

EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF THE SHERSHABADIA COMMUNITY: A STUDY OF IDENTITY, ORIGINS, AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN WEST BENGAL, BIHAR, AND JHARKHAND

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Abstract:

This research aims to examine the language and literature of the Shershabadia people, a socially disadvantaged group living in the neighbouring areas of West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand. Their language is referred to as Shershabadia. This study provides a concise examination of the identity, ancestral homeland, language, and literature of the subject.

Key-words: Shershabadia, Language, Literature, Geed or Folksong, Folk drama etc.

Introduction:Shershabadia

The populations of Bihar, Jharkhand, and Bengal are same. The name of their language is Sharashabadia. The name Shershabadi originates from the indigenous term Shershabad, as documented by G. E. Lambon (1918, p. 24) and M. & Cutter (1938, 45 BC) 2. The term "Shershabad" originated during the British period and has its roots in the Mughal word "Sarsabad" (also spelt as Sarsabd or Sarsabad). Abul Fazl, the chief minister of Samat Akbar, references it in the Aangani Akbari, while Alauddin Ispahani, also known as Mirza Nathan, authored the Pashi Itihas Baharistan-i-Ghaybi under the rule of Samat Jahangir. The term "Sarsabadia" is derived from the placename "Sarsabad" by adding the suffix '-ya'. It is now used as a caste name in the Bhagawangola and Lalgola blocks and Thana parts of Murshidabad. Hence, it is superfluous to state that the first rendition of the name 'Shershabadia' is Sarsabadia.

The original homelands of the Shershabadia:

Aangani Akbari states that Jannatabad (Lakhnauti) was among the 19 administrative divisions into which Akbar partitioned Bengal. The government was split into six divisions,

with the Jawar-e-Sarsabad, or Sarsabad Division, being the biggest. The structure included of 10 subdivisions known as mahalas, each with 11 ° -1 beams. According to Irfan Habib's location analysis, the geographical positioning of the ten mahalas of Jawar-e-Sarsabad was as follows: beams about 113-14, as mentioned on page 43 of Habib's work. [1. and 2.] Manikpur and Hatinda are currently located in the northernmost part of Malda district, specifically in Kambashi Harishchandrapur-I and Chanchal-I blocks. Gaurhanda, originally situated at Chanchal-II or Malatipur Rock in Malda district. Khiarpur or Khidirpur is presently located at Harishchandrapur-II. [5] Akbarpur encompasses parts of Chanchal-II and Ratua-I blocks in the present-day Malda district. It is situated along the banks of the Ganges river, extending westward to the boundary of Prarnia-Sahabganj district in Bihar-Jharkhand. This includes Gati (Garai), which is located south of the Ganges in the present-day Sahabganj district of Jharkhand. Teliagarhi fort stands there and it served as the gateway to Bengal for Bakhtiyar Khalji, Sher Shah, and Mansingh during their conquest of Lakhniti-Gaur-Pandua. [7] Makrain is now mostly located in the Ratua-2 block of Malda district. [8] Kotwali is situated south of Makrain and is currently in the English Bazar block, which is the main city of Malda. The Zamindari estate of Gani Khan Choudhury is renowned for its properties, including Sarsabad Mahal and Pardihar. Sarsabad Mahal, previously known as Shershabad Pargana, was part of Gaur and Murshidabad. Pardihar, on the other hand, was originally part of the undivided Kaliachak Thana and later became part of Shershabad Pargana during the British era. The spelling of 'Sarasabad' as 'Sarabar' by Irfan Habib has significance and conveys meaning. The term "sarsa" is translated as "sarsa + abad = sarsabad." The user's text is empty. The term "Saras" refers to anything that is moist or has a lot of water. Saraswan (सरस्वान) is a term that encompasses bodies of water such as lakes, rivers, and seas. Similarly, the term Saraswati signifies "river." Waterways such as rivers, canals, rivulets, ponds, and ditches. The rivers Ganges, Phulhar, Pagla, Bhagirathi, and Padma, together with their tributaries, flow through the region known as Jawar-e-Sarsabad, enhancing its fertility and beauty. This area is very affluent for this reason. The initial hamlet was given the name Sarsabad to indicate its abundant and rich agricultural land.

Shershabadia is a mixed tribe: Major groups:

The Shershabadia-speaking peasant group is a heterogeneous tribe. Murshidabad is inhabited by three primary ethnic groups: the Sarsabadia (Sarsabaida), the Phulbaria (Phulbaida), and the Penchi. Furthermore, with the Badia and the Pahuchi, the Bosni-Jolah tribes of undivided Kaliachak have been included as part of the Shershabadi tribes of Malda.

The settlement of Sujapur was affluent and inhabited by the Shershabadiyas. Ashok Mitra. 4 Period. The majority of Muslims trace their ancestry back to Hinduism and Buddhism. During the Middle Ages, there was a network of foreign shaykhs (pir-muballegh) and merchants who travelled on missionary circuits. The number 2122 According to the British writer William Hunter, a group of the Shershabadi people, who are descendants of Gaudapagada monarchs from different time periods, merged with the local populace and lost their royal power. Twenty-three Even throughout the Mughal and Nawab eras, it was seen that several troops opted for a career in agriculture and continued to be residents of the region known as Sarsabad.

