

INTRODUCTION

History of the Origin of Sericulture:

Sericulture is a fully agro – based commercial activity. A long history of origin is enclosed with sericulture. It was first discovered in China more than 4000 years ago.¹ After China and Japan, through the different countries via different ways, silk entered in India. Actually, India was not excluded from the flow of Chinese silk expansion although, we could not find any particular period for the introduction of sericulture in India.² But, different Indian epics, like as Rigveda, Ramayana, Mahabharata refers to sources about silk cultivation in Ancient India. In India, the Bengal province was famous for silk cultivation. ‘Patta – bastra’ was one the significant example, produced by silk-yarn.³ W.W. Hunter remarked that the silk cultivation was popular under the different region during the Hindu Dynasty at Gaur.⁴ In the Bengal Province, Malda was the chief silk producing centre. In 1577, Sheik Bhik, one silk merchant of Malda exported ‘*Maldahi Cloths*’ (silk cloths of Malda) to Russia.⁵ So, silk piece goods and in later, raw silk became the main export commodity in pre-colonial and post-colonial phase.

¹ H. V. Shivappa, *Indian Silk Industry*, Varanasi: Ganga Kaveri Publishing House, 2001, p. 1.

² P. K. Mohanty, *Tropical Tasar Culture in India*, New Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 2013. p. 12.

³ G. E. Lambourn, *Bengal District Gazetteers Malda*, Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1918, pp. 65 – 66.

⁴ W. W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. VII, Districts of Maldah, Rangpur and Dinajpur, Delhi: D. K. Publishing House, 1974, p. 94.

⁵ G. E. Lambourn, p.66.

Area of the Study :

Silk Industry was a major industry during the pre colonial Bengal. Malda was considered as a core area for the production of silk. Silk industry has been providing earning opportunity to the different types of silk workers, those who were engaged in the various stages of the entire silk production system.

The term '*Maldaha*' means a 'place of wealth'.⁶ This wealth was established mainly on sericulture. A large population of Malda was attached with silk industry of the region. The district of Malda was formed of the outlying portions of Purnea and Dinajpur districts on 13 March 1813.⁷ Mr. Braddon was first deputed to exercise the powers of Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector in Zillah Maldah.⁸ In 1832, the first treasury was established in Malda, but independent administrative set up was established in 1859. Thus, from 1859 onwards Malda enjoyed equal value along with other districts.⁹ The Civil Station and Administrative Headquarters were at English Bazar, which was also the principal town of the region, situated on the west bank of the Mahananda.¹⁰ The geographical as well as ecological setting of Malda promoted the entire development of the silk industry.

⁶ Jatindra Chandra Sengupta, *West Bengal District Gazetteers Malda*, Calcutta : Sree Saraswati Press, 1969, p. 1.

⁷ G. E. Lambourn, p.1.

⁸ J. J. Pemberton, *Geographical and Statistical Report on the District of Malda*, Calcutta: Thos. Jones "Calcutta Gazette" Office, 1854, p. 1.

⁹ Prodyot Ghosh, *Maldah Jelar Itihas*, first part, Calcutta : Pustak Biponi, Calcutta, 2006, p. 13.

¹⁰ W. W. Hunter, pp. 18 – 19.

In Malda, different stages of silk workers and traders, such as mulberry cultivators, rearers, reelers, *katanis*, winders, weavers, cloth-makers and business classes were attached with silk cultivation and silk trade. Most of the silk workers were enriched by proper efficiency for the particular work through the flow of generation to generation under large scale sericulture sector. This present research study focuses on the silk industry and silk trade in Malda, 1770 – 1833; while it also studies the situation of Bengal silk industry during the period in general.

Methodology and Limitations

This is an empirical research based on both primary as well as secondary sources. Primary sources include Archival Records, District Gazetteers, Provincial Series under Imperial Gazetteer of India, Reports, Memoirs, Magazines, Sericulture Manual and Hand Book. The primary sources are located in various Governmental Departments and Academic Libraries. Secondary sources are located in National Library of India at Calcutta, Libraries of different Universities and in various non - Governmental academic institutional Libraries.

