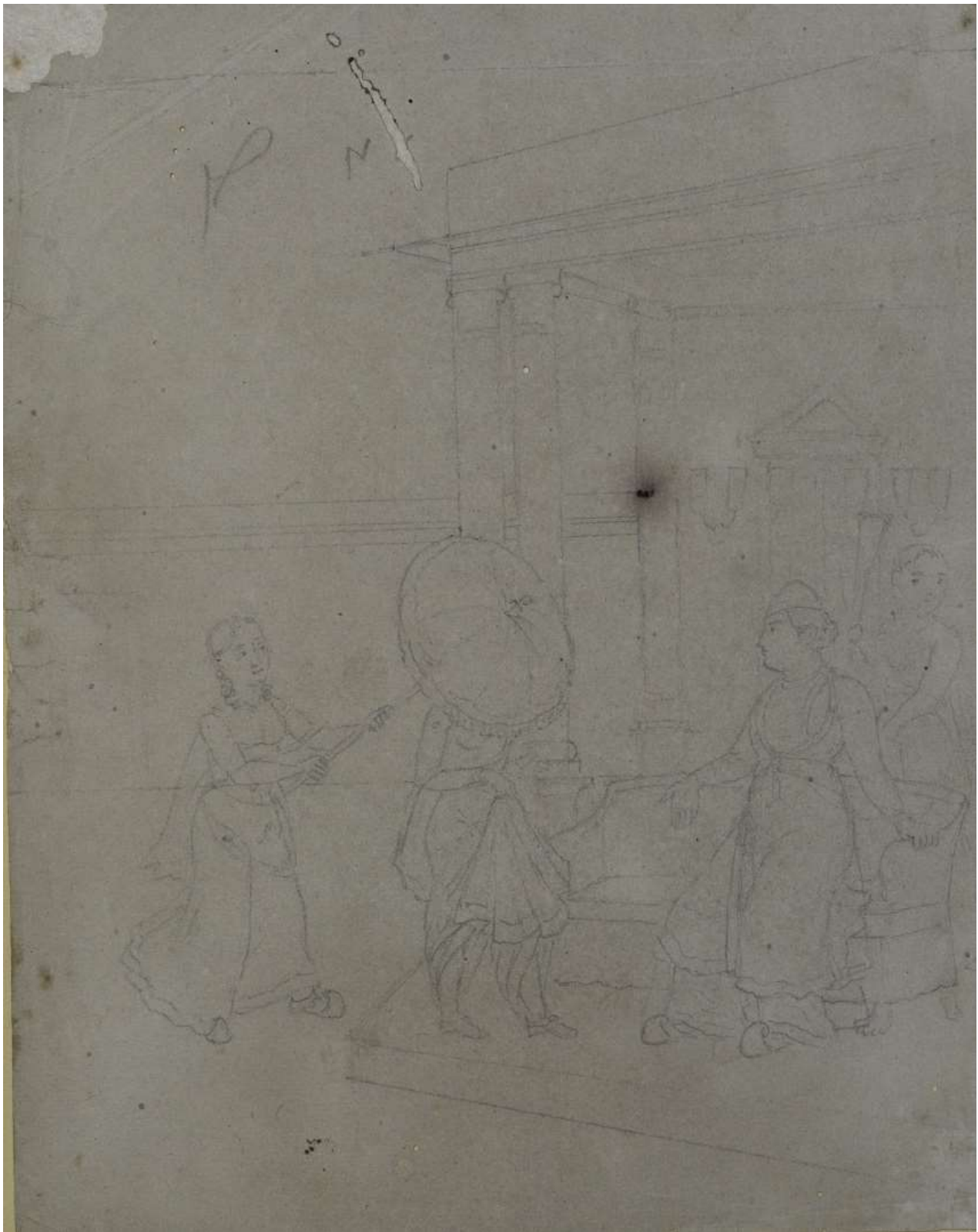


Fig no. 71: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah receiving a Begum

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xvii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah receiving a Begum.

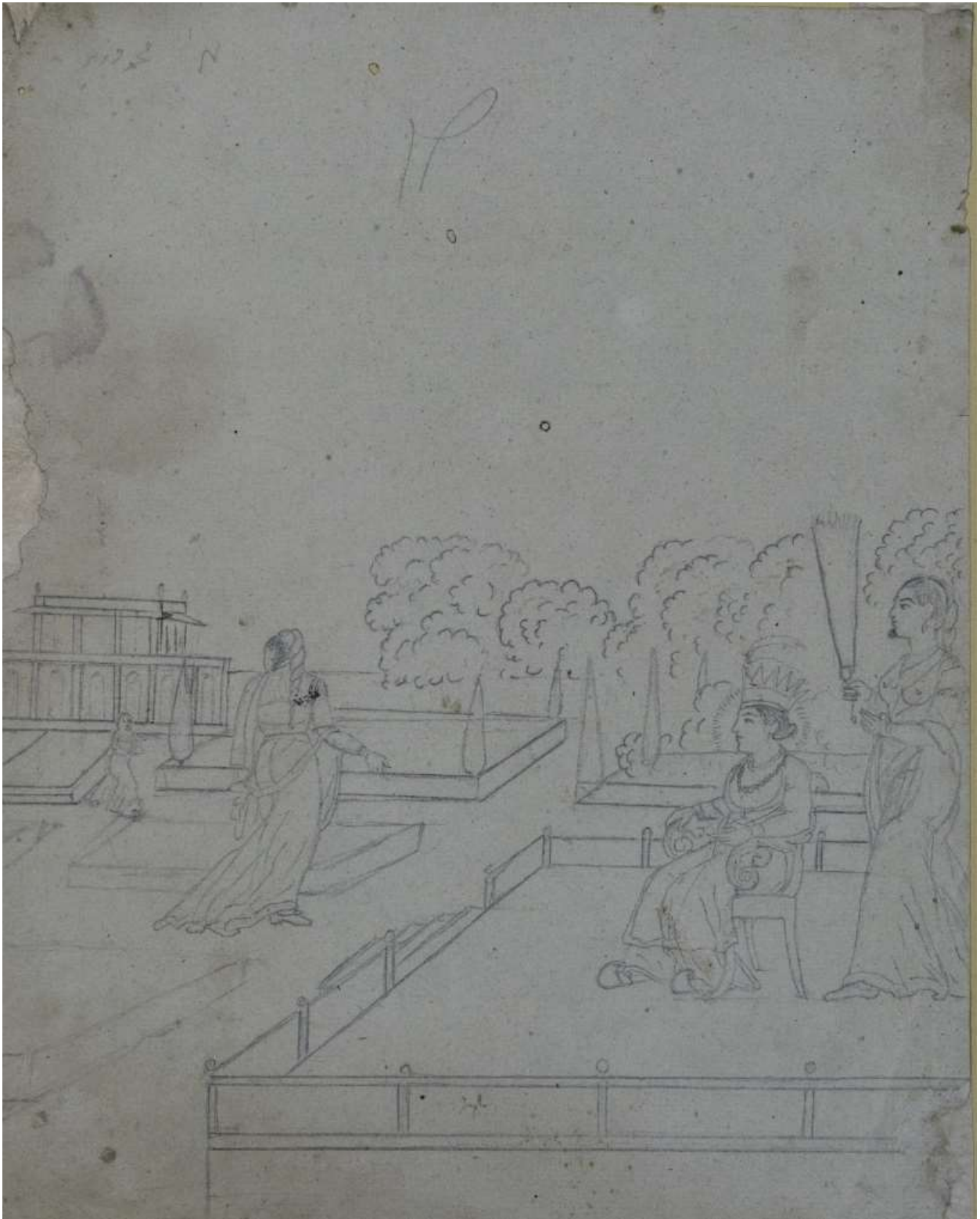


Fig no. 72: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah sitting in the garden.

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xviii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah sitting in the garden. Two ladies are moving around in the garden. He is sitting on a chair and being fanned by a lady.



Fig no. 73: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah watching his Begum enjoying fragrance of flowers

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xix)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah watching his Begum enjoying fragrance of flowers.



Fig no. 74: harem scene of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah

Accession no.	-	60.58(xx)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	Sketch shows harem scene of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah.



Fig no. 75: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah holding his Begum back who is beating some employee.

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xxi)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	This sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah holding his Begum back who is beating some employee.

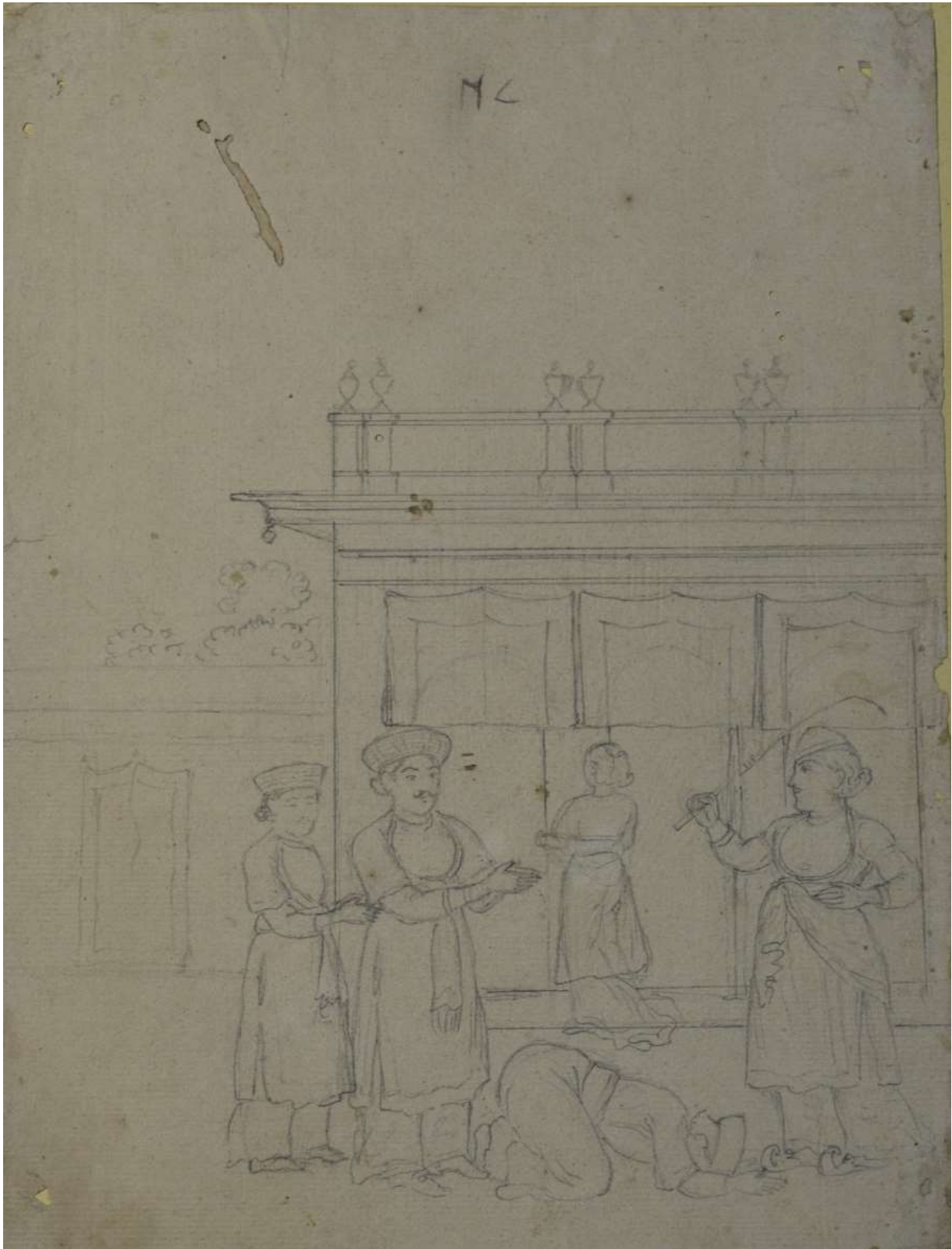


Fig no. 76: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah punishing a guilty person.

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xxii)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	This sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah punishing a guilty person.



Fig no. 77: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah consulting his courtiers.

Accession no.	- 60.58 (xxiii)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century CE
Description	- This sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah consulting his courtiers.



Fig no. 78: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah talking to his Begum

Accession no.	- 60.58 (xxiv)
School	- Awadh
Period	- 19 th Century CE
Description	- This sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah talking to his Begum.



Fig no. 79: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah listening to a Begum's complaint.

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xxv)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	This sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah listening to a Begum's complaint.



Fig no. 80: Nawab Wajid Ali Shah supervising the rehearsal of Indra Sabha

Accession no.	-	60.58 (xxvi)
School	-	Awadh
Period	-	19 th Century CE
Description	-	This sketch shows Nawab Wajid Ali Shah supervising the rehearsal of Indra Sabha.



Fig no. 81: Painting of Badshah Nasir-ud-din Haider

- Accession no. - 47.33
- School - Company Lucknow
- Period - 1825 AD
- Description - Badshah Nasir-ud-din Haider being carried on a palanquin. He is accompanied by his prime minister Agha Mir.



Fig no. 82: Painting of two artisians doing embroidery

Accession no.	-	40.247
School	-	Company Lucknow
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Description	-	Two artisians doing embroidery.



Fig no. 83: Painting of a Decorated Hauda

Accession no.	-	81.39
School	-	Company Banaras
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Description	-	Decorated Hauda



Fig no. 84: Painting of a palki

Accession no.	- 81.40
School	- Company Banaras
Period	- 19 th Century AD
Description	- Painting of a palki



Fig no. 85: Portrait of Raja Anand Gajapati

Accession no.	-	40.262
School	-	Company Banaras
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Portrait of Raja Anand Gajapati.



Fig no. 86: drawing

Accession no.	-	45.107
School	-	Company Banaras
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Man with a sword.



Fig no. 87: Portrait of a Noble

Accession no.	- 40.261
School	- Company Banaras
Period	- 1800 AD
Description	- Portrait of a Noble.



Fig no. 88: Painting

Accession no.	-	57.109
School	-	Company
Description	-	Three Soldiers



Fig no. 89: Painting of Nawab Mansur-ud-daula Bahadur

Accession no.	-	76.71
School	-	Company
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Description	-	Nawab Mansur-ud-daula Bahadur. He was maternal uncle of nawab Asif-ud-Daula



Fig no. 90: Painting of a royal lady

Accession no.	- 92.24
School	- Company
Period	- 1850 AD
Description	- Painting of a Begum (<i>Vilayti</i> Begum wife of Ghazi-ud-Din Haidar(?)) playing with a cat.

