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Chapter 1 : Landscape Design and Planning at the Swa Group (Process Architecture, NO) (è±†ç“£)

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It was an attempt to trace back the situation of Dhurumtollah within the province of huge marshy land of Colimba-Talpukur, populated with very different varieties of flora and fauna, and people of different cultural orientation and faith. The aboriginal Dhurumtollah continued to exist till the old city of Calcutta stretched across Govindpore and Chowringhee villages amidst forest of sundari trees. If so, how far realistically we can think of such construction in a forlorn marshland? An answer to this should conceivably help to resolve at least one of the two old theories. Calcutta has had a relatively short history of communal living but a long torturous memory of bloody relationship between Hindus and Muslims because of sheer religious predisposition politically instigated time and again. In spite of its many ugly episodes, Calcutta has been regarded a glorious seat of divine cultural heritage of Hindu-Muslim creative alliance in the form of Hindustani music, for instance. Dhurumtollah Street has too many religious institutions of diverse faiths standing peacefully side by side. We will see in course of our ongoing discussions that this street was a playground for experimenting with liberal principles in social, economic, educational, and spiritual orders as well. The view set a blessed disposition, which quickly disappears journeying further into the crowded thoroughfare passing by bazars and commercial houses, public and private institutions and residences of European, Eurasian and native families. There have been also a number of religious houses in close proximity of each other attended by Islamic, Christian and Hindu devotees. The ground of mosque and its neighboring land were owned by a zealous Musalman, Zaffir, who happened to be a Zamadar employed under Warren Hastings. Long had proposed and many accepted him unquestioningly. Rangalal Bandyopadhyay was one of them. Old Picture Postcard Courtesy: During its existence the Musalman population in Calcutta had never been so high to let us imagine tens of thousands Musalman devotees at Karbala, as Long says. The Census reports that the Musalman population In Calcutta grew from in to in Lastly, the scope of general acceptance of an Islamic shrine by other religious sects, Hindus in particular, sounds unrealistic in the historical context of socio-cultural relationships primarily based on religious practices, rites and ceremonies. The extract from East India Chronicle published in shows a short and sharp picture of the conflicting situation, and the social and political attitude to buy quick solution rather than any permanent gain. During the Government of Ally Verdi Khan, the Hidoos were publicly prohibited from celebrating their festival, whenever it happened to interfere with that of the Mahomedans. Thus the presence of the Ancient Mosque and its association with the naming of Dhurumtollah Street may remain a mere myth until researchers bring to light sufficient supportive evidence. He spent nearly his entire working life studying Indo-Aryan languages, editing and translating manuscripts. Haraprasad became famous for discovering the Charyapada, the earliest known examples of Bengali literature. Pre-modern Bengali Haraprasad suggested that the imagery, symbolism and worship of Dharmaraj bore very close resemblance to Buddhist notions of the sacred. He dedicated his entire career to pursue his ideas that resulted in numerous publications. It was Kshitish Prasad Chattopadhyay who, based on his anthropological field studies, first questioned his hypothesis in The antiquity of Dharmaraj, he believed, predated the Vedas, and the cult in its most primitive form was brought in by the Austric immigrants. This view got a support from grammarian Suniti Kumar Chatterji who independently proposed the Austric origin of Dharmaraj based on philological evidence. The most cautious review of Haraprasad was brought out in by Shashibhusan Dasgupta in his book, Obscure Religious Cults. Having critically examined archival resources he comes to a conclusion that proves to be most significant for our discussion. Asutosh Bhattachayya belongs to both the camps. This is a miniature of the chaitya. Below these is a stone with eruptions representing small-pox. He found there three regular shaped stones forming one object, the middle one being smaller than the other two. They are decked with brass or silver nail-heads fastened on the stones with wax. The stone-images of Dharmathakur, as exists