The Primary and Secondary sources on the area of study are limited. Most of the available sources are on colonial Bengal's economy where there is little focus on sericulture. Such references are not directly useful for the research on regional based silk industry and trade. Another limitation is that this research is primarily based on official reports and records, both published and unpublished, both primary and secondary sources.

Review of the Literature

Some of the important works on Malda and on its silk industry are discussed here. G.E. Lambourn in his book on ‘Bengal District Gazetteers - Malda’, discussed on geographical and historical condition of Malda. He had laid minimum stress on sericulture, also had not expressed any analytical views.¹¹ M. O. Carter in his ‘Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Malda 1928 – 1935’ discussed on sericulture as a household activity.¹² Jatindra Chandra Sengupta in the ‘West Bengal District Gazetteers Malda’ discussed on administrative and social services, but not on the economic significance of sericulture of the Malda district.¹³ In ‘A Statistical Account of Bengal (Districts of Malda, Rangpur and Dinajpur, Vol. VII)’ W. W. Hunter mentioned on the statistical information of sericulture activities of undivided Malda District. There is no detailed discussions in this book about silk industry.¹⁴

¹¹ G. E. Lambourn, *Bengal District Gazetteers Malda*, Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1918.

¹² M. O. Carter, *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operation in the District of Malda 1928 – 1935*, Alipore : Bengal Government Press, 1938.

¹³ J. C. Sengupta, *West Bengal District Gazetteers Malda*, Calcutta: Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd., 1969.

¹⁴ W. W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. VII, Districts of Maldah, Rangpur and Dinajpur, Delhi : D.K. Publishing House, 1974.

In ‘The Changing Fortunes of the Bengal Silk Industry 1757 – 1833’ written by Sailendra Kumar Bag, he had studied in detail on the various aspects of the Bengal silk industry during 1757 – 1833, but in this book, the author had not referred to any special position and features of silk industry of Malda.¹⁵ ‘Sericulture in West Bengal - A Geographical Analysis’ is a significant research on sericulture in Bengal. This book is written by Saswati Mukherjee. She reflected on the favorable condition for the development of silk cultivation than on industry and trade.¹⁶ In the book ‘Silk Industry of Malda and Murshidabad from 1660 to 1833’, author S. C. Guha discussed on the silk industry, but not particularly focused on the colonial economic policy. Although, this is the most valuable book to know about sericulture sector.¹⁷

Bulletins and in different Bengali and English Journals and Periodicals regarding sericulture, collected from various educational Institutions, there is not sufficient analytical discussion and impact on the economy of the district. Many renowned historians and economists like S. N. Chowdhury,¹⁸ H. G. Hanumappa,¹⁹ M. Madan Mohon Rao,²⁰ H. V. Shivappa,²¹ Giovanni Federico,²² Mohammad Ashraf Khan,²³

¹⁵ Sailendra Kumar Bag, *The Changing Fortunes of the Bengal Silk Industry 1757 – 1833*, Calcutta: Manasi Press, 1989.

¹⁶ Saswati Mukherjee, *Sericulture in West Bengal A Geographical Analysis*, Calcutta: Bhattacharyya and Bross, 1992.

¹⁷ S. C. Guha, *Silk Industry of Malda and Murshidabad from 1660 – 1833*, Siliguri: N. L. Publishers, 2003.

¹⁸ S. N. Chowdhury, *The Silkworms and its Culture*, Mysore: Print. And Pub. House, 1967.

¹⁹ H. G. Hanumappa, *Sericulture for Rural Development*, Bombay: Himalaya Publications, 1985.

²⁰ M. Madan Mohon Rao, *Comprehensive Sericulture Manual*, Hyderabad: B. S. Publications, 1999.

T. V. Sathe,²⁴ P. K. Mohanty,²⁵ and others mostly concentrated on sericulture from different concerns, particularly focusing on the scientific process for cultivation, but laid minimum focus on silk related large industry and trade. These authors do not inform us about the importance of comparative discussion on sericulture.

The aim of this research is to focus on the combined history of the silk industry in Bengal in general, and Malda in particular. Malda plays a significant role in the production of best qualities and large quantities raw silk in Bengal besides making different kinds silk fabrics. The objective of this research is to study the nature of the silk cultivation and the different aspects of production-organization; to examine the silk industry related internal and external trade with also changing condition of both the Native and European silk Merchants analysis and the contribution of the women in silk industry; to observe the economical effectiveness of silk industry for the Malda District, and finally to question the changing profile of the silk industry – from prosperity to misery.