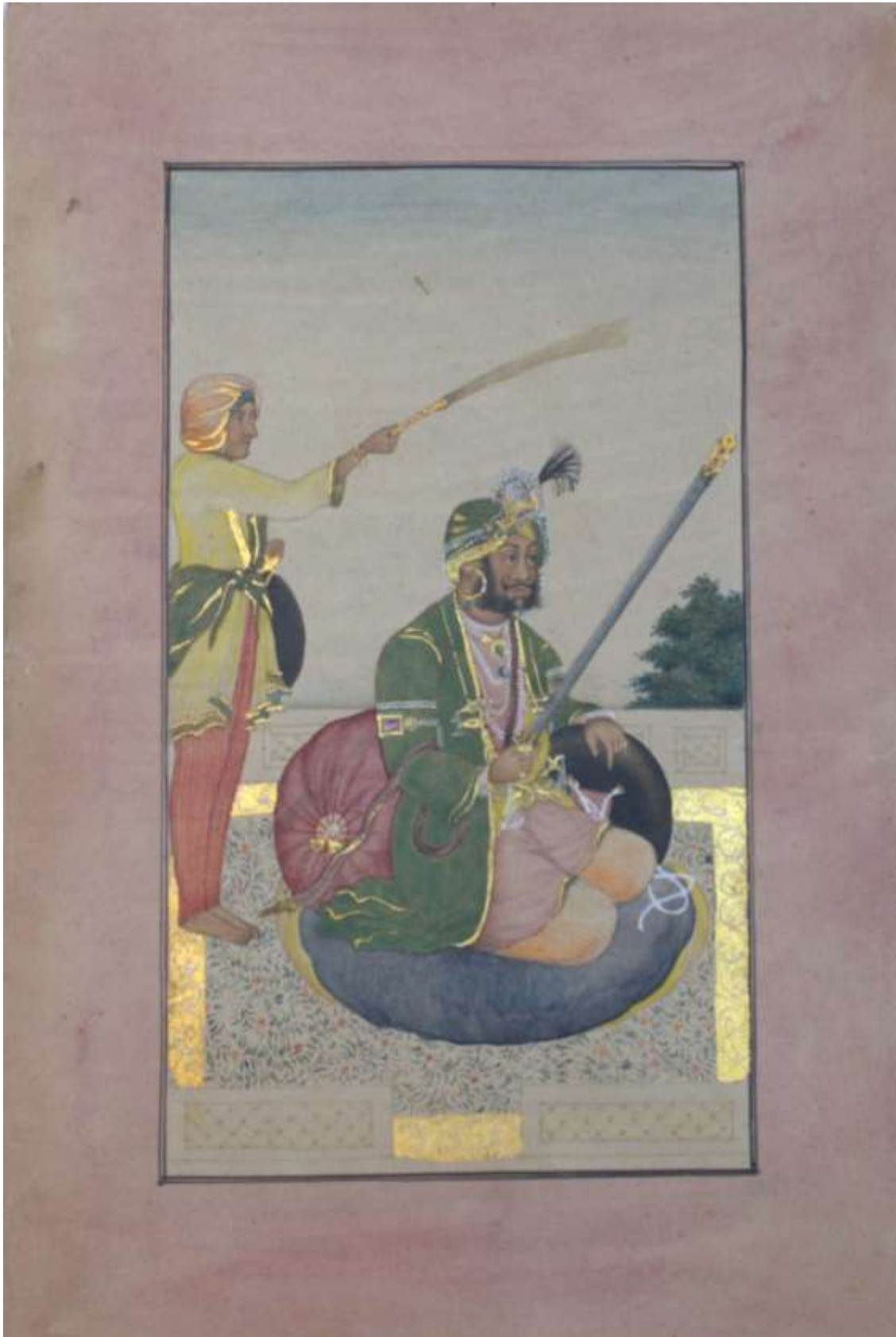


Fig no. 91: Painting of a Shikh Ruler

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Accession no. | - 60.37 |
| School | - Company |
| Description | - Painting of a Shikh ruler. |



Fig no. 92: Painting of engravers

Accession no.	- 40.249
School	- Company
Period	- 19 th Century AD
Description	- Painting of engravers (<i>Naqqāsh</i>) carving a flower pot.



Fig no. 93: Painting of a group of persons

Accession no.	-	62.26
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Painting of a group of persons doing different activities.



Fig no. 94: Painting of a Shikh ruler

Accession no.	- 54.11
School	- Company
Period	- 1800 AD
Description	- Painting of a Shikh Ruler.



Fig no. 95: Painting of a Scholar

Accession no.	- 40.259
School	- Company
Period	- 1875 AD
Description	- Painting of a scholar holding a leaf with a manuscript kept on a pedestal in front of him.



Fig no. 96: Painting of two holy men

School
Description

- Company
- This painting shows holy men. Left one is holding a rope and the right one is holding a tong and a basin of burning charcoals.



Fig no. 97: Painting of two military officers

Accession no.	-	60.112
School	-	Company
Period	-	1825 AD
Description	-	Painting of two military officers greeting each other.



Fig no. 98: Painting of a armed medicant

- School** - Company
- Description** - Painting of a armed medicant holding a spear.



Fig no. 99: Painting of a noble man

School
Description

- Company
- Portrait of Raja Balwant Singh (1711–1770), was the ruler of Benares State. He succeeded his father Raja Mansaram Singh as Raja of Kaswar and Maharaja of Benares in 1738.



Fig no. 100: painting showing scene of daily life

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Accession no. | - | 56.530 (i) |
| School | - | Company |
| Period | - | 1850 AD |
| Description | - | Kanchan girl trying to entice customers. Three Prospective customers are sanding near her house. |

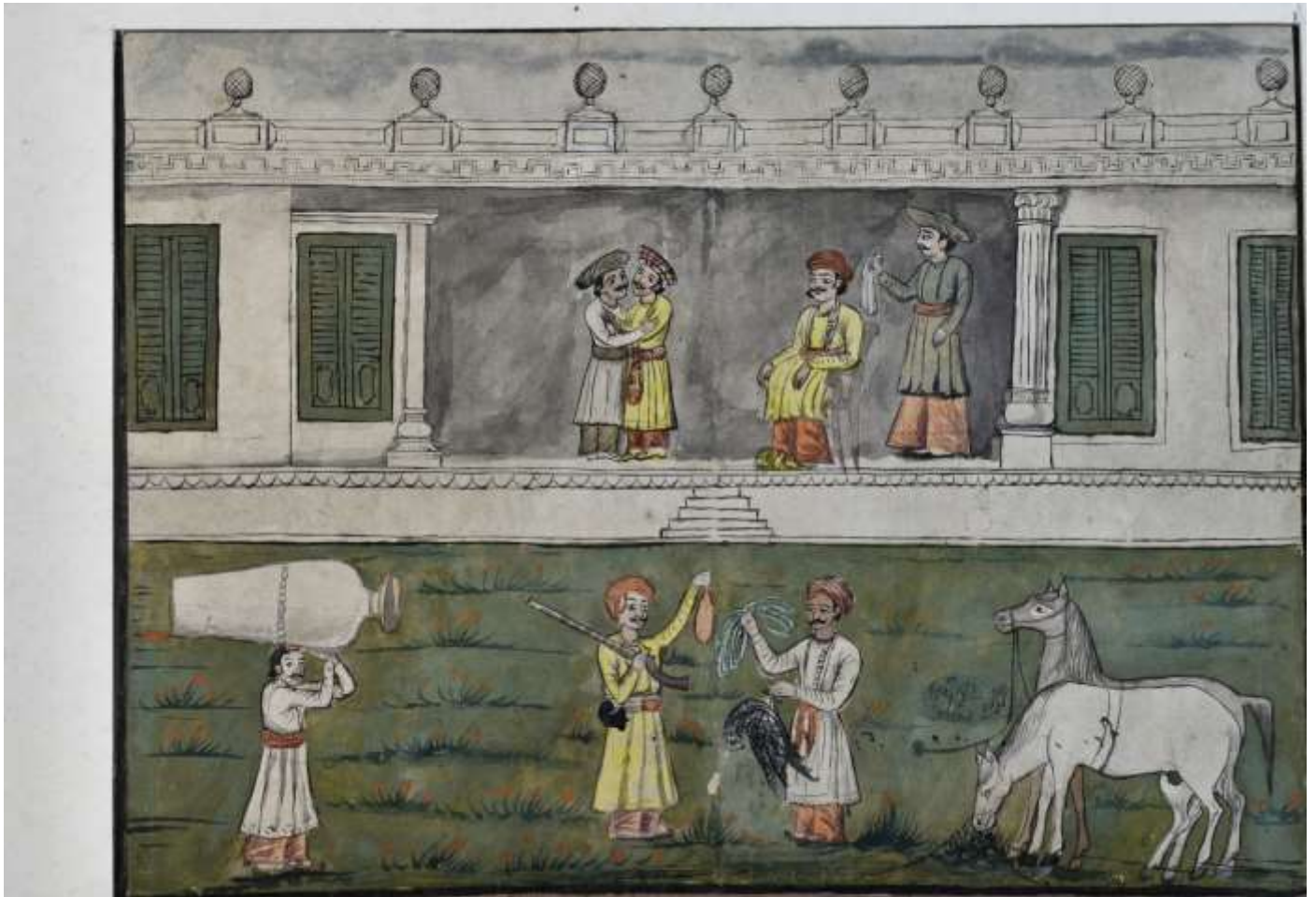


Fig no. 101: Painting showing a noble man sitting in the verandah of his house

- Accession no.** - 56.530 (ii)
School - Company
Period - 1850 AD
Description - Scene of daily life showing a noble man sitting on a chair in the Verandah of his house with a attendant on the backside fanning him with his cloth and two persons hugging each other in front of him. A hunter and a trapper showing their booty to each other with two horses standing on th right and a potter carrying a large vessel on his head and moving towards right.



Fig no. 102: Painting showing two men carrying *Palki*

Accession no.	-	56.530 (iii)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Two men carrying a <i>palki</i> with a women attendant walking by the side.



Fig no. 103: A noble man carrying a child, accompanied by his Wife

Accession no.	-	56.530 (iv)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	A noble man carrying a child, accompanied by his Wife, being received by two gatekeepers.



Fig no. 104: Painting showing sawari of Badshah Nasur-ud-Din

Accession no.	-	56.530 (v)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Sawari of Badshah Nasir-ud-din Haider passing in front of a two storied house. A lady is sitting on the first floor talking to a man standing outside the house.



Fig no. 105: Painting showing Nawab Nasir-ud-din haidar holding a court

Accession no.	-	56.530 (vi)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haidar holding a court accompanied by his chief minister Agha Mir.



Fig no. 106: Two men witnessing a dance performance.

Accession no.	-	56.530 (vii)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	A dancing girl giving her performance in the courtyard of a house. Two men are witnessing her performance.



Fig no. 107: Painting showing scene of daily life

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | 56.530 (viii) |
| School | - | Company |
| Period | - | 1850 AD |
| Description | - | Doctor examining his patient inside the house. Two palanquin carriers are standing outside. A maid servant is coming out of the door. |



Fig no. 108: Scene of building construction.

Accession no.	-	56.530 (ix)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Scene of building construction.



Fig no. 109: Scene of a market

Accession no.	-	56.530 (x)
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Shopkeepers, customers and passers by in a market.



Fig no. 110: Painting of an elephant

Accession no.	- 40.257
School	- Company
Period	- 1850
Description	- An elephant.



Fig no. 111: Painting of paradise fly catcher

Accession no.	-	43.33
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	A pair of <i>Shah Bulbul</i> @ Paradise fly catcher (<i>Terpsiphone paradise</i>).



Fig no. 112: Painting of two birds

Accession no.	- 26.199
School	- Company
Size	- 46.5x32.5 cm
Description	- This painting shows two birds. The upper one is Hoopoe (<i>Upupa epops</i>) and the lower one is Great Grey Shrike (<i>Lanius excubitor</i>).



Fig no. 113: Painting of a b Red-crested Pochard

Accession no.	-	40.258
School	-	Company
Period	-	19 th Century AD
Description	-	A Red-crested Pochard(<i>Netta rufina</i>).



Fig no. 114: Painting of a horse

Accession no.	- 40.256
School	- Company
Period	- 1850 AD
Description	- A horse.



Fig no. 115: Painting of a Hoopoe

School
Description

- Company
- Hoopoe bird (*Upupa epops*).



Fig no. 116: Painting of two Java sparrows

Accession no.	-	40.245
School	-	Company
Description	-	Two Java sparrows (<i>Lonchura oryzivora</i>) birds.



Fig no. 117: Painting of a twig of palash

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| Accession no. | - | 40.255 |
| School | - | Company |
| Period | - | 1850 AD |
| Description | - | Twig of Fire of the forest @ Dhak @ Palash (<i>Butea monosperma</i>) flowers. |



Fig no. 118: Painting of an aster flower

Accession no.	- 59.122
School	- Company
Period	- 1850 AD
Description	- An Aster flower (<i>Kalimeris indica</i>) plant.



Fig no. 119: Painting of morning glory flower

Accession no.	-	59.124
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	A flowering twig of Morning glory (<i>Ipomoea sp.</i>).



Fig no. 120: Painting of a flower

Accession no.	- 40.254
School	- Company
Period	- 1850 AD
Description	- Painting of a flower.



Fig no. 121: Painting of a Kashni flower

Accession no.	-	40.253
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Flower branch of a Kashni @ Chicory plant (<i>Cichorium intybus</i>)



Fig no. 122: Unfinished sketch of an arch by John Ruskin

Accession no.	-	21.139
School	-	Company
Period	-	1874 AD
Size	-	8x6.5 cm
Description	-	Unfinished sketch of an arch made by Professor J. Ruskin. A native of Fuligno a town in Italy. He has authored the famous book 'Unto This last ', which forms the basis of Gandhian philosophy. From his book Gandhi got the idea of <i>Antyodaya</i> . The concept of 'Unto This Last' first comes in the 'The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard' narrated by Jesus Christ (Matthew 20:1-16) (King James Version of Bible).



Fig no. 123: Floral design with double fishes

Accession no.	-	40.248
School	-	Company
Period	-	1850 AD
Description	-	Floral design with double fishes. The image of fishes with slight change is part of Royal insignia of Awadh.



Fig no. 124: British officers on horse back

Accession no.	- S.2657(i)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- British officer on horseback.



Fig no. 125: Hussars

Accession no.	-	S.2657(ii)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Hussars.



Fig no. 126: Two hussars on horseback

Accession no.	- S.2657(iv)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Two Hussars on horseback.

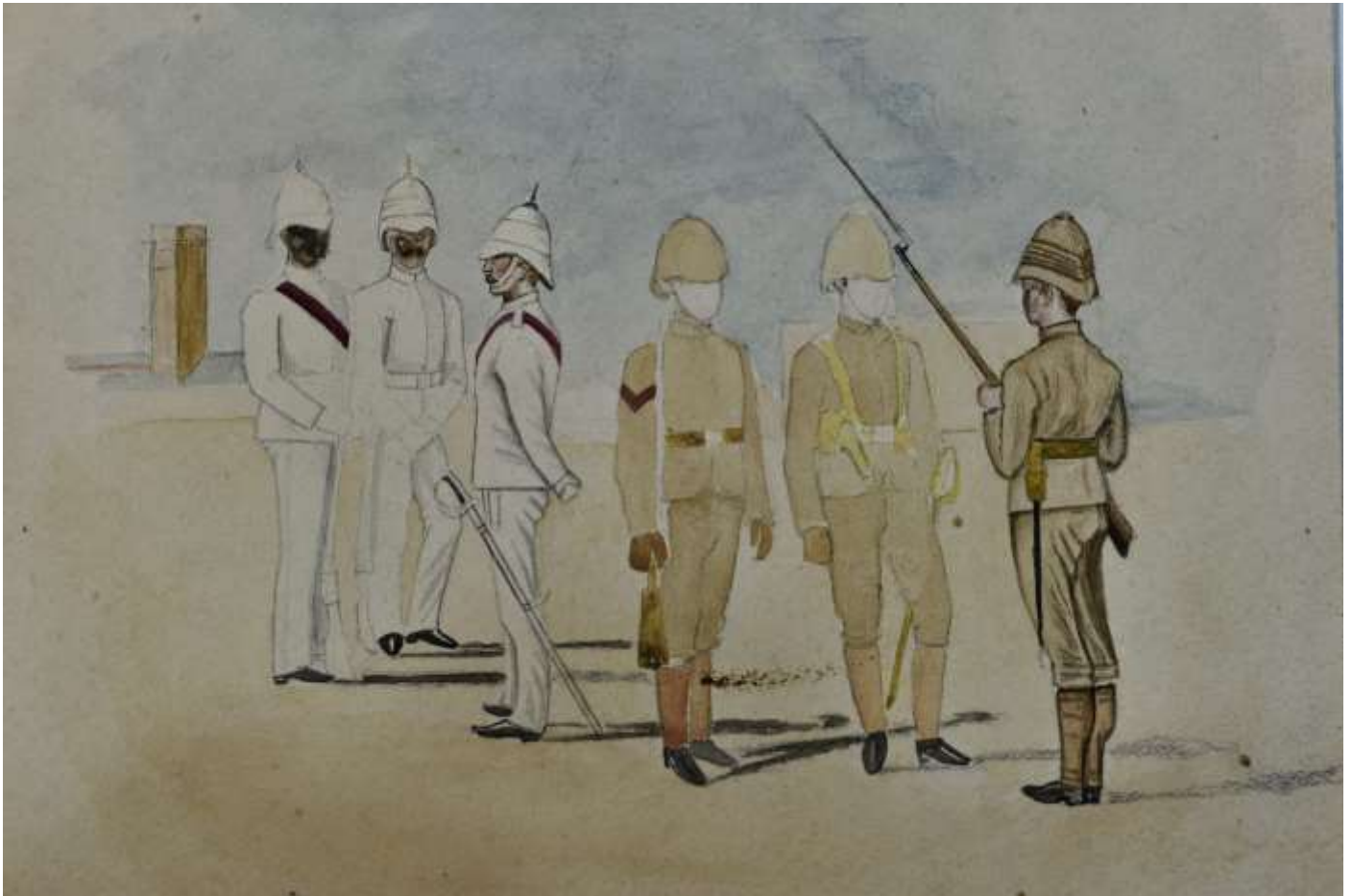


Fig no. 127: British officers and soldiers

Accession no.	- S.2657(v)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- British officers and soldiers.