The main languages of the region are:

Sarsabad, located in the contiguous geographical area of North Rarh, Bagri, and Varendra, is a component of Jawar and Shershabad Parganas. The Shershabadia language serves as a connection between the regional languages of Rati and Varendri. The Sharashabadia languages have strong linguistic affinity with Kamtapuri to the north, Maithili to the west, and Jharkhandi to the southwest. Linguist Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar classifies the Bengali-speaking area into 12 divisions. On November 5, he specifically addresses the Shershabadia language. Shershabadia, Maldaiya, or Jangipuri are three possible options. The Bengali language is mostly spoken in certain regions, including most portions of Murshidabad district, the Pakuf and Rajmahal subdivisions of Santal Pargana, Maldah district, Barsoi, the Ajmangar area, and some eastern districts of Katihar district. Additionally, Bengali is spoken in West Dinajpur's Dalkola and Rajshahi district's Nawabganj subdivision. This dialect has an exquisite pronunciation and a distinctive tone or speaking style. Language and Dialect-1, also known as Discourse 7, took place on 31 July 1983 in Kolkata. During his presentation, he described the Shershabadia language as possessing an exceptionally exquisite pronunciation, with its speech and intonation being distinctly unparalleled. M. O. Katar refuses to classify the Shershabadis as authentic Bengalis (Bengalis proper) due to the Hindi influence in their language. According to Satya, the Shershabadis have a distinctive intonation where their voice rises to a high pitch at the conclusion of a phrase. This particular characteristic is a consistent and reliable subject of ridicule throughout Gambhira and Alkap performances. The information can be found on page 46.

Shershabadia has a wealth of folk writing, with Gantira and Alkap being highly acclaimed folk dramas in the language. Shershabadia, sometimes referred to as Maldaiya or Jangipuri depending on the specific area, is the primary language spoken by both Hindus and Muslims in the regions of Malda and Murshidabad. Within the language and culture of the

Shershabadia Muslims, several Hindu customs have been observed for generations in Gourbang, including the use of goktira, alkap, geed, haldi ritual, and paan-supari during marriage ceremonies. It is worth noting that the majority of their forefathers have converted to Islam.

Books on Shershabadia society, culture and language:

Despite the presence of material about Shershabadia in many government papers such as cess reports, district gazetteers, and settlement survey reports since 1901, the first comprehensive study book on Shershabadia is Abdus Samad's "Shershabadi's Kathalekhay" published in 1987. He has compiled and published a diverse range of Shershabadia folk literature, including Fausti (riddles), Laokchhara, Khesa, Khela rhyme, and Geed of Girls. The next study book is "Shershabadia Susprdayer Language and Culture" (1999) authored by Professor Mir Rezaul Karim. Three Nurul Hasan's book, Shershabadia Muslim Society, Culture, and Language (2018), is a recent publication. Abdul Ahab's book, "Shershabad and Shershabadia: The History of a Tribe" (2021), provides a meticulous examination of the origins of Shershabadia history. Lassa-Arser Pramer Geed (2016), authored by Nurul Hasan, is a compilation of songs that are often sung by females belonging to the Shershabadia group. Moh. Ibrahim's Gourbanger Beti Geet Bahukaunik Partha (2022) is a significant and contemporary literary work that explores the theme of Shershabadiya Geed (Songs for Girls). During the 1970s, Abdus Samad, the first Sharashabadia poet, disseminated his poetry across several journals. The first editorial of Badiya Bartatar, the first newspaper located in Shershabadia and published in Malda, took place in 1989. The second edition of the Shershabadia magazine, overseen by Abdul Ahab and published from Maldah, Shershabadia, is a bi-monthly publication focused on literature and culture. It started its print run with the Autumn 2020 issue, covering the months of August to September. Hasan Ali and Mohd introduced the fourth edition of the Shershabadia semi-annual magazine, Pahat, in January 2021. The fourth edition of the Shershabadia magazine, titled Pahat, was issued in January 2021. It was edited by Hasan Ali and Mohd. Mosaraf Hossain, both from Islampur in Uttar Dinajpur.

Shershabadia literature and poetry:

Shershabadia's agricultural community has long been characterised by a lack of progress. Although the poets of Gramganj wrote poetry in this regional language, they did not publish or preserve them. Abdus Samad's Kene Kigono, a researcher and writer from Malda, is said to have written the first printed poem in the language around the 1980s. Utpal Das, a poet

hailing from Malda, has released three poems in the following order: Loke Hamra from Malda district (2011), How Humanity (2015), and Chidnya Gaye (2018). I presently reside in Siliguri, and poet Nurul Hasan's Chikas poem was published in 2015. Shershabadiya Kavya, authored by Ibn Zaynab, also known as Abdul Ahab, is a collection of Kafr poetry published in 2021. Despite the existence of three other poetry volumes, namely Abdus Samader Ke Dhan Bahane Kun Sahane (2021), Moh. Mazharul Abedin's Sholwana Shershabadia (2022), and Sajiruddin Ahmed's Haranghe Kabitya (2022), মর. Akmal Hossain's poem Hamra Kaliachaker Lok (2022) represents a recent inclusion.

Conclusion :

Given that Gaur, the capital of mediaeval Bengal, was located in the heart of the area, it is not surprising that it had the distinction of being acknowledged as a Gaudiya language at that time. Subsequently, when the capital of Bengal was relocated to South Bengal, the dialect spoken in South Bengal attained the designation of Standard Bengali, while the language of Gauranchal was disregarded. Disregarding such disregard, the current generation has initiated a push to develop the Shershabadia language and literature.

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