²¹ H. V. Shivappa, *Indian Silk Industry*, Varanasi: Ganga Kaberi Publishing House, 2001.

²² Giovanni Federico, *An Economic History of Silk Industry 1830 - 1930*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

²³ Mohammad Ashraf Khan, Madan Mohon Bhat, Tribhuwan Singh, *Silkworm Crop Protection – Concepts and Approaches*, Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 2011.

²⁴ T. V. Sathe, A. D. Jadhav, *Sericulture and Pest Management*, New Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 2012.

²⁵ P. K. Mohanty, *Tropical Tasar Culture in India*, New Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 2013.

This research aims to fill up the gap through a detailed investigation and analysis of the primary and secondary sources relating to sericulture of Malda district to show the real condition on ‘The Silk Industry and Silk Trade in Malda: 1770 – 1833’.

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Introduction deals with the statement of the main theme. The introduction focuses on time frame: 1770 – 1833. The famine of 1770 occurred in Bengal resulting in limitless financial loss for the Bengal's economy. The mulberry planters, cocoon – growers, silk winders, weavers all fell into an insecure economic life. The colonial government felt this condition and took many ways for their own profit. The English East India Company continued to encourage the production of raw silk. Due to the motives of increase in profit, silk filature factory was established at English Bazar in 1770.²⁶

The Commercial Residency House was also founded in the year 1770.²⁷ Thomas Henschman was the first Commercial Resident of the Commercial House at English Bazar.²⁸ Mr. Henschman is still remembered and his statue is seen in the present time on a Pillar within Malda Court Compound. The Commercial Residency House is at present the official residence of the Collector.²⁹

Thus the year 1770 is very important for the Malda District from the perspective of the Company's motives and the Company wanted more profit through the use of European filature method at English Bazar in Malda.

²⁶ Saswati Mukherje, p. 99.

²⁷ G. E. Lambourn, p.70.

²⁸ W. W. Hunter, p. 95.

²⁹ Ibid.

1833 was the significant year for the silk trade, because the English East India Company wind up their silk business in Bengal by the Charter Act of 1833.³⁰ Throughout the entire period, the English Company maintained closed connection with the Bengal silk industry. 1770 – 1833 was a very crucial phase in silk industry and silk trade for Malda, because Malda lost her previous highly prestigious reputation during this period.

The first Chapter of this thesis is divided into two parts: first, studies the method of mulberry cultivation and cocoon production, and the impact of the calamities such as flood, drought, hot wind etc., over which human beings had no control at all. This part also traces the condition of soil, air, climate as affecting the growth of mulberry – the only food of the small caterpillars consequently on their constitution and finally on the cocoons they produced. In this context, the habits and prejudices of the rearers as affecting the method of rearing the most delicate silkworms are also discussed.

In Malda, silk was harvested three times in every year. The local name of the harvest was bund. The bunds named after the three months in which those were ripped. There were three bunds – (1) November bund, (2) March bund, and (3) July Bund. The

³⁰ H. R. Ghosal, *Economic Transition in the Bengal Presidency*, Calcutta : Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1996, p. 51.

November bund was the chief bund.³¹ The silkworms were of different varieties, such as (1) Nisteri, (2) Chota, or Deshi, (3) Bara palu, (4) China palu, and (5) Bula palu: all multivoltine varieties.³² From the beginning of silk cultivation to formation of cocoons of the silk, cultivators took special care.

The second part of the first Chapter studies the changes in the organization of silk production. It discusses the new condition of silk *ryots* and *cattanees* (reeler) and how they served the Company in post Plassey period. The role of the intermediaries, such as, *banyan*, *gomasthas* and *pykars* in the production-organization are also discussed. They played different role in this organizational sector. Banyan played an important role in the silk business. The *gomasthas* enjoyed the power and got money from the silk business.³³

The second Chapter of this study is on the silk trade of Malda: both internal and external. In internal trade, silk piece goods were exported to different places in India, like as Agra, Ahemadabad, Nagpore etc.,³⁴ and maintained regular commercial relation for external market with different countries of Europe, such as England, Russia etc.³⁵ Before 1757, both the trade was generated by native merchants, but after 1757, the English East India Company became the main regulator of the silk trade. The

³¹ G. E. Lambourn, p. 67.