Fig no. 128: hussar on horseback

Accession no.	- S.2657(vi)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Hussar officer on horse.



Fig no. 129: Hussar officer

Accession no.	- S.2657(vii)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Hussar officer.



Fig no. 130: Hussars unfinished drawing

Accession no.	- S.2657(viii)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Hussars unfinished drawing.



Fig no. 131: unfinished paintings of Hussars

Accession no.	- S.2657(ix)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Unfinished paintings of Hussars



Fig no. 132: Hussars with sheep

Accession no.	- S.2657(x)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Hussars with sheep.



Fig no. 133: Polo player

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xi)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Polo player.



Fig no. 134: Polo player

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xii)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Polo player.



Fig no. 135: Polo player

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xiii)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Polo player.



Fig no. 136: Horse rider

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xiv)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Horse rider.



Fig no. 137: officer on horseback

Accession no.	- S.2657(xv)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Officer on horseback.



Fig no. 138: Officer on horseback

Accession no.	- S.2657(xvi)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Officer on horseback unfinished.



Fig no. 139: Parade

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Accession no. | - | S.2657(xvii) |
| Period | - | 1807 AD |
| School | - | Company |
| Description | - | Parade with ram the regimental mascot. |



Fig no. 140: Polo player

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xviii)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	A Polo player.



Fig no. 141: A Cavalry Officer

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Accession no. | - S.2657(xix) |
| Period | - 1807 AD |
| School | - Company |
| Description | - A Cavalry officer on horseback. |



Fig no. 142: British soldiers

Accession no.	- S.2657(xx)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- British soldiers.



Fig no. 143: Hussars

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xxi)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Hussars.



Fig no. 144: Changing of the guards

Accession no.	- S.2657(xxii)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Changing of the guard.



Fig no. 145: Encampments of Hussars

Accession no.	- S.2657(xxiii)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- Encampments of Hussars.



Fig no. 146: Hussars

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xxiv)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Hussars british soldiers.



Fig no. 147: British Soldiers

Accession no.	- S.2657(xxv)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- British soldiers.



Fig no. 148: British soldiers

Accession no.	- S.2657(xxvi)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- British soldiers.



Fig no. 149: British soldiers

Accession no.	- S.2657(xxvii)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company
Description	- British soldiers.



Fig no. 150: Officer on horseback

Accession no.	- S.2657(xxviii)
Period	- 1807 AD
School	- Company

Description - Officer on horseback.



Fig no. 151: Horse rider

Accession no. - S.2657(xxix)
Period - 1807 AD
School - Company
Description - Horse rider.



Fig no. 152: Hussars

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xxx)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Hussars English soldiers.



Fig no. 153: Horse rider

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xxxi)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Horse rider.



Fig no. 154: horse

Accession no.	-	S.2657(xxxii)
Period	-	1807 AD
School	-	Company
Description	-	Horse.



Fig no. 155: 21 ivory potraits

Accession no. - 11.3.04
 Description - 21 ivory potraits.

Following are the potraits of persons in four lines, starting from top left corner and ending at bottom right corner:



Fig no. 156: Portrait of Jamadar Khushal Singh

Description

- Portrait of Jamadar Khushal Singh. He was appointed personal attendant (*Khidmat-gar*) to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Later on he became lord chamberlain.



Fig no. 157: Portrait of Sardar Hira Singh

Description

- Portrait of Sardar Hira Singh.



Fig no. 158: Portrait of Sher Shah Suri

Description

- Portrait of Sher Shah Suri @ Farid al-Din Khan, (1472 or 1486 – 22 May 1545). He was also known by his title Sultan Adil. He was the first Sur Emperor, from 1540 until his death in 1545.



Fig no. 159: Portrait of Kunwar Naunihal Singh

Description

- Portrait of Kunwar Naunihal Singh (11 February 1821 – 5 November 1840). He was the third Maharaja of the Sikh Empire, ruling from 1839 until his death in 1840. He was the only son of Maharaja Kharak Singh and his consort, Maharani Chand Kaur.



Fig no. 160: Portrait of Sardar Shyam Singh Atariwala

Description

- Portrait of Sardar Shyam Singh Atariwala. He was celebrated, brave general of the Sikh Empire.



Fig no. 161: Portrait of Bahadur Shah II

Description

- Bahadur Shah II, The last king of Delhi, widely known by his poetic title Bahadur Shah Zafar and was the twentieth and last Mughal Emperor and an Urdu poet.



Fig no. 162: Portrait of Dalip Singh

Description

- Portrait of Dalip Singh, the last Maharaja of the Sikh Empire. He was Maharaja Ranjit Singh's youngest son, the only child of Maharani Jind Kaur.



Fig no. 163: Portrait of Amir Sher Ali

Description

- Portrait of Amir Sher Ali. He became king of Afghanistan after the death of his father Dost Mohammad Khan on 9 June 1863.



Fig no. 164: Portrait of unknown noble

Description

- Protrait of an unknown noble.



Fig no. 165: Portrait of unknown noble

Description

- Protrait of an unknown noble.



Fig no. 166: Portrait of a unknown noble

Description

- Portrait of a unknown noble.



Fig no. 167: Portrait of Anar Kali

Description

- Portrait of Anar kali. She is said to be the Lover of Mughal Prince Salim, who later became Emperor Jahangir.



Fig no. 168: Portrait of Rani Chanda

Description

- Portrait of Rani Chanda (Mother of Dalip Singh). She was the youngest wife of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the mother of the last Maharaja of the Sikh Empire, Dalip Singh.



Fig no. 169: Portrait of Zēb-un-Nisā Begam

Description

- Portrait of Zēb-un-Nisā Begam (daughter of Aurangzeb). The eldest child of Prince Muhi-ud-Din (later, Emperor Aurangzeb), was born on 15 February 1638 in Daulatabad, Deccan



Fig no. 170: Portrait of Mumtaz Mahal

Description

- Portrait of Mumtaz Mahal born Arjumand Banu Begum (27 April 1593 – 17 June 1631), was the empress consort of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. The Taj Mahal was constructed as her tomb by her husband. She was the daughter of Abu'l-Hasan Asaf Khan and the niece of Empress Nur Jahan.



Fig no. 171: Portrait of Begum Samroo

Description

- Protrait of Begum Samroo of Sardhana, district Meerut.



Fig no. 172: Portrait of General Allard

Description

- Portrait of General Allard, who entered in 1822, the service of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He was commissioned to raise a corps of dragoons and lancers. On completion of this task, Allard was awarded the rank of General, and became the leader of the Company officer corps in the Maharaja's service.



Fig no. 173: Portrait of Muhammad Hassan

Description

- Portrait of Muhammad Hasan, Wazir of patiala. His full name was Khalifa Sayyid Muhammad Hasan and was a prominent Prime Minister of the Patiala State during the late 19th century . He was a highly influential administrator who served during the reigns of the last two Rajas (likely Maharaja Mohinder Singh and Maharaja Rajinder Singh).



Fig no. 174: Portrait of Sir Henry Lawrence and his wife when young

Description

- Portrait of Sir Henry Lawrence and his wife when young. He was a British military officer in British India. He died in the Siege of Lucknow during the First war of Independence in 1857.



Fig no. 175: Portrait of Dost Muhammad khan

Description

- Portrait of Dost Muhammad Khan, Amir of Kabul (23 December 1792 – 9 June 1863) nicknamed the Great Emir. He was the founder of the Barakzai dynasty and one of the prominent rulers of Afghanistan during the First Anglo-Afghan War.



Fig no. 176: Portrait of General Avitabile

Description

- Portrait of General Avitabile @ Abu Tabela (25 October 1791 – 28 March 1850). He was a Neapolitan-Italian soldier, mercenary and adventurer. He joined the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab in 1827, and later also received various civilian appointments. In 1829 he was made administrator of Wazirabad and in 1837 he succeeded Hari Singh Nalwa as governor of Peshawar. He remained in the Punjab until the assassination of Maharaja Sher Singh in 1843.

Human Movement, Demographic Impact and Settlement Pattern in Ancient Past: The Manipuri (Meitei) in Tripura

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Introduction

Migration has played an important role in establishing civilization because it altered the population size, composition, structure and culture of the area. Man migrated to different places across the globe as a result of an impact made by certain push and pull factors.¹ Peter Belwood in his *First Migrants* defined migration as permanent movement of all or part of a population to live in a new territory by separating from where it was previously based. It brings changes in society, culture and polity which promotes diversity in nature.² He further asserted three significant phases of human migration in pre-historic period. The first phase occurred within and outside Africa and through Eurasia by the extinct members of the genus over 2.5 million years ago. The second phase occurred between 120,000 and 10,000 years ago embarked by the so-called ancestral of the modern human i.e., *Homo Sapiens* on a series of migrations across vast regions of the world. The third phase happened over the past 10,000 years across most oceans and continents except Antarctica by the farmers, herders and boat builders in many separate groups. Pre-historic migration was occurred to meet the basic survival needs like food, water, shelter, due to development of agriculture during Holocene where human search for fertile land and demographic pressure leading to search for new habitable areas.³

Several historical evidences give information about Manipuri's movement in many regions, particularly in adjacent ancient kingdoms such as Assam, Takhel (Tripura), Ava (Burma) and Kachar (Cachar). The earliest phase of Meitei dispersal in various locations is traced back to the

period of proto-historic Meitei monarch Kangba, who controlled Manipur during the pre-Christian era.⁴ *Ningthou Kangbalon* described the nine sons of King Kangba; Koikoi, Teima, Yangma, Tesrot, Urenkhunba, Urenhanba, Irem, Khabi and Langba were spread beyond Manipur in various directions. Tesrot, one of his sons, departed towards south-west directions and became the Takhel (present-day Tripura).⁵ The migration of Manipuri to Tripura had taken place due to court intrigues, political turmoil and matrimonial alliances among the kingdoms. Udainarayan Adhikari's *Socio-Cultural Relations among States in pre-Independence India: A study of Tripura and Manipur* stated that in the year 1760 AD due to the court intrigues in the royal palace of Manipur, Chit Shai, the prince of Manipur moved to Tripura and settled in Kailasgarh or Kashba. He was followed by several Manipuris who established their settlement in Kashba, Sonamura, Comilla, etc.⁶ L. Biramangal Singh in his work *Takhelda Manipuri* also mentioned that the son of Garibniwaz, Ajit Sai (Chit Sai) along with his assistant came to Tripura to seek the help of King Krishna Manikya of Tripura (1760-1783 AD) in regaining the throne of Manipur. He further noted that the followers of Ajit Sai (Chit Sai) settled in places such as Kashba and Sonamura sub-division i.e., Nalchhara, Khedabari, Tokchhapara etc.⁷ without returning to their former kingdoms.

Matrimonial alliance was also an important factor for the migration of Manipuris (Meitei) in Tripura. The marriage alliance between Manipur and Tripura dates back to around 5th century A.D. when Taidaksin succeeded his father Dakshin as the ruler of Tripura. Taidakshin wedded a princess from Mekhali and had a son called Sutaksin was described in the Royal Chronicle of Tripura, *Shri Rajmala Vol I-IV*.⁸ However, it does not provide the name of the Mekhali princess who was wedded to Taidakshin. Since then, the royal matrimony had been one of the essential diplomatic tools between the two kingdoms. N. Tarunkumar Singh in his *The Pan-Manipuris* narrated the first Meitei settlement in Tripura based on royal matrimony was established during the period of Maharaja Bhagyachandra (1759-1798 AD). He gave the hand of his daughter Rajmala (Sija Tampha) to Krishna Manikya (1748-1783), the King of Tripura and she became the chief queen. After the death of her husband in 1783 AD, Rajmala (Sija Tampha) ruled Tripura for two years.⁹ According to Dwijendra Narayana Goswami, the queen of Krishna Manikya, Janhaba Devi who was locally known as *Champa* was believed to be a Manipuri lady. The Manipuris in Tripura known her as *Shija Champa* who built the Panchratna temple and installed a deity of Radhamadhaba at Radhanagar of Noor Nagar Pargana which is currently located in Bangladesh.¹⁰

The most significant matrimonial relation between the royal house of Tripura and Manipur occurred in 1798 A.D. during the period of Bhagyachandra (1759-1798 AD), the King of Manipur and Rajdhar Manikya II (1785-1804), the King of Tripura. On the way of Bhagyachandra's journey to Nabadwip for a pilgrimage, he gave his daughter Princess Hariseshwori in marriage to Rajdhar Manikya II, the King of Tripura.¹¹ In this incident, a number of followers who settled with her in Tripura accompanied the princess. According to Soibam Suresh Kumar Singh, multiple households relocated in Tripura to provide comfort to the princess who had just been married to the kingdom where language, customs and people were completely unfamiliar to her.¹² Rajkumar Kamaljit Singh's *Tripuragi Meihourola Meitei (The Manipuris beginning of their settlements in Tripura)* has provided an information about the clans or *sagei* who came as retinues of the princess and

made a permanent settlement in Agartala as Sarungbam, Hanjabam, Khumanthem and Laipubam.¹³ It is further informed that the task of serving the Radhamadhav idol which was presented by her father Bhagyachandra when she married Rajdhar Manikya II was performed by the Laipubam family at the royal palace of Tripura.¹⁴ Dr Ch. Jaimini Devi¹⁵ in her work *Daughter of Manipur*, has supplied the names of the King's trusted attendants who remained in Tripura to assisted the princess as Shrideb Mallik Hidamcha, Nongsu Khumbongcha, Tayung Hidang Shridam, Narayan Laishraba, Tulsishyam, Pheidanai Shanglakpa, Naharup Hajari, Churamani Thiyamcha Nungsung Surya, Naha Cheiteinya of Nongpok Cheitheng, Sanchani Thingujamba. The Brahmins, musicians and noblemen were not debarred to stay with the princess as both the king of Manipur and Tripura had mutually agreed them to be with the princess.¹⁶ The followers of the princess were allotted a village called *Mekhlipara* (Meitei Leikai) located near the palace in Puratan (ancient) Agartala.¹⁷ *Mekhlipara* was derived from the term *Mekhali/Mogli* which was a name of Manipuri known by the people of Tripura.¹⁸ The royal matrimony significantly impacts on political and socio-cultural relation of Manipur and Tripura kingdoms resulting the enlargement of the route between them and migration of the people between the two kingdoms was made easier.¹⁹

Another major incident that led to the migration of Manipuri in Tripura was the Burmese invasion of 1819 which lasted for seven years and that period is locally known as *Chahi Taret Khuntakpa* (Seven years devastation) by the Manipuris. During that period, many Manipuris left their original homeland Manipur to look for the safer places which led to the migration to neighbouring kingdoms such as Ahom, Cachar and Tripura. The immediate caused of Burmese war of 1819 was over the issue of Marjit Singh, the then King of Manipur who refused to attend the coronation ceremony of King Bagyidaw of Burma, giving his brothers antagonistic attitude as an excuse.²⁰ Consequently, the King of Burma ordered his general to punish Marjit Singh and annihilated Manipur for his insolent behaviour against the king of Burma.²¹ D. G. E. Hall stated in *A History of South-East Asia* that

*The failure of the Raja of Manipur to attend Bagyidaw's coronation was used as an excuse to dethrone him and devastate his country.*²²

The atrocity committed by the Burmese troops during that period was so terrible that the Meitei still evoked till now as *Ava Meehat* or *Ava Meehai*.²³ To avoid atrocities, the people of Manipur fled to safer locations, especially neighbouring states like Assam and Tripura²⁴, which testified that the Manipuri were compelled to, migrated to neighbouring kingdoms for safety. As a result, the population of Manipur declined so much that R. Brown's *Statistical Account of Manipur* stated

*The population of the valley had been so much reduced during the Burmese occupation that when Gambhir Singh established himself as the King of Manipur, the adult male population is said not to have exceeded three thousand with a scanty proportion of women and children.*²⁵