³² G. E. Lambourn, pp. 66 – 67.

³³ Letter written by H.W. Drog, Resident at Cossimbazar to John Lumsden, President and Member of the Board of Trade, Fort William, dated 30 March 1809, Proceedings , Board of Trade (henceforth BOT), Commercial, 12 May 1809, Volume 232, West Bengal State Archives (henceforth WBSA), Calcutta.

³⁴ G. E. Lambourn, p. 66.

³⁵ S. K. Bag, p. 79.

Company's monopoly in silk trade and commerce was applicable upto the Charter Act of 1833. The Company was removed from silk business in Bengal province due to the Commercial provision of this Act.

The third Chapter is on the proper role of women in the sericulture sector. It focuses on female contribution and their active engagement for the development of sericulture. Sericulture has been treated as cottage based economic activity, so participation ratio of women in silk industry was very high. The work of rearing of cocoons was mainly covered by women.³⁶

The fourth Chapter of this study deals with the economic features of the silk industry of Malda as an important side under regional history. Mainly in pre-colonial period, most of the agricultural cultivators depended on silk related economic source. The impact of industrialization on silk industry is also discussed in this Chapter. After the Industrial Revolution of England, the Company's policy was changed due to industrial demand. As result, economic significance of silk industry of Malda was under a very miserable condition.

The 18th Century debate on the decline of the Mughal State and changing condition of the Silk Economy of Malda, a region under Bengal Province: A Historical Explanation from Mughal to British Raj

³⁶ Letter written by Zamindars, Pykars and silk Merchants of Bengal to William Barendish Bentinck, Governor General in Council, Fort William 24 November 1834, enclosed in letter from Secretary to Government in General in General Department, dated 1 December, Letter No.21, Petitioners also send true copy to H. J. Princep, Secretary to Government, Proceedings, BOT, Commercial, Proceeding No. 45, Vol. 542, 11 December 1834, WBSA, Calcutta.

The 18th century was a transitional and debatable phase of Indian history. The importance of the different types of transitions which occurred in the eighteenth century, led to differing interpretations of almost every issue involved. The period in question is the time when the Mughal rulers lost their powers and the British took over the administrative power. The first transition happened in the first half of the century from the Mughal political economy to regional political orders. The second was the transition in the period following the battles of Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1764) in the polity, society and economy as the British East India Company steered its way to a position of political prominence in North India. Both these phases have been extensively studied by historians, who debate not only the nature of change in the eighteenth century but also its implication for the establishment of early colonial rule in India.³⁷ The 18th century debate stands on the 'Dark ages versus economic prosperity' and 'Continuity versus change'.

The early historians of Mughal India viewed the events of the eighteenth century as being integral to political developments in the Mughal Empire. Since the 'big event' of the century was the political collapse of the Empire, it was only logical that the historiography of the eighteenth century was linked to the Imperial decline. The early historiography mainly focused on the declined of the administrative and religious policies of individual rulers and their nobles.³⁸

The great historians of the early twentieth century like Sir Jadunath Sarkar claimed that the Maratha, Jat and Sikh resistance was evidence of a strong Hindu opposition against Aurangzeb's religiously bigot policies and was the reason for the ultimate collapse of the

³⁷ Seema Alavi (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century in India – Debates in Indian History and Society*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010, p.1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.3.

Mughal Empire.³⁹ Nationalist scholars further argue that Hindu rulers such as the Marathas should have been the legitimate successors of Mughals.

Colonialists, on the other hand, believed that the British East India Company of Occidental origin with its rule of law, governance model and the ‘gift of civilization’ were the legitimate heir to the decadent Muslims. They wanted to civilize the barbaric, Oriental despots of East. The great colonialist thinker James Mill mentioned the 18th century as a ‘dark’ century which was rescued by the establishment of colonial ruler.

The Aligarh School of Marxist historians emphasized on the state formation pattern and very impressive role of bankers, merchants and elites who held lands in forming pre colonial and colonial states. These historians took economy as the base with politics, society and culture as the super structure. Satish Chandra specially focused on the *jagirdari* as well as *mansabdari* crisis under Mughal India. He also talks on *Jama* and *Hasil*, where the former is the estimated revenue, later is the actual revenue. He argued that the Mughal rulers could not collect revenue on regular basis through their state machineries. He further stated that the *jagirdari* crisis with distinct economic undertones finally undid the Mughal stability.⁴⁰ Irfan Habib argues for an agrarian crisis due to the decline of the Mughal Empire. He mentioned that the high rate of land revenue demanded by Delhi caused large scale rural exploitation, leading to peasant migration and rebellion. This created an agrarian crisis that resulted in the weakening of the

³⁹ Seema Alavi (ed.), Op.Cit., pp. 3 – 4.

⁴⁰ Satish Chandra, ‘Review of the Crisis of the Jagirdari System’ in *Medieval India: Society, the Jagirdari Crisis, and the Village*, Delhi: Macmillan, 1982, pp. 61 – 75.

Empire's political edifice.⁴¹ Atahar M. Ali accepted Habib's model of a fiscally centralized state, but attributed its decline not so much to the high land revenue demand but rather to the shortage of jagirs. The deficit was created because of the political expansion of the Empire into less fertile lands, especially in the Deccan. This increased the number of nobles without a corresponding augmentation in jagir lands. The shortage of jagirs generated an administrative problem, which, in its turn, fuelled the economic crisis.⁴²

The traditional views have been challenged by the Cambridge School that see the arrival of colonialism as a long drawn historical process. C. A. Bayly initiated the 'revisionist' approach to the analysis of Mughal polity, he emphasized that the key role of Mughal rule had been territorial expansion and centralization. His richly textured social history, especially *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, suggests that regional political crystallization was a consequence of three important developments. First, the emergence and developments of a new class of intermediaries. Second, the gentrification process, which brought together a class of scribes, accountants, and other Mughal service groups that served the new powers locally and sank their feet deep into society, investing in the small towns i.e. *qasbahs*. Finally, he stressed on the practice of military fiscalism, which meant the maintenance of large armies and their deployment in revenue collection.

⁴¹ Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556 – 1707*, Delhi: Asia Publishing House. 1963.

⁴² Atahar M. Ali, *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*, Aligarh : Dept. of History, AMU, 1966.

The emphasis in Bayly's work is on the rise of intermediaries, complete with the trappings of royal power, drawing on Mughal military and fiscal institutions, and their emergence as new power centres.⁴³ These revenue collecting intermediaries, who derived their power from a variety of portfolios and who disappeared in the face of the British Company onslaught later in the decade, are categorized by C. A. Bayly and Sanjay Subrahmanyam as 'portfolio capitalists'. Sanjay Subrahmanyam has suggested a global approach by speculating the increased connectivity of the local and the supra local, through travel, commerce, conflict and intellectual as well as cultural exchanges resulting in a critical and widespread feature of early modernity. He suggested the term 'portfolio capitalist' for the groups that were simultaneously involved in both commerce and politics like traders, bankers and merchants.⁴⁴

We can say that change and continuity both are present in the eighteenth century through the unique nature of economy, polity and society. The debates on continuity versus change of the 18th century becomes more impressive when started of the British Raj and its initial impact on the inland political and commercial system. The historical fact of 1757 marked a decisive break with pro colonial past, or whether, as the Revisionists have argued, the basis for colonialism was already present in India and these elements were simply initiated by colonialism. Continuity and change in the field of polity, economy and culture is also debatable. The art and architecture has changed their routes, but patron – client relationship remained same. The Mughal rulers enjoyed their power as such previous times, but the main political power was controlled by the colonial

⁴³ C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the age of British Expansion 1770 – 1870*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1983.

⁴⁴ Sanjay Subrahmanaym, 'Portfolio Capitalist and the Political Economy of Early Modern India', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 25, No.4. 1988, pp. 401 – 24.

rulers. Besides, the economic system was then followed in the regional areas without any direct control from the Mughal throne of Delhi.

The inferior situation of the Mughal polity and economy in the eighteenth century has often been described by scholars as the 'Dark Age'. But, the idea of 'prosperity' stands on the emergence of the colonial commercial network, which connected regional economy of India with the entire European trading economy.