Gangmumei Kabui in his *History of Manipur Volume I: Pre-Colonial Period* says that during the seven years devastation the population of Manipur was so reduced that only around 10,000 or 2,000 households were remained in the Imphal valley because most of the population were either escaped to Cachar along with Marjit Singh or took shelter to the western hills of Manipur and

thousands of Manipuri were taken as a prisoner to Burma.²⁶ During seven years devastation, the Manipuris used *Tongjei maril Lambi* to reach the neighbouring kingdoms located on the western sides of Manipur including Tripura.²⁷ The exact number of Manipuri who arrived in Tripura due to Burmese havoc is hard to trace. However, Soibam Suresh Kumar in his work *Takhenda Meitei Khuntaba* informed that even though the precise number of individuals who entered Tripura during *Awa Lan* (Burmese war) is unknown, more than 10,000 Manipuri were believed to be migrated to Tripura.²⁸

Most of the Manipuris who settled down in Tripura during Burmese War (1819-1826 AD) locally known as *Chahi Taret Khuntakpa* (Seven Years Devastation) did not migrated directly from Manipur but through Cachar and Sylhet, then gradually entered places such as Dharmanagar, Kailashahar, Kamalpur, and Khowai Sub-division of Tripura.²⁹ R.K. Tarunjit Singh stated in his seminar paper *Tripurada Manipuri* that the people who came from Manipur during the Burmese War 1819 settled in places adjacent to Comilla (currently under the Bangladesh Territory) such as Sonamura, Bisalgarh, Kashba, Bamutia, Bajalghat etc. of Tripura.³⁰ The King of Tripura was kind enough to allot a habitation site to the Manipuris who seek refuge in Tripura due to Burmese war of 1819 AD. RK Kamaljit Singh in his *Rajdhani Agartala gi Meihourol amasung Meitei* provided that Dhan Singh, Deb Singh, Chandra Singh and Jagadhiswor were fled from Manipur to Tripura due to Burmese War and inhabited in a place near Puratan Agartala. Later, the King granted them a village called *Barjala* to set up their permanent settlement.³¹ Another incident is recorded in W. W. Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal vol-6* that *Mekhali* (name of Meitei known by Tripuri) left their homeland Manipur in 1824 due to the Burmese invasion and took shelter in the Hill Tipperah (area under the rule of the King of Tripura) till 1863 AD.³² Afterwards, they migrated to Tipperah District or Chakla Roshanabad (area under Mughal supervision which was later ceded to the British administration in 1765 AD)³³ because of the alleged involvement in the political dispute between Birchandra Manikya, the King of Tripura (1862-1896 AD) and NilKrishna, brother of Ishan Chandra Manikya (the predecessor of Birchandra Manikya).³⁴

The Manipuris in Tripura were found to reside in regions upward of the Surma river's tributaries including the Dolai, Manu and Khuwai up to and beyond Agartala.³⁵ W.W. Hunter's work *The Statistical Account of Bengal Volume-6* stated that most of the Manipuris settled in Agartala, the capital city of Tripura and in the northern frontier area near Sylhet.³⁶ The main reasons for the Manipuri settlement in Agartala was the matrimonial alliance between Manipuris and Tripura royal house.³⁷

Presently, in Agartala municipality of Tripura West district, Meitei are found living in places such as Radhanagar (Bhati Abhoynagar), North Dhaleswor, South Dhaleswor, Bhanamalipur Math Chowmuhani (Aoli), Dhapta (Chandrapur), Ujjan Abhoynagar, Barjala.³⁸ R.K. Tarunjit Singh in his seminar paper *Tripurada Manipuri*³⁹ listed the names of the Manipuri habitation sites currently found in the six districts of Tripura as follows:

District	Block/Area	Villages
West District	Jiraniya Block	Tourou Khunou (Nayagao)

West District	Jiraniya Block	Sanagikhun (Brdhwangar)
West District	Jiraniya Block	Kwaaban
West District	Jiraniya Block	Rani Khun (Kalinar)
West District	Ranirbazar Municipal Council	Tourou (Nalghariya)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Jagatpur
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Chingaram (Chechhuria)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Chingdong Leikai (Uttar Chechhuria)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Mamang Leikai
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Mayai Leikai
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Maning Leikai
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Lourembam Leikai
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Likman Khuman (Taaltala)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Sansenbam Leikai (Gazaria)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Touropokpi (Kamalghat)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Unung Leikai (Jamirghat)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Fatikchhara
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Saat dubiya
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Kalkaliya
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Pukhri Leikai (Baman Puskurini)
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Lakshman Singh Mura
West District	Mohanpur Block (North Sardar Sub-Division)	Nandanagar
West District	Bamutia Block	Bajalghat
West District	Bamutia Block	Kaoli (Bukjor)
West District	Bamutia Block	Berimura
West District	Bamutia Block	Barjosh
West District	Bamutia Block	Rangutia
West District	Bamutia Block	Bhandarimura
West District	Bamutia Block	Panijai (Guchamura)
West District	Bamutia Block	Pakha (Lamabari)
West District	Bamutia Block	Khunou (Sonatala)
West District	Bamutia Block	Leirenkabi (Nayagao)
West District	Bamutia Block	Irang Leikai
Sipahijala District	Bishalgarh Block	Gholagati (Khuman Leikai, Maning Leikai, Mamang Leikai, Torban Leikai and Chiyonpat)

Sipahijala District	Bishalgarh Block	Badyardighi (Nongchup Leikai, Awang Leikai, Nongpok Leikai, Colony)
Sipahijala District	Bishalgarh Block	Kashba (Awang Nongpok Leikai)
Sipahijala District	Bishalgarh Block	Durganagar (Murabari)
Sipahijala District	Charilam RD Block	Takabari (Mamang Leikai, Colony Leikai)
Sipahijala District	Charilam RD Block	Lalsinghmura (Mamang leikai, maning Leikai, Tilabari)
Sipahijala District	Charilam RD Block	Khuman Colony
Sipahijala District	Dugli Block	Sankhola
Sipahijala District	Dugli Block	Naran Khemar (Lolampokpi, Chandipur, Kakramura, Naran)
Sipahijala District	Takarjala Block	Telerban (Only Meitei village that comes under the jurisdiction of Tribal Area Autonomous District Council)
Khuwai District	RD Block	Gouranagar (Awang Leikai, Mamang Leikai, Maning Leikai, Kha Leikai)
Khuwai District	RD Block	Charghariya
Khuwai District	RD Block	Boisamura
Khuwai District	RD Block	Khowai Town
Khuwai District	RD Block	Durganagar
Khuwai District	RD Block	Jambhura
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Kunjaban
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Kirnangarh
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Ghilatali colony
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Ghilatali Khunjao
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Sarbung
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Dwarikapur
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Amar Colony
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Laktiya
Khuwai District	Kalyanpura Block	Tuisindrai Rangkhal para
Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Kamarkandi

Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Shrinathapura
Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Padmerpara
Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Kamranga
Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Jitur Dighirpar
Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Padmer Dighipar
Unakoti District	Gouranagar Block	Govindapur
Unakoti District	Kumarghat Block	Kanchanbhari
Unakoti District	Kumarghat Block	Nalkata
Unakoti District	Kumarghat Block	Betchhara
Unakoti District	Kumarghat Block	Nutan Bazar
Unakoti District	Chandipura Block	Dhanabilash Maning Leikai
Unakoti District	Chandipura Block	Nongpok Leikai
Unakoti District	Chandipura Block	Tarapasa Leikai
Unakoti District	Chandipura Block	Aor (Durgapur)
Unakoti District	Chandipura Block	Mohonpuraa
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Barsurma
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Panchhasi
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Kuchainala
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Lalchhari
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Kamranga Bhumihin
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Harerkhola
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Methirama
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Methirama Colony
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Kalchhari
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Manik Bhandar
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Debhichhara (Mahavir)
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Halahali
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Nakphul
Dhalai District	Durgachowmuni Block	Malaya
Dhalai District	Salema Block	Barlutama
Dhalai District	Salema Block	Abhanga
North District	Dharmanagar Municipal Council	Rajbhari
North District	Dharmanagar Municipal Council	Dewan basa
North District	Dharmanagar Municipal Council	Khagri (Kameswar)
North District	Panisagar Block	Jalabasa
North District	Panisagar Block	Madhavapura
North District	Kadamtala Block	Ichai (Govindapur)

North District	Kadamtala Block	Ranibari
North District	Padmabil Block	Bagabasa
North District	Damchhara Block	Sundibasa
North District	Yuvaraj Nagar Block	Rajnagar

Table 1: Manipuri villages located in the six districts of Tripura

The reasons for choosing Tripura as destination of migration was economic reasons since it was easy to obtain the land there and competition was less intense.⁴⁰ To establish permanent settlement in Sylhet and Tripura, the Manipuris had to clear the jungles, reclaim the land and search for a place which was suitable for ploughing where water was abundant and the terrain was neither too high nor too low.⁴¹ Afterwards, they started to settled down by mobilizing a close acquaintance of around 30 households along with a Brahmin whom the responsibility of serving the Radha-Krishna idol was bestowed and a mandap was constructed⁴² for community worship. R.K.Tarunjit Singh⁴³ provide information about the population of Manipuris in Tripura since 1874 AD up to 2011 as given below:

Years	Population of Tripura (as a whole)	Manipuri Population
1874	74,282	7045
1900	1,73,325	13,256 (including Manipuri Muslims)
1910	2,29,613	16,381 (Male-8,717 and Female-7,664)
1920	3,04,437	15,549
1931	3,82,450	19,210 (Male-9,872 and Female-9,338)
1941	-	-
1951	6,39,029	19,086
1961	11,42,005	27,940
1971	15,56,342	17,144
1981	20,47,351	19,801 (Male-9,971 and Female-9,830. Out of the total number, 1,802 are Manipuri Muslim)
1991	27,57,205	19,737
2001	31,91,168	20,716
2011	36,73,917	23,779

Table 2: Population of Manipuri in Tripura as per the information given by RK Tarunjit Singh's *Tripurada Manipuri*.

After India got independence in 1947, a change occurred in the demographical structure of Tripura. There was a large influx of population in Tripura including Manipuri from eastern Pakistan (Present day Bangladesh) who were settled in Sylhet, Daka and Susum Durgapur (Myeman Sing).⁴⁴ It is difficult to determine the precise number of Manipuris who entered Tripura at this time. However, Soibam Suresh Kumar asserted in *Takhenda Meitei Khuntaba* that around 6-7 thousand Manipuri arrived in Tripura during this period.⁴⁵ Consequently, an enormous challenge was faced by the Manipuris (Meitei) settlers in Tripura because of the increasing of competition

with the other community and the high value of the land.⁴⁶ Therefore, in search of better livelihood, Tripura's Manipuri began to migrate to different places such as Manipur and Assam. This led to the disappearance of several Meitei villages in Tripura.⁴⁷

Conclusion: Migration has been a crucial factor in shaping civilizations by altering population structure, settlement patterns and cultural life and this is clearly reflected in the historical relationship between Manipur and Tripura. Manipuri migration in Tripura was driven by court intrigues, political instability and royal matrimonial alliances. Tripura emerged as a destination place firstly due to its kinship ties with Manipur having early settlements at Mekhlipara in Agartala established through royal marriages in 1798 AD. The most significant phase of migration occurred during the Burmese invasion of Manipur (1819–1826) when large numbers of Manipuris were forcibly displaced and sought refuge in Tripura leading to the spread of Manipuri settlements across its north, north-west and west regions i.e., Dharmanagar, Kailashahar, Kamalpur, Khuwai, Bisalgargh, Agartala and Sadar with royal patronage. Currently, out of 8 districts in Tripura, Manipuri inhabitants are found in 6 districts viz, West district, Sipahijala district, Khuwai district, Unakoti district, Dhalai district and North district. Over time, Manipuris adopted a dispersed settlement pattern, interacting closely with other communities which encouraged socio-cultural assimilation while still preserving their distinct traditions and identity. Post-independence demographic changes like rising competition for land and economic pressures further influenced the decline or disappearance of some Manipuri villages in Tripura. The migration of Manipuris to Tripura represents a continuous historical process that reshaped demographic patterns, strengthened inter-kingdom relations and contributed to the cultural plurality of the region while sustaining a strong sense of Manipuri heritage.

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Tracing biodiversity through museum sculptures: A case study of the State Museum Lucknow

Al- Shaz Fathmi

State Museum, Lucknow

Introduction: The State Museum, Lucknow, is one of India's oldest and richest museums. It is a multipurpose museum that preserves archaeological artefacts of historical importance, along with other rare artefacts of natural history, coins, art ware, and decorative art. In this collection, artefacts of *Jain*, *Buddhist*, and *Brahmanical* sculptures are preserved. Since its inception in 1863, it has aimed to preserve and conserve the cultural and Natural heritage of the region, shedding light on the history of various cultures for the benefit of present and future generations (Kumar and Fatmi, 2020).

The study is based on the documentation of stone sculptures from the State Museum, Lucknow, depicting ancient animals. The archaeology section possesses objects of *Buddhist*, *Jaina* and *Brahmanical* sects. Apart from this, there are a few architectural fragments. Some of these are depicted with animals and birds like mounts, symbols of Gods and the identification mark of *Jaina Tirthankaras*. Stupas and cave paintings of the *Buddhist* religion are quite remarkable. In this study, the sculptures preserved in the State Museum Lucknow from 1st Century BCE to 12th Century CE have been examined. These sculptures are depicted with both vertebrate and invertebrate animals.

This is the first study to be conducted on the stone sculptures of the museum to document the ancient species on them. Though much literature review is available about those sculptures that are depicted with species frequently found, but during the study, it was found that there are a few sculptures preserved in the collection that depict ancient species. Archaeological evidence shows that different animals were engraved on sculptures during the Chalcolithic and Megalithic periods (Kadgaonkar, 023). Humans were closely associated with animals, and it can be appreciated through paintings and engraving on sculptures and coins (Brush 1913). There may be different intentions behind the carving, like decorative, religious or mythological, but it's very clear that animals were never neglected by any civilisation (Kadgaonkar 2008).

A scientific study of these sculptures will help collect real-time data on ancient habitat distributions of the animals. It is an almost untouched field, although Indo-logical, artistic, and mythological studies have been conducted on a large scale. Through this study, the animals depicted on the sculptures have been documented and categorised according to the IUCN Red List. The Data collected through this study will definitely help the field biologist. In various ways, these are depicted in sculptural art, like on *dwarsakha's* and pillars, Animals as a mount, carving along with

the main deity, in the form of a motif, in the parikar of the central image, on the pedestal and independently on tablets and big pieces of stone.

1.1. **Carving on *Dwar Shakhas* and Pillars:** A broken part of the pillar, probably the central attachment lines, is carved with medallions, one of which depicts crocodile-fish (J-312). There is a part of the cross rail carved with two lions on its lower band (J-287). In a railing pillar, we see some insects, like a scorpion, carved on the pillar. All of these are from Mathura and belong to 1st Century BC. A part of the railing pillar made of red sandstone, from *Kankali Tila*, Mathura, is carved with a pig and pig-tailed fish (J-475). A lion is carved in a cross rail recovered from Mathura, made of Red sandstone, dateable to 1st Century BCE-2nd Century AD (J-500), in another cross rail, we have a bear and an aardvark (J-505).



J-312 railing pillar depicting crocodile-fish



J-287 Railing pillar depicting lion



J-500 a top rail depicting fish tailed lion and an unidentified mammal



J-505 a top rail depicting bear and Aardvark

Fig. No. 01:

A Bison and In certain cases elephant (J-523) are also carved (J-508). In a very interesting cross rail, made of Red Sandstone from Mathura belonging to 1st BCE-2nd Cent., a rabbit is running behind a deer (J-654). A cross rail is carved with a leopard (J-359) and a crocodile (J-360). In certain cases, Makara fish, Jungle cat and *Shankha* are also seen (J-402, J-369, J-406). A very important sculpture, where an extinct bird, *Rodrigues solitaire*, is seen (J-408). In some railing pillar from *Kankali tila*, Mathura belonging to 1st Cent BCE to 2nd Cent AD, a bull, goat, dolphin (J-294), J-301, J331) are depicted.



J-523 a top rail depicting a walking lion



J-654 a rabbit is running behind the deer on a top rail



J-508 a top rail depicting a lion chasing a wild bison

Fig. No. 02:

A Red Sandstone pillar carved with a sea lion and another one with a crocodile (B-806) are quite important; both are from Mathura, 1st century BC -2nd Century AD. A part of the door lintel carved with a lion and a parrot, and in another pillar (B-147), a *shalbhanjika* is standing on an elephant (J-595 A), along with an *ayagpatta* decorated with fish (J-250), are a few to mention. In an image of a *Yakshi*, made of Sandstone belonging to 2nd century AD from *Kaushambi* (B-731), standing cross-legged along the pillar, there is a rat on the left side and a bird on the right side over her head. In another case of a cross rail of a railing pillar (B-50) made of Sandstone belonging to 1st Century AD -2nd Century AD, a unicorn fish and a *makara fish* are carved, and in another cross-rail (B-81), a Swan is carved.