So, we can say that the eighteenth century cannot be seen as a period of total decline, be it politically, and especially economically. It was an eventful period and not just a gap between the two Empires or a dark period before the gift of civilization by the Occidentals. It was a period marked by change as new regional polities emerged as well as indigenous economic and cultural elements were absorbed by the English Company Raj. As per concern of economic historiography, the eighteenth century debates are very close to the silk industry and silk trade of Malda under Bengal region during the colonial period. The English East India Company got lots of privileges due to Farrukhsiyar's Farman in 1717.⁴⁵ The victory at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 led the English power gain a complete commercial benefit.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Om Prakash, 'Trade and Politics in Eighteenth century Bengal' in the Seema Alavi (ed.) book, *The Eighteenth Century in India – Debates in Indian History and Society*, New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 143 – 44.

⁴⁶ Seema Alavi (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century in India – Debates in Indian History and Society*, New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 22.

At the initial stage, the English Company depended on Bengal for food items such as rice, sugar, and oil as well as raw materials such as cotton and indigo in entire India.⁴⁷ Gradually, they decided to fully engage into the textiles industry like as Gujarat silk and Dhaka muslins.⁴⁸ In Bengal, silk and muslin has been carried on outstanding features since the pre colonial period.⁴⁹

In this respect, Malda has been major centre for silk production with also silk trade since the Hindu dynasty at Gaur.⁵⁰ During the Muslim period in India, the Empress Nurjahan and other rulers were the heartiest patronizers of the silk fabrics.⁵¹ The traditional silk industry of Malda faced various challenges by English Company in the eighteenth century.

The silk industry and silk trade of Malda had changed to bound the route by the economic fragmentation and highly colonial pressure in the eighteenth century.⁵² The eighteenth century was a transitional phase for the sericultural industry of Malda . The English East India Company put on special attention on Malda's silk trade in the

⁴⁷ Om Prakash, Op. Cit., p.141.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ A. F. M. Abdul Ali, *The Silk Industry in Bengal : In the Days of John Company*, Poona : IHRC, 7th Session, January 12, 1925, p.1.

⁵⁰ G. E. Lambourn, *Bengal District Gazetteers Malda*, Calcutta : The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1918, pp. 65 – 66.

⁵¹ S. C. Guha, Op. Cit., pp.141 – 42.

⁵² David Clingingsmith and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *India's Deindustrialization in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Harvard: Harvard University, August 2005, p.1.

second half of the eighteenth century and had changed their trading policy.⁵³ They rejected the traditional method and started European system in Malda⁵⁴ and other parts of India for huge production of raw silk.⁵⁵

As a result, lots of indigenous mulberry cultivators, weavers, spinners, native silk merchants fell into the dilemma, which was created by the colonial rulers.⁵⁶ In this research, I offer a new interpretation on the changing condition of silk industry and silk trade of Malda since the post Plassey and post Dewani times. From this period, the English East India Company took the prominent position among the various competitors in the silk trade and gained the highest profit.

The colonial rulers represented themselves as ‘Lord’, whereas native people were treated as ‘Servants’ of the Lord. The study of the regional silk industry and trade of Malda, provide the different burning ‘inhuman’ and ‘poor economics’ related examples in this region during the colonial period.

⁵³ S. C. Guha, Op. Cit., pp.iii – iv.

⁵⁴ Saswati Mukherjee, *Sericulture in West Bengal: A Geographical Analysis*, Calcutta: Bhattacharyya and Bros, 1992,p.99.

⁵⁵ Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, Vol .I, London : Black, Parry and Kingsbury (Booksellers to the East India Company), 1807.

⁵⁶ Prasannan Parthasarathi, ‘Merchants and the Rise of Colonialism’, in the Seema Alavi (ed.) book, *The Eighteenth Century in India – Debates in Indian History and Society*, New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 212.

Based on the above discussion, I can say that the colonial hegemony disturbed the economic life of the entire population, who were fully depended on every stage of silk cultivation and trade. The present research basically emphasizes on the different sides of the silk industry and silk trade of Malda from 1770 to 1833. On completion of the analysis from various corners, we will observe the pessimistic impact of colonial rule on sericulture. The real fact is that the silk industry and silk trade of Malda disoriented the previous glory and fell under stagnant condition during the period under observation.