B-50 a railing pillar depicting Makara fish



J-595 a *shalbhanjika* standing on an elephant and unicorn fish.

Fig. No. 03:

Sometimes we see pheasants also, like in the case of J-522, a part of a top rail made of sandstone belonging to 1st -2nd Century AD, an extinct species, Crocodile dolphin has been found carved on a railing pillar (B-82) made of Sandstone belonging to 1st -2nd Century AD, Mathura. Sometimes, cross rails (55.200) are carved with some unusual animals like sea horse. In the collection, there is a railing pillar (B-254) from Mathura belonging to 1st-2nd Century AD, which is carved on two sides. *Kārtikeya* is shown standing with his mount peacock at the lower end. On a pillar (J-563) belonging to 5th Century AD made of Red sandstone from Mathura, there is a *Ghat Pallav* motif with a tortoise (Kumar, 2020).



Fig. No. 04: B-82 a railing pillar depicting Crocodile Dolphin



Fig. No. 05: B-811 a railing pillar depicting Rodrigues Solitaire

1.2. **Animal As A Mount:** A fragment of a colossal *Vishnu* image (57.303) made of Vindhyan sandstone found from Sitapur belonging to 8th - 9th Century AD, shows four-handed *Brahma* and his mount goose. A 1st Century AD image, where a man is riding a bull (J-642) and an 8th Century AD image of Goddess *Durga* with her mount lion standing behind her are appreciable. A quite fascinating image of the mother goddesses (H-34) sitting on their mounts is preserved in the collection. *Brahmi* is sitting on *Goose*, *Maheshwari* is sitting on *bull*, *Kaumari* is sitting on *peacock*, *Vaishnavi* is sitting on *Garuna*, *Indrani* is sitting on *elephant*, and *Varahi* is sitting on *buffalo* in this sculpture. A sandstone image of Goddess *Parvati* (66.135.4) belonging to 8th-9th Century AD is standing on her mount lizard (Kumar, 2020).

1.3. **Carving on Parikara/Along with the Main Images:** There are several images of *Parshwanatha* recovered from Mathura, made of Red Sandstone, 1st century. BCE - 2nd Century AD, they are carved with snakes (J-39, J-67) 447,448. In the *parikara* of a broken Sandstone image of *Vishnu* (H-124), 7th - 8th Century AD. Sultanpur, different animals like *Shankha*, lion, fish, wild boar, tortoise and snake are carved. Standing image of Hari-Hara (H-119), 8th-century sandstone, Mathura, depicts a bull and *shankha*, while another headless *Uma Maheshwar* (66.71.4), sandstone image of the 8th-9th century AD depicts snake, bull, lion and peacock. A buff sandstone image of *Batukeshwara* (66.45.4/G.447), 9th Century AD from Agra depicts an elephant and a snake, and a pair of horns of a Ram. In another image of *Vishnu* (S-703), 8th-9th Uchgaon, Sitapur, two crocodiles are carved. In a Vindhyan sandstone image of dancing *Ganesha* belonging to 8th-9th century AD, he is shown wearing a tiger skin.

1.4. **Motif on Pedestal:** An inscribed pedestal carved with two lions (J-3), broken images of *Jaina Tirthankara* seated on an inscribed pedestal carved with two lions at both corners (J-5, J-6, J-9, J-31, J-14) are kept in the museum. In one image, four devotees are shown worshipping a *dharmchakra* and they are flanked by two lions (J-26, 423). A broken image of *Tirthankara*, whose head and the left arm are broken, is seated on an inscribed pedestal which is also carved with two lions at each corner. In between them, four standing and one sitting devotees are praying around a cultic object (J-35).

Depiction as Symbol: In one sculpture Goddess *Mansa* (O.263) is sitting on a pedestal, and her symbol snake is carved in an urn. In a broken panel, *Devaki* is feeding *Krishna* (O.265, where the symbol *shankha* is seen. One image of Goddess *Gaj-Lakshmi* (O.251) made of sandstone from Jaunpur belonging to 8th -9th Century AD shows two elephants flanking her head above the shoulder level.

1.5. **Sculptural Fragment:** Certain sculptural fragments made of Red Sandstone belonging to 1st Century BCE-2nd Century AD are preserved in the museum, it is not confirmed to which main sculpture they belong. Sculptural fragments show (J-659), a bull and horse (J-603), crocodile fish (J-

648) 555, a lion in furious mood on a sandstone pedestal (B-347), etc. A stone panel (B-122) belonging to 1st-2nd Century AD from Mathura is carved with two-bullock carts. A goose (55.295) has been found eating something, and in a broken piece of architectural fragment (UN), we see the claw of a bird, probably an eagle. In another case (55.240), a golden eagle is taking away a deer fawn, while another adult deer is looking at it. In a frieze made of schist (G-265) belonging to 2nd Century AD, Buddha's birth and renunciation scenes are depicted with lion and horses, while in another frieze (G-245) belonging to 2nd-3rd Century AD, a Himalayan goat species, the Argali sheep, is carved. In an architectural fragment, (64.12) made of sandstone belonging to 10th Century AD, we see a bird that, based on physical features, looks quite close to the extinct bird dodo.

Result and Discussion: The invertebrate class Mollusca is represented by the order Gastropoda. A member of this order from the family Turbinellidae is Turbinella. Another Phylum, Arthropoda, is represented by the order Scorpiones. The *Hottentotta* of the Buthidae family is seen on some cross rails. Approximately 46 species of vertebrates representing Fishes, Amphibians, Reptiles, Aves and Mammals have been documented. The Order Scorpaeniformes of Crocodile-fish is important to be mention. Other orders are Sygnathiformes (Sea horse), Anura (frog), Squamata (snake), Crocodilia (crocodile), Ichthyosauria (fishes), Testudines (tortoises), Psittaciformes (parrot), Anseriformes (swan and goose), Galliformes (peacock), Accipitriformes (Eagle sp), Carnivora (lion), Artiodactyla (Pig/sow, deer, buffalo, bull, cow, dolphin, camel, argali sheep, wild boar, wild bison), Perrisodactyla (horse, rhinoceros, donkey), Primate (monkey), Lagomorpha (rabbit), Carnivora (leopard, jungle cat, sea lion, tiger, dog, bear), Proboscidea (elephant) and Tubulidentata (Aardvark), The extinct bird Dodo and Rodrigue solitaire of Columbiformes are important to be mention. Here is the list of vertebrates documented in the study.

A list depicting Species and their conservation status as per the IUCN status

S. No.	Common Name	Scientific Name	IUCN
1.	Fish	<i>Fish sp</i>	-
2.	Crocodile-fish	<i>Cymbacephalus beauforti</i>	Extinct
3.	Sea Horse	<i>Hippocampus sp.</i>	Extinct
4.	Frog	<i>Haplobatrachus sp</i>	-
5.	Snake	<i>Snake sp</i>	-
6.	Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus sp.</i>	Least Concern
7.	Crocodile-Dolphin	<i>Magyarosuchus fitsosi</i>	Extinct
8.	Tortoise	<i>Testudo sp.</i>	-
9.	Common Indian Monitor lizard	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>	Least Concern
10.	Rose Ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula sp.</i>	Least Concern
11.	Mute Swan	<i>Sygnus olor</i>	Least Concern
12.	Dodo	<i>Raphus cucullatus</i>	Extinct
13.	Rodrigue solitaire	<i>Pezophaps solitaria</i>	

14.	Peacock	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	
15.	Eagle	<i>Eagle sp</i>	-
16.	Goose	<i>Anser anser domesticus</i>	Least Concern
17.	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Least Concern
18.	Lion/lioness	<i>Panthera leo</i>	Endangered
19.	Pig/Sow	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Domesticated
20.	Horse	<i>Equa caballus</i>	Domesticated
21.	Monkey	<i>Macaca radiata</i>	Least Concern
22.	Deer	<i>Deer sp</i>	-
23.	Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus sp.</i>	-
24.	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Vulnerable
25.	Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus</i>	Least concern
26.	Water Buffalo	<i>Bubalus bubalis</i>	domesticated
27.	Bull/cow	<i>Bos gaurus</i>	Domesticated
28.	Elephant	<i>Elephus maximus</i>	Endangered
29.	Rat	<i>Rattus rattus</i>	Domesticated
30.	Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>	Endangered
31.	Sea Lion	<i>Eumetopias sp.</i>	
32.	Dolphin	<i>Dolphinus sp.</i>	
33.	Camel	<i>Camelus dromedarius</i>	Domesticated
34.	Aardvark	<i>Orycteropus afer</i>	Least Concern
35.	Rhinoceros	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>	Vulnerable
36.	Dog	<i>Canis familiaris</i>	Domesticated
37.	Tibetan Argali Sheep	<i>Ovis ammon</i>	Near threatened
38.	Sheep	<i>Gandhar sp</i>	-
39.	Donkey	<i>Equas africanus asinus</i>	Domesticated
40.	Goat	<i>Capra hircus</i>	Domesticated
41.	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Least Concern
42.	Wild Bison/ Gaur	<i>Bison bison</i>	Vulnerable
43.	Bear	<i>Ursinus sp</i>	Species not clear
44.	Ram	-	Species not clear
45.	Crested Pheasant	<i>Pheasant sp</i>	Species not clear
46.	Cock	<i>Gallus sp</i>	Species not clear

It is quite interesting to document the ancient biodiversity depicted on the sculptures dated 1st Cent BCE-12th Cent. CE. Because no other artwork than the miniature paintings and manuscripts will be helpful to collect such an important ancient biological diversity data through space and time.

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Heritage Management and Community Participation: A Case study of *Pancha Tirtha* Temples in Hajo, Assam, India

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Introduction: The archaeological heritage constitutes the basic record of past human activities. All remains and objects and any other traces of humankind from past times are considered elements of the archaeological heritage (Revised Valletta Convention 1992). Archaeological heritage includes all physical manifestations of past ways of life, and includes many monuments (Kobylinski et al. 2005:255). Archaeological heritage ranging from ancient period to the colonial period in the form of rock engravings, rock-cut sculptures, sculptural designs, temple ruins, fortification, ramparts, caves, tanks, buildings, etc. are found all over Assam (Boruah 2007). Hajo, a small urban settlement situated near Guwahati city in Assam is one such place renowned for built as well as religious categories of heritage. From the early period of history to the late medieval period, it was under the rule of different royal powers. Different rulers sponsored the construction of the magnificent temples, Mosque and *Dargah* adorned with intricate carvings, inscriptions and exquisite sculptures. As such Hajo assumes the pride of important historical and archaeological sites in Assam exhibiting the history, inscriptions and architecture in temples and monuments

(Lavoni 2014: 364- 370).

The area gains importance in the scholarly works of many focusing on various aspects. In the later part of nineteenth century, Waddell (1895) highlighted the existence of Buddhist elements in the temples of Hajo. Several other scholars (Choudhury 1966; Barua 1985; Boruah 2007) also revealed similar association of Buddhism with the temples of Hajo. Talukdar (1959) while studying the broken pillars found within the campus of Madhav temple also established its association with Buddhism. Further many scholars had made study on Madhav temple (Kakati 1935; Goswami 1984). Sarma (1988) and Nath (1989) evaluated the temple complex within the area while Bhuvan (2017) studies about the temples and the shrines of Hajo area. Sarma (2001) made a thorough anthropo -archaeological study on Hajo temple complex. In 2010, Kalita made a socio-cultural investigation of the religious centers of Hajo including the *Pancha Tirtha* temples. A few others have focused on the study of its sacred geography (Lavoni 2014) while Sarkar (Sarkar et al.2019) had made a study on the turtles living in the Bishnu Puskar tank at Hajo. Basu (2021) made a study on the architectural style of the Hayagriva *Madhava* temple. It can be seen that the focus of most of the studies is centered round the Hayagriva- Madhav temple mainly. However, other four temples situated near the Hayagriva- Madhav temple which are known as *Pancha Tirtha* have not yet gained the attention of the scholars. The anthropological, historical and archaeological significance of the *Pancha Tirtha* temples as well as the role and participation of people in the management and maintenance of these heritage property thus become importance for detailed study. This paper is an attempt to understand the significance of archaeological heritage of the *Pancha Tirtha* temples and also to examine and analyses the role and participation of people in management of the temple complex living heritage.

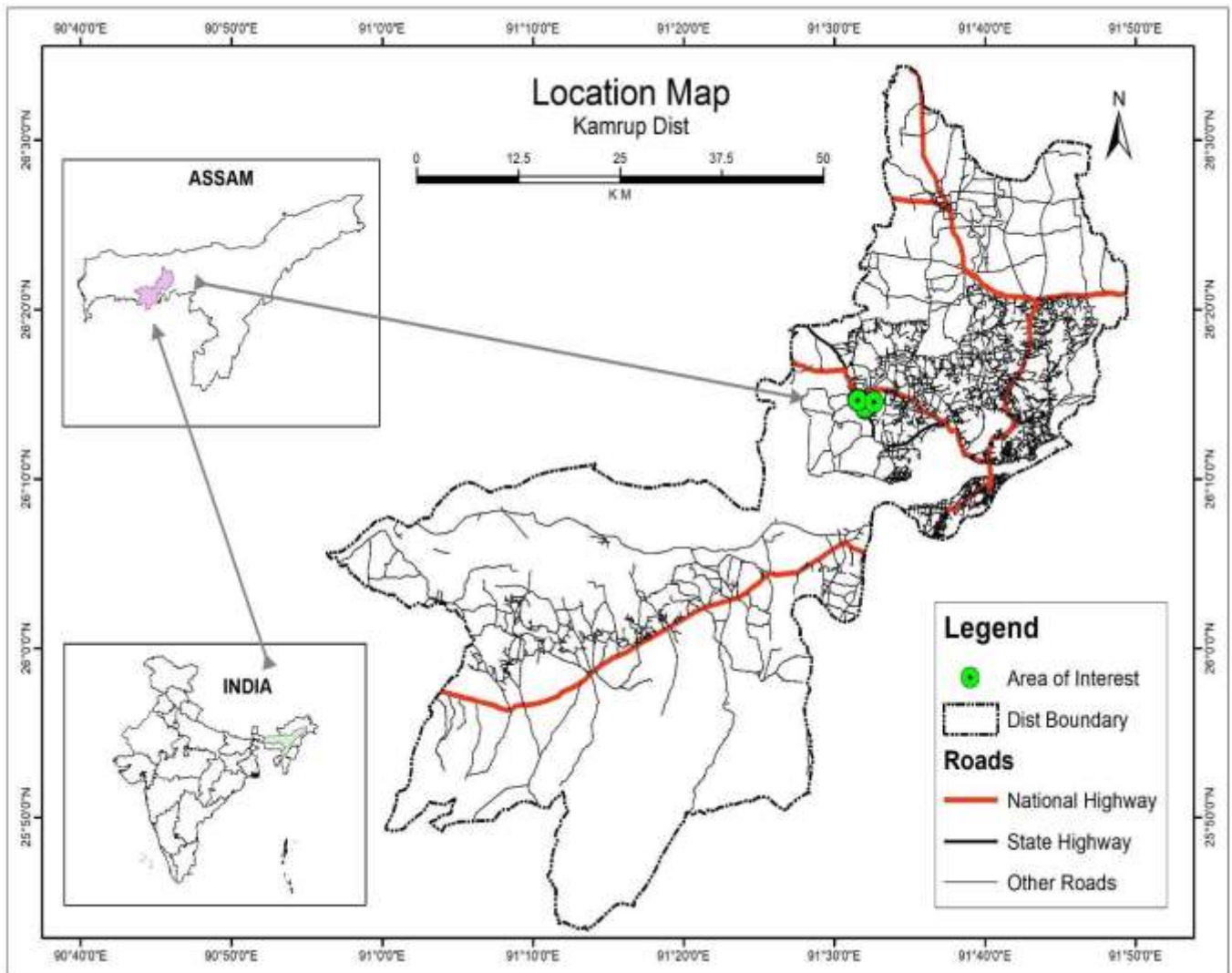


Fig. No. 01: Location of Hajo in Assam

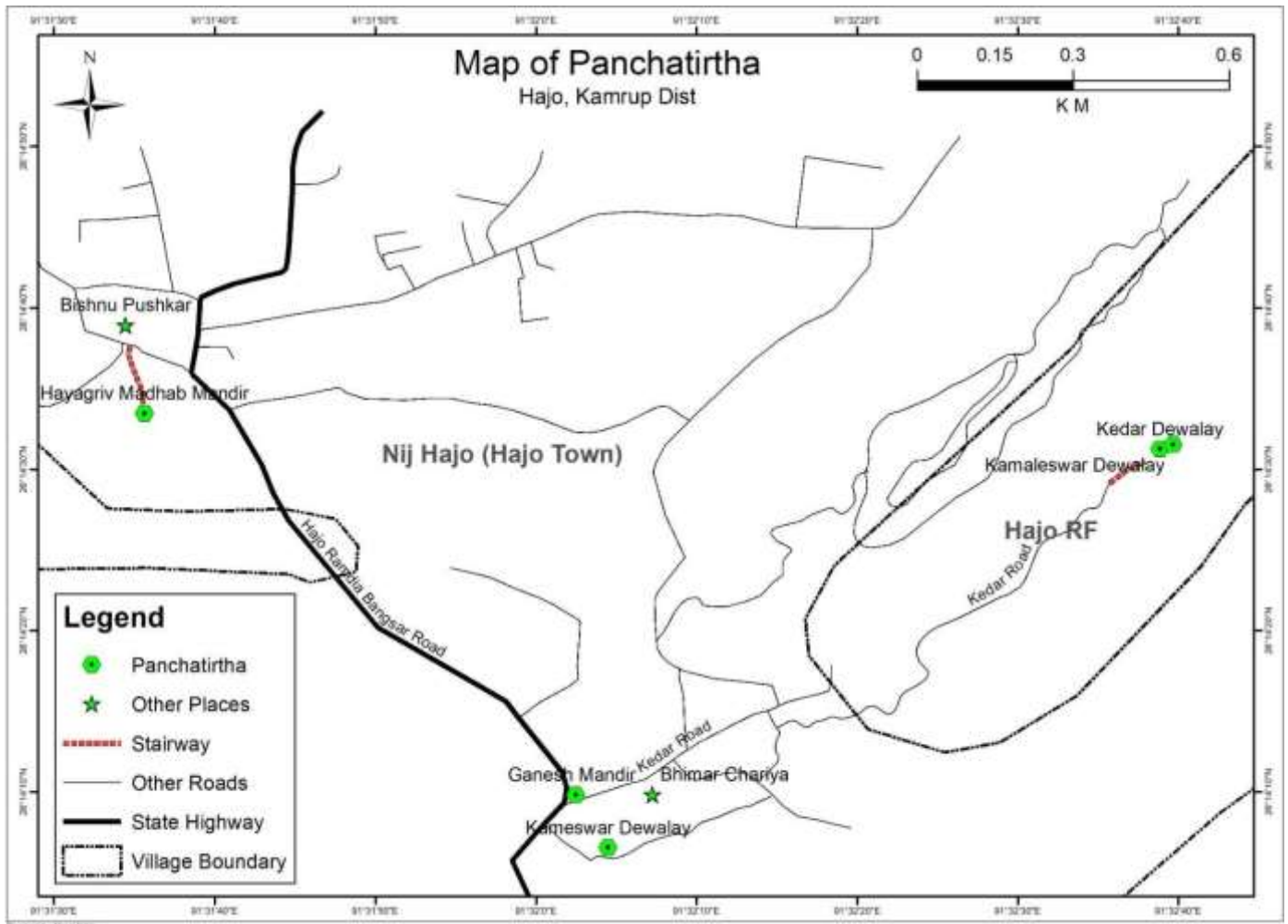


Fig. No. 02: Map of Panchatirtha

As per verbal tradition, in ancient time the place was the capital of a Mech king known as *Haj* after which the place was called Hajo. Another version speaks that the term Hajo is derived from Bodo dialect where 'Ha' means land and *G-JAU* means high, thereby implying it as a highland or hill (Nath1989; Sarma 2001)

Historically, Hajo was known by different names at different point of time. In the ancient Assamese literature Kalika purana (11th century A.D.) and Yogini tantra (14th century A.D.), the existence of Hayagriva *Madhava* temple is mentioned. Kalika Purana even mentioned the location of Hayagriva *Madhava* at Manikuta (Kalita 2010:45). It refers to a water body called Apurnabhava where Vishnu took a bath. In the 14th century it was known as Bishnupuskar as mentioned in the Yogini Tantra (Chakraborty 2024). During medieval period it was an important seat of the rule of three powerful royal dynasties namely the Koches, the Ahoms and the Mughals. In the 16th century during the reign of Koch King Raghu Deva, Hajo was its capital which was came to be known

as Koch Hajo. The Koch Kingdom left an indelible mark on the history and heritage of the region. At the time of Mohammadan invasions in Assam it served as a resting camp. The Mughals described Hajo as Sujaabad or Sujanagar in the 17th century in the reign of Shahjahan (Chakraborty

2024). In the 18th century it was an important place of pilgrimage for the Ahom rulers, who rebuilt a number of Hindu temples in the vicinity. The temple monuments in the form of structures and features are mainly located in the hill areas in the Southern side of Hajo.

Findings

Section I

History and Archaeology of *Pancha Tirtha* temples

Since early times, Hajo is considered as a place of *Pancha Tirtha* (Pancha meaning five; tirtha meaning pilgrimage) which represent a temple complex consisting of five temples namely Hayagriva Madhava, Kedareswar, Kameswar, Kamaleswar and Ganesh temple. The most prominent and oldest one among all five temples of *Pancha Tirtha* is the Hayagriva *Madhava* temple. The other four temples are constructed in a later date and renovated during Ahom reign. All of the *Pancha Tirtha* temples possess high heritage value with different archaeological structures and artistic features. A descriptive account of history of evolution and archaeological attributes of each of the temples is given below (Table1).

S. No.	Name of Temples	Archaeological features	GPS Coordinates	Built (CE/Dynasty)	Rebuilt (CE/Dynasty)	Time Period (CE)
1	Hayagriva-Madhava	Stone built temple with rock-cut sculptures, inscription, Stone pillars, Stone ruins, Doul Griha	26° 14' 33.47" N Lat & 91° 31' 35.60" E Long	10 th / Pala dynasty	16 th (1583)/ Koch King Raghudev Narayan	Early to late Medieval (10 th to 16 th)
2	Kedareswar	Stone built Garbhagriha other parts brick built. Main deity- Shiva – Parvati	26°14'30.41" N Lat & 91°32'38.33" E Long	11 th Pala dynasty	1753/Ahom king Rajeswar Singha (1751-1759)	Early to Late Medieval (11 th to 18 th)
3	Kamaleswar	brick-built temple on stone base, Sivalinga	26°14'31.39" N & 91°32' 39.79" E Long	11 th Pala dynasty	18 th /Ahom King Shiva Singha (1714-1744)	Early to Late Medieval (11 th to 18 th)
4	Kameswar	brick-built temple Siva-Linga	26°14'05.81" N Lat & 91°32'05.08" E Long	Not Kn./	Mid- 18 th /Ahom King Pramatta Singha (1744-1751)	Late Medieval/18 th

5	Ganesha Temple	Rock cut Ganesha	26°14'10.67" N Lat & 91°32'02.79" E Long	Not known	1744 CE by Ahom King Pramatta Singha (1744-1751)	Late Medieval /18th
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Hayagriva Madhava temple, popularly known as **Madhava** temple is located on a small hillock called Manikut hill with an elevation of 96.38m from MSL. It is the most graceful temple of Hayagriva who is considered as a minor avatara of Vishnu. (Rao 1993:260). In Sanskrit 'Haya' means horse and 'griva' means neck; as such Hayagriva means horse headed Vishnu. As per legend, Lord Vishnu in the form of Hayagriva killed the Demon *Jvarasura* at *Manikuta* hill.

It is a renovated temple built on the plinth of an earlier stone temple belonging to early medieval period (Goswami, 1984; Boruah, 2007). The original stone temple was constructed, during the reign of Pal dynasty in the 10th /11th century A.D. (Goswami, 1984). As per the inscription present in the outer wall of the temple, the present temple was rebuilt by Koch king Raghudeva Narayan in AD 1583. According to Basu (2021:85) this temple is one of the significant Koch temples that have survived the test of time.

Archaeologically, the temple consists of a Garbhagriha, Antarala, and a Mandapa. The ground plan of the temple is similar to early medieval temples. The Garbhagriha of the temple is stone-built, octagonal in shape and about 30 feet in diameter. According to Basu (2021), the style of architecture of it belongs to the Nagara. Vertically, the temple consists of basement, middle portion and a Sikhara. The Sikhara is pyramidal which is quite different from the typical Orissan style of temple (Basu, 2021). The base of the temple consists of huge brick pillars. It has art work from Vaishnavism, Saivism and Shaktism (Bhuban, 2017).



Figure 3: Deities in the Garbhagriha

The garbhagriha consists of five idols of Lord Vishnu collectively known as Pancha Madhav. They are Hayagriva-Madhava, Dwitiya Madhava, Gobinda Madhava, Vasudeva and Garuda. Among these Hayagriva- *Madhava* is perhaps the original image of the shrine and is kept in the middle. This image is always kept covered under a cloth and a *Jalmala*. A *Jalmala* is specially prepared for the deity from a chaplet of flowers. Next to Hayagriva- *Madhava* towards right hand side, the idol of Dwitiya *Madhava* and towards left hand side, the idol of Gobinda *Madhava* are placed. During different ceremonies like *Maghi Sankranti*, *Doul jatra*, *Ashoka Astami*, etc. the idol of Govinda *Madhava* is taken out of the temple for ceremonial processions and is also known as Chalanta-Madhava. The Vasudeva idol is found to the extreme left of Hayagriva whereas Garuda idol is found to the extreme right near Dwitiya Madhava. The inner wall of the garbhagriha has a carved figure of Hanuman as the *Dwarpal*. The lamps in the garbhagriha are never put off. It is an *akhanda deep*, the big earthen lamps connected to the oil tin.

The mandapa is made up of blocks of stones and quite bigger than the garbhagriha. It consists of four large octagonal shaped stone pillars with pointed arches. According to Sarma (1988:127), these arches were probably renovated by the Koch rulers under the Islamic influence. There is a square platform at the center of the mandapa which is used for the rituals and the presenting offerings.

Fragments of a pillar are found within the campus of the Madhav temple. According to scholars, it is a large monolithic pillar that broke in great earthquake of 1897. The local people call it "Ashoka Pillar". According to Talukder (1955), this is a Buddhist pillar. He has further mentioned that the marks that are visible on the pillar have been formed by reverse flow of a stream of River Brahmaputra. However, Kosambi (1977) is of the view that this pillar belongs to much later date.

On the outer wall of the garbhagriha of the temple, rock cut images and sculptures of various Brahmanical deities are visible. Some other sculptures are also found to be scattered within the campus of the temple (Table: 2). The rock cut images observed in the exterior wall of the garbhagriha or sanctum of *Madhava* temple are identified as (i) different incarnation of Vishnu namely Varaha, Narashimha, Rama and Kalki (ii) Dikpalaka (deity of different directions) such as Indra, Yama, Agni, Vayu, Varuna, Kubera, Ishana (iii) other deities such as Vishnu accompanied by Lakshmi and Kali, (iv) common people such as a man representing a Rishi and women with child etc. Two prominent sculptures found in the campus are identified as

(i) a man doing meditation and ii) **a scene from Ramayana** (depicting Ravana kidnapping Sita).

Before entering into the garbhagriha of the temple, there exists the image of Narasimha the 4th incarnation of the Lord Vishnu. According to Boruah (2007) the Narashimha image found at Hajo is unique and on stylistic ground datable to c. 10th century A.D.



Figure 4: Sculptures on the exterior wall of the temple

Table 2: List of sculptures on the exterior wall of the temple and the campus.

S. No	God /goddesses	Description	Location
1	Varaha (3rd incarnation of Vishnu)	A four-armed Vishnu holding Sankha, Chakra, Gada, Padma in standing position	Exterior wall of the sanctum
2	Narasimha (4 th incarnation of Lord Vishnu)	Man-lion image with four hands engaged in tearing the stomach of Hiranyakasipu.	Before entering to the main temple
3	Rama (7 th incarnation of Lord Vishnu)	Man standing with bow and arrow.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
4	Kalki 10 th incarnation Of lord Vishnu.	Seated on a horse with sword in one hand; other hand holding the horse bridle.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
5	Indra (deity of East)	On his vehicle Airavata, engaged in a fight with a demon.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
6	Varuna (deity of West)	Seated on Makara, holding Aksamala and snake	In temple campus
7	Kubera (Deity of North)	Seated on arms of a man holding a ratna patra and a club in hands and associated with his two wives	Exterior wall of the sanctum
8	Isana (deity of North east)	Holding a trisula like Lord Shiva	Exterior wall of the
9	Vayu (deity of North-west)	Taking deer as vehicle, holding a banner and a tree in his hands	Exterior wall of the sanctum
10	Yama ((deity of south)	Seated on the back of the buffalo, holding a club in hand and showing profile view with rounded belly.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
11	Agni (deity of South east)	A two-handed figure holding a Sakti and vessel in his hand seating in the backside of Ram	Exterior wall of the sanctum
12	Vishnu	Seated on Garuda, accompanied by Goddess Lakshmi.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
13	Kali	Four armed, holding sword, shield, skull and an unknown object in four hands.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
14	Rishi	Long bearded man representing Rishi.	Exterior wall of the sanctum

15	Female figurine	Three female figurine carrying fruits, one is carrying a child.	Exterior wall of the sanctum
16	Meditative man	An image of a man doing meditation	Temple campus
17	A story from Ramayana	A scene from Ramayana depicting Ravana eloping Sita.	Temple campus

Source: Field work Deul/Doul Griha

On the North West direction of Hayagriv-Madhab temple, there is a structure called *Doul Griha*. It is also known as *Fakua Doul* (*fakua* means Holi and *Doul* means temple). It was built by Ahom King Pramatta Singha in 1750 A.D. The plan of the *doul* is octagonal in shape and it is built 10 feet above the ground with a number of stairs all around the *Doul Griha*. The top of the *doul* is domical in shape. Towards western side, there is a wooden door with curved upper structure. Inside the *doul*, there is a wooden palki or *ratha* with floral designs.



Figure 5: Doul Griha

The importance of this fakua doul arises every year during the time of Holi festival observed in the Assamese month of Phaguna or Chait (February- March). As part of the celebration of the Holi festival the idol of Chalanta *Madhava* from *Madhava* temple is carried to the doul griha and kept for three days. Thereafter the idol of *Madhava* along with the other two deities from Kedar temple and Kameswar temple are taken out for the ceremonial Ratha Yatra. Large number of pilgrims irrespective of caste and religion participate in the said Ratha Yatra.

Kedareswar Temple

Next to Hayagriva *Madhava* temple, **Kedar or Kedareswar** which mean Shiva is one of the important temples of Pancha tirtha. It is located at the top of the Madanachala hill at a height of 165.19 m from MSL and is about 2.6 Km away from Hayagriva *Madhava* temple. The exact period of construction of this temple is not known but the stone-built Garbhagriha depicts a very old antiquity of the same. **Kalita (2010)** stated that 'it finds mentioned in the *Kalika Purana* and the *Jogini Tantra* that the antiquity of the stone temple goes back to 11th century'. As per the inscription present on the walls of the temple, the Kedareswar temple was rebuilt by Ahom King Rajeswar Singha in 1753 upon the stone plinth of the original temple. Since then, the temple got patronage from the succeeding Ahom kings. Lakshminath Singha donated both land and people for the service of the temple in 1778 CE. Similarly in 1783 CE Gaurinath Singha donated ornaments, utensils and a number of *paiks* (**The people obliged to render services in exchange of land by the Ahom kings in Assam**). He also donated 69 puras of land to the *paiks* for the settlement and management of the temple (Kalita,2010, 49).

The garbhagriha of Kedar temple is stone built, almost square in shape and measures about 22.9x23 ft. in area. The antarala and mandapa are brick built, rectangular in shape measuring 10x24 ft. and 26x52 ft. in length and breadth respectively. The garbhagriha enshrines a shiva linga. According to Hindu Mythology, the 'linga' of this temple is very significant and it is said to be Wayambhu, which means 'one that originates itself' and is not crafted or made. This linga appears to be an ardhnanarishwara form of Lord Shiva. The linga is generally kept covered with a big metal bowl. There is another idol which is a five-faced Shiva sitting on a bull. According to Sarma (2001), this idol is the representative god of the temple and is known as Chalanta Kedar or Shiva (moving idol of Shiva). Besides, there are seen a number of remnants of the ancient stone temple within the campus of Kedar temple. The sculpture of Vishwapadma among these is notable.



Figure 6: Devotees moving towards Kedar temple and some architectural members



Figure 7: Architectural members and Viswapadma

Kamaleswar Temple (26°14'31.39" N & 91°32'39.79" E)

Kamaleswar is a brick-built temple located at a distance of fifty-meter North of Kedar temple in the Madanachal hillock at an altitude of 164.14 m from MSL. The original temple was built during the same time with the Kedar temple as mentioned in the Yogini Tantra (Kalita, 2010:52). The existence of the temple is also mentioned in Kamrupar Buranji. It was rebuilt by the Ahom King Siva Singha (1714-1744) in the first half of the eighteenth century. The temple gained royal patronage under the reign of a number of Ahom kings namely Pramatta Singha, Rajeswar Singha,

lakshmi Singha, Gaurinath Singha, Chandra Kanta Singha who offered great tribute to the temple (Kalita,2010:52)



Figure 8: Kamaleswar Temple

The present temple is smaller in size in comparison to the other four *Pancha Tirtha* temples and consists of a garbhagriha only. The garbhagriha is brick built and constructed over the original stone plinth. It measures about 18x12 ft. and enshrines a Shiva Linga. Adjacent to the garbhagriha, a rectangular shaped mandapa made in the contemporary time is found. No other structural remains are found within the periphery of the temple. The 1897 earthquake caused severe destruction to the temple.

Near the temple there is a pond named as Madanpuskar. The water level of this pond according to remains same during the summer as well as during winter as it was constructed upon a big stone. It can be regarded as an ancient water source for both the temples i.e. Kedar and Kamaleswar.



Figure 9: Kamaleswar Temple: side view

Kameswar Temple:

Kameswar temple is located at a distance of one and a half Kilometer away from the *Madhava* temple towards Eastern direction. Like Kedar and Kamaleswar it is also a Shiva temple. The temple is constructed in the Gokarna Hill at an elevation of approx. **94.82 m** from MSL.

The very existence of the Kameswar temple is mentioned in Kalika Purana and Yogini Tantra as Kampeetha; its existence is also mentioned in literatures (Kalita 2010: 53). Due to different reasons the original temple damaged in different times. As per record, the Ahom King Pramatta Singha (1744-1751) rebuilt it during the middle part of 18th century. The temple was found broken again due to the great earthquake of Assam in 1897.



Figure 10: Kameswar Temple



Figure 11: Rock engravings

Kameswar temple is made of brick and consists of a Garbhagriha (20x20 ft.) with domical Sikhara, an Antarala (14x16.2 ft.) and a rectangular shaped mandapa. This mandapa is a tin roof with half wall structure made in the recent time measuring about 22x50.1 ft in area. Terracotta human figurine is found engraved on the outer walls of the garbhagriha and the antarala. A few of these are found without having a head. The Garbhagriha enshrines a portable idol of five faced-Shiva which is taken out in the ceremonial procession. The remnants of stone steps connecting to the temple towards eastern direction is still visible. Near the temple towards the Southeastern direction there are huge in-situ blocks of stones which reveal mason mark and rock engraving of a chessboard.

Ganesh Temple



Figure 12: Ganesh Temple

The **Ganesh temple** is located at Ganesh Tola of Hajo about **1500 m** East from the Hayagriva-*Madhava* temple. It is situated at an altitude of **78.23m from MSL**. The temple is constructed on a huge stone boulder, 30 feet long, 15 feet high and 18 feet wide which resemble the shape of an elephant. On this boulder there is a large engraved image of Ganesha. As per the inscription present on the entrance door of the temple the present temple was reconstructed by Ahom king Pramatta Singha in 1744 C.E. At present, the temple consists of a garbhagriha, antarala and a mandapa. The garbhagriha measures about 22x22ft and the antarala is 14x12 ft. in length and breadth respectively. Mandapa measures about 18x30 ft. The Sikhara of the temple has four Angasikharas (towers) on the four corners. Terracotta image of Ganesh is depicted on the walls of the boundary. On special occasions like Maghi Sankranti (generally on 13th January), the deities of other Pancha-tirtha temples namely Madhava, Kedar and Kameswar are brought here as part of ritual. Therefore, this temple is also known as Deva Bhavana as it is the meeting place of the deities of the Pancha tirtha. The priest of the temple worships the deity regularly and offerings are made at the temple. Now a days Ganesha Chaturthi is celebrated in the temple.

Preservation and conservation

The *Pancha Tirtha* temples of Hajo, since their emergence have been passing through various phases of renovation and preservation under the patronage of different rulers. As per record, the first phase of renovation was done in Hayagriva *Madhava* temple by Koch ruler in the 16th century. The main raw material used during the time was stone. Throughout the Koch reign and succeeding Ahom period, the temple had been in existence with great importance to the devotees as religious shrine in Hajo.

As per report of Wade during early part of eighteenth century *Madhava* was the only temple in Hajo, almost equal to the size but much richer in every article than the Kamakhya temple in Nilachal hill in Guwahati (Bhuyan, 2012: 42).

Since the middle part of 18th century, the other four temples are found to be renovated and reconstructed by different Ahom kings. Out of the four, Kamaleswar temple was reconstructed first under the reign of Siva Singha (1714-1744). After Siva Singha, Pramatta Singha (1744-1751) in his reign reconstructed two temples namely Kameswar (exact year of the reconstruction is not known) and Ganesha in 1744. Kedar temple was rebuilt in 1753 by the succeeding Ahom king Rajeswar Singha (1751-1759). The Ahom used brick as the chief raw material for the reconstruction of the temples. During eighteen and nineteen centuries all these temples had been looked after by different Ahom rulers with great devotion and they provided land and people for the management and maintenance of the temples.

In 1861 Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was formed under British rule with a motto to conserve and preserve the ancient monuments and sites of national importance. Towards that end in the early part of twentieth century (1903-04) a survey was conducted by ASI in Hajo area. By this time the temples of Hajo specially Kedar, Kameswar and Kamaleswar were greatly affected with severe damage due to the great earthquake of Assam that occurred in 1897. The survey resulted in different conservation works which include repairing of damaged areas and plastering of walls. The survey made by Spooner for ASI in 1912 found that the Kedar or Kedareswar temple was likely rebuilt with stone during the Singha (Ahom) period, as it shows moulding to be of a different stone. He further commented that it might be an attempt to fit the reconstructed temple over the remains of an older temple (Spooner, 1914).

After almost hundred years of Spooner's visit to these temples, in 2005, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Guwahati circle declared the Hayagriva *Madhava* temple, Kedareswar temple, Ganesh temple and Kameswar temple as protected sites. However, the Kamaleswar temple is left out in the list. Since then ASI initiated number of conservation and development works for these four temples.

The works undertaken by ASI for the protection and development of *Pancha Tirtha* temples as per available reports (Indian Archaeological Review-IAR) have been enumerated. This includes varieties of activities related to preservation and development of the temples. The preservation works carried out are of two types namely; protection of site boundary, and conservation of

monuments. The development work includes construction of infrastructure, providing facilities of public comfort and recreation and supply of drinking water as well as sanitation facilities. The details of the activities carried out are captured in the Table: 03.

Protection of Boundary Wall: To protect the boundary of the temples, ASI has done several activities in phased manner. In Hayagriva *Madhava* temple the gateway on the eastern side is restored (2006-07), plastering of brick wall at the main entrance is made (2008-09), and a retaining wall in front of the temple was constructed (2009-10).

In Kedar temple, ASI (Archeological Survey of India) did the replastering of old compound wall (2008-09), constructed a retaining wall in the north west corner and laid out stone apron around the temple in 2009-

10. During 2006-07 a dwarf wall with chain link fencing and brick-on-edge apron around the Kameswar temple was done. In 2013-14 a breast wall was also constructed in the same temple for the protection of the boundary.

Conservation of Monuments:

To conserve the monuments, several activities have been carried out in all the four protected temples. The conservation activities carried out in case of Hayagriva *Madhava* temple includes (i) application of pressure grouting to leaky terrace and roofs of mandapa and antarala and cleaning and pressure grouting of the surface of the external and internal wall, (ii) application of mortars to the cracks in the entrance door of the mandapa (iii) stone pitching around the temple, (iv) Painting of the roof of the Mandapa, (v) application of Lime surkhi to the parapet wall of the temple etc.

The conservation activities for the Kedar temple are little different. It includes (i) pointing to the main vimana of the temple after raking out the decayed pointing, (ii) plastering and water proofing of the outer surface of the Ardhamandapa, (iii) replastering of the inner and outer surface of the front side (façade) of the temple and (iv) plastering of mandapa.

Similarly, (i) repairing of damaged floor of the mandapa, (ii) repairing of lime concrete floor of mukhamandapa and (iii) plastering of the main temple with lime surkhi are the conservation activities of Kameswar temple.

In Ganesha temple, (i) plastering on the main temple, (ii) repairing of Lime concrete floor and (iii) laying out brick-on-edge apron around the temple of Ganesha are conducted to protect the temple. All these activities aimed towards strengthening and water tightening of different parts of the monument as well as to prevent soil erosion within the campus of the respective monument.

Public comfort & recreation:

Besides protecting the boundary walls and conserving the monuments, as per policy of heritage conservation providing facilities for the visitors(public) are very important tasks to be performed by the protecting authority. Towards that end ASI has been taking a number of initiatives for each

of the temples as stated below.

These are i) construction of ramp for the disabled persons, ii) restoration of the ancient and undulated stone stairways iii) restoring the original stone stairs at western entrance of the temple with parapet wall on both sides, iv) installation of pipe rallying in the front stairways of the temple (safety measure for the visitors) v) providing pipe railing in the ramp and vi) PCC approach to the western side staircases are some of the facilities have been made for **Hayagriva Madhava Temple**. **In Kedar temple** i) replacement of damaged Courtyard of mandapa and ardhmandapa with Kota stone, ii) seating facility for the visitors and pipe railings at the slopes have been done. **Similarly, i) making** seating benches and construction of tree rounds for the visitors, ii) leveling of uneven ground, iii) pipe railings at the slopes and pathways have been done for the benefit of the public/visitors in **Kameswar Temple**.



Figure 13: Preservation activities at Kameswar Temple Drinking water and sanitation:

Provision of drinking water and sanitation facility are the two basic amenities to be present in any religious site having public access. Toilets are constructed in *Madhava* temple in 2012-13 and drinking water facility was provided to Kameswar temple during 2009-10 under the supervision of ASI. However, all the *Pancha Tirtha* temples have these facilities either made by ASI or by the temple committee.

Apart from all these above-mentioned preservation works; the protecting authority has provided

protection notice board and cultural notice board to all four temples and has been maintaining these.

Initiative Taken	Name of Temple	Work done	Reference Year
Protection of Boundary	Hayagriva Madhava	gateway in the eastern side restored plastering of brick wall at the main entrance. Construction of a retaining wall in front of the temple.	2006-07 2008-09 2009-10
	Kedar	Replastering of old compound wall. Construction of a retaining wall in the north west corner Laying out stone apron around the temple.	2008-09 2009-10
	Kameswar	Dwarf wall with chain link fencing. Brick-on-edge apron around the temple. Construction of breast wall.	2006-07 2013-14
Conservation of Monuments	Hayagriva Madhava	Application of pressure grouting to leaky terrace and roofs of Mandapa and Antarala of the temple. Cleaning and pressure grouting of the surface of the external and internal wall. Application of mortars to the cracks in the entrance door of the Mandapa. Stone pitching around the temple Painting of the roof of the Mandapa. Application of Lime surkhi to the parapet wall.	2006-07 2009-10 2011-12
	Kedar	Pointing to the main vimana of the temple after raking out the decayed pointing has been completed. Plastering and water tightening of the outer surface of the Ardhamandapa. Replastering of the inner and outer surface of the front side (façade) of the temple. Plastering of Mandapa.	2006-07 2008-09 2009-10

	Kameswar	Repairing of damaged floor of the Mandapa. Repairing of lime concrete floor of mukhamandapa. Plastering of the main temple with lime surkhi.	2009-10
	Ganesha	Resetting the connecting pathway between the Bhog-ghar and the main temple. Plastering on the main temple. Repairing of Lime concrete floor. Laying out brick-on-edge apron was laid around the temple.	2008-09 2009-10
Facilities for devotees	Kedar	Replacement of damaged Courtyard of Mandapa and Ardhamandapa with Kota stone.	2006-07
Public comfort & recreation	Hayagriva-Madhava	Construction of ramp for the disabled persons. Restoration of the ancient and undulated stone stairways. Restoring the original stone stairs at western entrance of the temple with parapet wall on both sides. Installation of pipe rallying in the front stairways of the temple (safety measure for the visitors). Providing pipe railing in the ramp. PCC approach was provided to the western side staircases.	2006-07 2006-07 2008-09 2009-10) 2011-12 2011-12
	Kedar	Seating facility for the visitors Pipe railings at the slopes.	2009-10
	Kameswar	Making seating benches and construction of tree rounds for the visitors Lavelling of uneven ground Pipe railings at the slopes and pathways.	2009-10) 2009-10) 2013-14

Drinking water and sanitation	Hayagriva Madhava	Sanitary toilets (4) for male & female	2012-13
	Kameswar	Drinking water facility.	2009-10

Table 3: Protection and Conservation works initiated by ASI (2006-07 to 2024- 25)



Figure 14: Hayagriva Madhava temple before and after plastering of the main temple Source: (IAR 2009-2010: 278)



Figure 15: Kameswar temple before and after plastering of the main temple Source: (IAR 2009-2010: 279)



Figure 16: Ganesh temple before and after pastering of the main temple Source: (IAR 2009-10: 281)

Section II

Community Participation and Management of rituals in *Pancha Tirtha* temples:

The role and participation of people is very important for the preservation and management of any heritage property. The research reveals that in the management of different rituals in the *Pancha Tirtha* temples, traditionally the local people are deeply involved. The local community signify the people living within the periphery of the temple complex. It is a mixture population consisting of different caste group like Brahmin as well as *Malakar*, *Bania*, *Kumar*, *Kaibortya*, *Shudra*, *Bez*, *Chamar*, *Kahar*, etc. All are followers of Hinduism. Apart from Hindus, there are Muslim people also called as Marias.

All the people long years back settled in the locality. The Brahman caste people is said to be brought from *Kanauj* in Uttar Pradesh. Initially, there were only four families, who in course of time emerged into a distinct category identified as *Deuri* who perform mainly the ritual works. Other than Brahmins those who rendered services to the temple are termed as *Sewaits*. For the smooth functioning of the temple complex, Sarma (2001) enumerated emergence of various *Sewaits* groups (service provider). The Ahom ruler during its reign brought 120 service providing people (*Saikuri Hazela*) to their present location for rendering various services to the temple free of cost. In return they were provided land that belonged to the temple. During the Ahom period, there were altogether thirty-six *sewaits* groups (Hajo Anchalar Itihaax: 39). These individuals eventually gave rise to different classes or groups and developed into a well-organized socio-economic network (Sarma 2001). The surnames or titles of the people or groups came into existence according to their kinds of services rendered to the temple (Pathak 1999:1).

As per report of Wade, during early part of 18th century, *Madhava* temple had an establishment of 500 people of which 200 Brahmins and 300 attendants of other castes performing various duties towards the temple. The brahmins leads/ heads the puja in temple and is called *Doloi*. The temple was extended over a land area of 400 bighas (Bhuiyan, 2012:43).

Although the exact time of migration of these people is not known, they have lived for passed several generations living close to the periphery of *Madhava* temple. They are found to be distributed into different hamlets locally called *Tolas*. The helmets where they are inhabitant since long are as follows-

Brahman para: The locality/ helmet that exist towards the western side just adjacent to the campus of *Madhava* temple is known as *Brahman Para*. It consists of twenty-two households (2024) with twelve belong to the Brahmin caste and ten to *Malakar* caste group. The descendants of Brahmin group are now dwellers in a number of villages in undivided *Kamrup* districts of Assam. The appointment of priests (*Bor deuri* and *Saru deuri*) have always been from this helmet or from their descendants or relatives living in other villages in Nalbari area.

Moria Patti: Next to *Brahman para*, the hamlet is called as *Moriapatti* situated at a distance of 150

meters from the *Madhava* temple. The inhabitants are from Muslim community known as *Moria*. They are basically brass metal workers and in the early days used to provide all the **required brass metal objects and utensils** to the temple. Only in the recent years nearby market serves the purpose. The total households of this helmet are 110 housing about 1200 people in 2024.

Athparia Tola: It is a small helmet located just at 100-meter away towards North western direction of the *Madhava* temple. It consists of people mainly from *Malakar* caste and also some other schedule caste people of Assam. There are sixteen households in this tola. **The post of *Athparia* of the temple is chosen from this hamlet.** The cleansing of the garbhagriha, looking after of the lighted earthen lamp, arrangement of *Naibedya and Bhoga* are the allotted task of *Athparia*. Also, it is his duty to stay at the campus of the concerned temple.

Bharali Tola: It exists towards northern direction of the temple just near the *Athparia tola*. **Earlier a man from the *Bharali tola* was appointed to look after the storehouse of the temple.** But nowadays, it is maintained by the committee members. This Tola consists of about twenty-two household.

Mali Tola: The *Mali tola* located towards Northern direction of the *Madhva* temple. It consists of 25 household with a population of 120 belonging to *Malakar* caste one of the schedule castes in Assam. **Traditionally, the people of this hamlet used to supply flower and prepare garland for the *Madhava* temple.**

Sonari Tola: *Sonari Tola* is situated to the East of the *Madhava* temple. It is the hamlet of goldsmiths. There are 18 households in total with population numbering 72 now. These people are from Bania caste- one of the schedule castes in Assam. Traditionally, they used to carry out the production of gold, silver and other metal ornaments.

Bez Tola: Towards the east of the *Sonari Tola* lies the *Bez Tola*. People of this Tola were *napits* (barber) in the past. There are altogether 30 households in this Tola. Only one household of the hamlet is continuing with the traditional profession now, whereas the rest have shifted to other professions.

Kumar para: *Kumar para* lies one km east of the temple. It is a hamlet of potters. The para now consists of 100 households with about 500 population. They used to make various vessels like *charu, kalah, ghot, gasa, saki* etc. **The duty of the *Kumar* was to supply necessary vessels/ pots to the temple.** But, nowadays, the temple committee procures necessary pots of the temple from the salespersons not necessarily belonging to the people of this hamlet.

Gayan Tola: This is located towards northeastern direction of the temple. Originally it was known as *Natpara* in which the temple dancers used to reside long time ago (Sharma 2005:97). Due to disappearance of the custom of ritual dancing, it was renamed as *Gayan Tola*. The present population in the helmet are 200 with 55 households.

All the above-mentioned community groups are found within 10 Km. areas surrounding the

Hayagriva *Madhava* temple. Originally, the Ahom king settled them there for the purpose of smooth delivery of various temple related services. Thus, historically, there evolved a multi-ethnic socio-cultural settings centering round these temples.

i) Role and Participation of local Community:

All religious shrines involve regular performance of quite a good number of activities. The local people living in the vicinity have been performing their assigned role as per traditions. An account of these is provided below.

Daily Functioning: The FGD reveals (table-3) that there are certain prescribed roles which are traditionally performed by the persons who are assigned for the purpose. The daily functioning of the temple begins with the opening of the main door of the temple in the morning. Traditionally, there were *Duwari* (door opener) to do the same job. There were persons called *Jogaitola* who used to awake up the deities (Sharma 2005:56) by beating *dhol* (drum) and singing morning song. Earlier, they were recited from a helmet called *Jagaitola*, the people of which are now involved in different occupations. The role of *duwari* or *Jogaitola* however, no longer persist in any of these five temples. Now-a-days, the doors are opened by the *Athparia*. The concern *Athparia* of the temple clean the garbhagriha and arrange prasada (naibadya). Also, he arranges all the required items for daily worship namely flowers, Tulsi leaves, durba, rice, sesum seeds, gandhaka, paste of sandal wood and water for cleaning the deities.

After *athparia* performs his duty, the *Bor Deuri* (main priest) used to clean the deities and starts the daily ritual. He is assisted by *Xoru Deuri* (assistant priest). At least two priests are involved every day in each temple. There is a group of 24 priests devoted to performing daily as well as special day rituals in these temples. They perform duties on rotation basis.

Offering of Bhoga to the deities (prasada of rice, dal etc.), is another regular activities of the *Pancha Tirtha* temples. The amount of *bhoga* ranges from minimum 5/6 kgs in normal days to 70/80 Kgs of rice on the day of special events. The source of arranging daily *Bhoga* is from the temple stock which is mostly added by the devotees. There are special people to prepare *bhoga*. At present all temples except Kamaleswar people are assigned to prepare *bhoga*.

In the past *Bharali* (treasurer) was another category of people who used to keep and count all stocks (cash or kind) belonging to the temple. But now a days this work is looked after by the local management committee.

Malakar is another category of person who regularly used to supply required flowers and garlands to the temple specially to the *Madhava* temple. Now a days, most of the flowers are found available in the petty shops located within the temple premises. However, in the month of Kartika (October-November) *Tulsi malas* are offered to *Madhava* temple only by the *Malakar s*.

Likewise, the *kumars* (potters) in the olden days living near the temples complex used to supply all the required pots and potteries to the temples. But, the these people no longer supply the pottery. The required potteries of the temples are now procured from the market only.

Table 4: Participation of Local people in the Regular functioning of the temples.

Participant	Prescribed role	Role in practice
Priest (<i>bor deuri</i>)	Daily ritual	Daily ritual
Priest (<i>xoru deuri</i>)	Cleaning, bathing of deities, assisting <i>Bor deuri</i>	Cleaning, bathing of deities, assisting <i>Bor deuri</i>
Jagaitola	Awakening God by Singing	Nil
<i>Duwari</i>	Opens the door	Nil
<i>Athparia</i>	Cleans Garbhagriha, arranges <i>prashada</i>	Opens door, Cleans Garbhagriha, arranges <i>prashada</i>
<i>Randhani (cook)</i>	Prepares <i>Bhoga</i>	Prepares <i>Bhoga</i>
<i>Malakar</i>	Provides flowers and garlands	Provides flowers and garlands
<i>Bharali</i>	Maintain store	Maintains store only on special occasions like <i>Monikut Utsab</i> and also made arrangements for the <i>Bulbuli</i> fight
<i>Kumar(potters)</i>	Provide potteries	Nil

Special Occasions of the *Pancha Tirtha* temples and people's participation:

Besides the regular activities of the temples there are certain other events like *Maghi Sankranti*, *Doul*, *Ashoka asthami*, *Janmastami* celebrated in *Madhava* temple each year. Similarly, *Shivaratri* and *Madan puja* are observed in the *Kedar* temple as well as in the *Kamaleswar* and *Kameswar* temple.

Maghi Sankranti is observed on the last day of Assamese month *Puh* (mid-December -mid January). It is regarded very auspicious event in which every year a large number of visitors assembled *Puh* is followed by the month of *Magh* – the most auspicious month in Assamese calendar. It is the time to visit religious shrines and events. *Maghi mela* are held during this period. In the month of *Phaguna* or *Chait* (February-March), *Doul utsav* is celebrated in the *Madhava* temple. During the time of *Doul* or *Holi*, *Chalanta Madhava* from *Madhava* temple is kept on the *Doulgriha* for three days and then taken down from the *Doulgriha* on the last day of the festival. Then all the three deities i.e. *Chalanta Madhava* along with one deity from *Kedar* temple and another from *Kameswar* temple are taken out for the ceremonial procession. Large number of

pilgrimages irrespective of caste and religion participate in the said Ritual procession. The inter religious tie is well reflected through this festival. As per tradition, the local Muslim from the *Fakirtola* area are engaged in road clearance during the ceremonial procession.

On each of these above-mentioned special occasions large number of visitors used to participate. Out of them, some are regular devotees of local area; some are pilgrims while some others are tourists. The devotees are mostly Hindu by religion. Notably, the Hayagriva- *Madhava* temple is regarded as a holy place by the Buddhist. They believe that this temple consists of a relic of Lord Buddha and furthermore the Buddha attained Nirvana where the present temple of Hayagriva-*Madhava* rest (Waddell, 1895; Choudhury, 1966; Barua, 1973). As per record, in the early part of eighteenth century, large number of people from Bhutan who are basically Buddhist by religion, used to visit the temple and worship (Dalton,1855; Bhuyan,2012). The Prince of the Bhutan used to send people to offer puja to the God Madhava. They also used to maintain a trade relation in various parts of Assam including Hajo area since early time. There happened to be a great hat (market) known as *Bootia* (Bhutia) hat and a great number of Bhutia people (people from Bhutan) used to come here for the purpose of trading quite a number of items like blankets, gold dust, musk, chowries, red silk, blue salt, metal bell (*ghunta*) and even sheep, goats and dogs. In return they used to collect dry fish, cloths, mugar dhuti, coins, etc. The temple is still a place of pilgrimage for the Buddhists (Baruah, 1985). As such during the winter a large number of pilgrims from Bhutia community visit the temple.

At the present time, the flow of visitors generally starts during winter season from October - November to March -April. During summers except on special occasions the number of visitors is generally less. In the month of Kartika (mid-October to mid-November), Tulsi diya event takes place in the *Madhava* temple. People from far away as well as local area visit and offer garland of *tulsi* or *tulasi* (holy basil) to God *Madhava* which is regarded as very auspicious offering. Besides such offerings, many of such people visit the other four temples also. As per focus group discussion, the average visitors to the *Madhava* temple during this month is approximately estimated in between ten to fifteen thousand.

Table 5: Special Occasions of the *Pancha Tirtha* temples maintained traditionally

Name of temple	Name of event	Time (Day/Month)
	<i>Maghi Sankranti</i>	last day of Puh (14 th Jan
	<i>Doul</i>	Fagun (Usually in March on the day of full Moon)
	<i>Ashoka asthami</i>	<i>Chait</i> (April) date varies.
	<i>Krishna Janmashtami</i>	<i>Bhado</i> (Aug./sept) Date varies

	<i>Tulsi Diya</i>	Kartik (Oct./Nov.) Whole month
Madhava, Kedar, Kameswar	<i>Madan Chaitrali</i>	13 th day of dark forth night of Chait (mid-March-mid April)
Kedar, Kamaleswar, Kameswar	<i>Sivaratri</i>	<i>Fagun</i> (Feb/March)
Ganesha	Ganesh Chaturthi	Shukla Chaturthi Tithi(Jan/Feb)

Since 1992 with the effort of All Assam Students Union (AASU) in collaboration with regional AASU unit a great event is observed on the first day of Magh, called *Manikut Utsav*. Keeping the early tradition of unity and harmony intact, a big cultural procession is arranged which starts from Poa mecca to the *Madhava* temple. Large number of people irrespective of caste, creed and community participate in this procession showcasing the age-old unity and harmony of Hajo area.

Local management committee and their participation

As per the provisions of the Assam Ancient Monument and Records Act, 1959, there has to be a committee for management of the protected heritage site. **The management committee** comprises of seven members with a functional tenure of three years. Among the seven, one is a government officer posted in the locality representing the state government and six are local. The traditional head (Doloi) of the temple is the President of management committee with lifelong term. The other posts of the committee include one Secretary, one Treasurer and three Executive Members.

The study reveals that there is one management committee called *Pancha Tirtha Dewalaya Porisalona Samiti (PTDPS), Hajo* which looking after the management of the five temples of Hajo. The *Doloi*, the traditional head of the temple is the President of committee with lifelong term. The other posts of the committee in place include a Secretary, a Treasurer and three Executive Members. The drawing of local members into the committee are found to be done thought selection process rather than election.

All of them are male by gender. They are drawn from nearby villages like Nakuchi, Borgaon, Gerua and Hajo town which are located within 10 km radius of the Hayagriva *Madhava* temple. The committee is under the supervision of district judge.

The committee acts as decision maker as well as implementing body. It takes leading role in the construction of any infrastructure and facilities that are funded either by the government or its own fund available through donation or gift to the temple. They also undertake repairing work of the steps once in every year. It looks after the cleanliness of the campus including all the steps leading to the temples. The cleanliness of the campus is carried out through seven cleaners; four of

whom are salaried employees engaged by the managing committee. In each of the temples, except Kamaleswar temple there engaged separate cleaner at least one for maintaining regular cleanliness. Being smaller in area, the Kamaleswar temple is treated as part of Kedar temple. The committee organizes all special events related to the five temples. Organising ritual procession in Maghi Sankranti, Ashoka Asthami etc. is the great responsibility of the local committee. They set rules and regulations during the time of ritual procession so that visitors/ devotees can take part in the events peacefully.

Conclusion:

Among the five temples in Hajo, Hayagriva-*Madhava* temple is the most revered. Hayagriva *Madhava* is basically a Vishnu temple. The other three namely Kedareswar, Kameswar, Kamaleswara are mainly the place of worship of Hindu God Shiva. Ganesh temple represents the God Ganesh, another very prominent Hindu God. All the five temples are situated within an area of 3 km. and regarded by the people as Pancha tirtha.

Historically and archaeologically, Hayagriva-*Madhava* is the oldest and richest one. Other four temples have been constructed and reconstructed in the later period. The socio-economic and socio-religious condition of the neighbouring communities pivot round the Hayagriva- *Madhava* temple (Sarma, 2001 :) The other four temples centre round the Hayagriva-*Madhava* temple. Except *Kamaleswar* temple other four temples are protected centrally by ASI. Several conservations as well as development works have been conducted from time to time under their supervision.

The highest number of pilgrims visit Hayagriva temple followed by *Kedar*, *Ganesh*, *Kameswar* and *Kamaleswar* temples, respectively. The average number of visitors per month ranges between 5,000-6,000 and during special occasions like *Makar Sankranti*, Doul festival, Manikut Utshav this number crosses more than lakh. Managing such large gatherings is a difficult task for the ASI. Here lies the role of local people and committee.

The local people represent a multi ethnic society consisting of different caste and religions who have been living around the Panch tirtha temple complex in different helmets since long. Other than Hindus, Muslims living from the past also became a part of the temple and are found to exist within the sphere of the temple system (Sarma 2021).

Notably, local people have been regulating and managing the functioning of the temples. The people of different helmets have their assigned duties and accordingly they involved. The community have their representatives in the local committee. With the help of management committee, the local people not only manage the day-to-day activities but also manage different special occasions of the temples. With great regard people participate in special occasions like Maghi Sankranti and others. They ensure their participation by their physical presence and also by contributing offerings in cash or kind. In such occasions, there happens to be a festive environment in Hajo and its neighboring areas. During the time of ritual procession, people lay *Gamosa* (A type of Scarf) in front of their houses so that the procession passes on it, afterwards this *Gamosa* becomes sacred for the people. As per the temple priest, besides Hindus the leaders from

Muslim community also take part in the festivals when deities like *Chalanta Madhava*, from the concerned temples are taken out for procession. Such participation of people irrespective of caste and religion in different activities of the temples is unique to Hajo.

The underlying fact leading to the voluntary participation of the people is the deep faith and believe they have on the deities of each of the temples. As per Hindu religious traditions, person who visit *Jagannath* temple in *Puri*, Orissa must visit *Madhava* temple at *Hajo*. The daily worship in each of the *Pancha Tirtha* temple is regarded highly significant for the pilgrims (*Bhaktas*.) It is believed that *Hayagriva Madhava* always fulfills the wishes of the *Bhaktas*. The same belief people have for other four temples also. The *Akhanda Pradeep* (The earthen lamp which never put off) at *Madhava* temple is the representative of this belief.

In conclusion it can be said that the *Pancha Tirtha* temples in Hajo is no doubt a place of great archaeological importance. Apart from that it possesses both sociocultural and socio religious importance. It is the community who play a crucial role in keeping the continuity of socio-religious traditions. People valued it in the past and the same continue in the contemporary time too.

Acknowledgement: The authors are very much thankful to various stakeholders of the temple namely the Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati circle, priests of the *Pancha Tirtha* temple, the local committee, caretakers and visitors. We also offer special thanks to Dr. Manjil Hazarika of Cotton University for his valuable input and suggestions.

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