in Jaunbazar Temple, are still being worshipped in West Bengal. Buddhism, even in its Tantric form, was pushed aside and was gradually assimilated into the cognate religious systems among Hindus and the Muslims, and the Dharma cult is the outcome of such a popular assimilation. Hindus, like Dharmites themselves, regard Dharmathakur either as a form of Vishnu or of Shiva. They do not have anything to oppose until Dharmathakur is claimed to be the supreme deity – the creator of Hindu Trinity. Census, J, A temple has been built there only toward the end of the 19th century, in BS at premise no. As before Gajan is being held every year two days before Chaitra Sankranti – an occasion of great festivity for the locals – matter Hindus and Muslims. In a unique celebration of Buddha Purnima. Anandabazar The findings of Haraprasad should have been well-known in the academic world of his time and thereafter. Yet the existence of Jaunbazar Thakurbari is sadly overlooked by all but a few. Pranotosh Ghatak, a 20th century journalist, is one of them. He narrates the story of Dhurumtollah Street justly pointing to the hallowed seat of Dharmathakur on Jaunbazar Street as the origin of the name of Dhurumtollah Street. Pranotosh provides whereabouts of the few other Dharma Thakurbaris around Dhurumtollah. Until very lately, we were unsure about the exact address of the Jaunbazar Street Thakurbari that Haraprasad had visited and referred to as premise no. Temple Foundation Stone Another directory, namely, the Bengal Directory for shows it at premise no. While many of the idols Haraprasad described still show up, some seemingly go missing or misplaced. Dharmaraj Sila with metallic Eyes. Author The most important among the available ones is the Dharmaraj sila – with two metallic eyes set on the uncut primeval stone placed above three separate stone tablets bearing symbols of Kurmo avatar, matsya aavatar and a pada-padma of exquisite minimalistic style of ancient Indian art. Besides the idol of Dharmaraj with two metallic eyes fitted on black granite in primeval form, there are idols of kurmo avatar and matsya? This is not a hasty conclusion but actually conceived long back by Haraprasad, Shashibhushan redefined it, and since then generally accepted and retained by informed people. How and when this non-Aryan religious sect, outwardly Buddhist, propagated? Who inspired this faith in this part of the country? The subject sure enough goes far beyond the colonial Calcutta but not unrelated to the topics we discuss in puronokolkata. The issues need handling with sophistication and perhaps a different platform. However, I intend to address the questions summarily to share with you my perceptions and also to encourage researchers to undertake intensive studies to reveal an obscure ethnic cultural link with ancient Calcutta. Sadhus from the riverside go to Dharmatala to pay homage, take part in Gajan and Mela organized by the fishermen under the patronage of Rani Rashmoni. The Dom-pandits played the role of ministers in performing rites and ceremonies of Dharma-Thakur. Manikram completes his work in circa 4th Jayistha Saka era. The recency of Dharmamangal kavyas and the era of Rani Rashmoni dispute the theory that Dharma-cult was introduced in Calcutta by the Jelepara fishing community. Moreover, the primeval shalgram of Dharma-Thakur found in Jaunbazar-Dhurumtollah Sitala-temple differs radically from the depictions of Dharmamangal kavya, being more akin to the pseudo-Buddhist notion of Nath-cult. The most prominent among the Nath-siddhas are Minanath or Matsyendranath, Goraksanath, Jalandhari and Chauranginath – all included in the list of the Buddhist Siddhacaryas. Chauranginath, or Chaurangi Swami, is regarded as one of the apostles of Bengal. Courtesy of the Freer Sackler Gallery. He is one of the nine nathgurus and according to some traditions a direct disciple of Minanath. We know little of Chauringhi but some unverified stories like the ones retold by Harisadhan in his book. Legend has it that the sacred granite bearing the face of Kali the Goddess was discovered by Chaurangi swami or his disciple Jangalgiri, and thereafter the jungle covering the area between Lal Dighi and Southern end of Govindpore was named Chowringhee after his name. Though we get this from flimsy source, it may be worth exploring since, other than hearsay, there is no clue as yet how and where from the vigraha of Kali was brought into the Kalighat temple. We learnt from Kalikshetradipika that it was found in the wilds by a wandering sanyasi: Nakuleswar discovered and reestablished in Kalighat by one Tarachand Sikh; Jangaleswar Mahadeva, said to be relocated somewhere in Bhowanipore Kansaripara by Jangalgiri – a disciple of Chauranginath; Nangareswar Mahadev exists near Burrabazar Pan-posta; Chouringiswara Mahadeva is said to have been unearthed while the Asiatic Society building was being

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constructed and removed afterwards to some unknown destination. AK Ray is right so far as there is no hard evidence that Chauranga Swami ever came here. But there is no evidence either that he never did, especially being an acknowledged apostle of Bengal. Map of Calcutta Before the English. We know from Dinesh Sen that one of the Bengal apostles is Chaurangi swami. He and his disciples are known as Chaurangis in the sense that their religious life was to stand the fourfold test of ascetics, viz. No wonder Chaurangi swami and his disciples find the jungle adjacent to river Ganges an ideal retreat for them, and the jungle becomes then known by the name of Chaurangis. The jungle Chaurangi had been in existence long before the English occupation. The earliest map of Calcutta made in the 16th Century shows its topography covering the entire region between the Creek and Kalighat opposite Govindpore. It was for the first time, the map Mark Wood prepared in charted the chunk of land separated from Chowringhee as Colinga. Colinga includes two subareas: Talpooker and Jala Colinga where Jaunbazar-Dhurrumtollah belongs to. It is the site of Dharma-Thakur Temple very much within the domain of Chaurangi. Here the Nath devotees of Dharma put their obscure religion into practice and made it adored by people of all sects. In course of time Dharmatala turns into a holy place for all, and a landmark of Calcutta then and now. Indian Gods Sages And Cities. Calcutta, Old and New: A Historical and Descriptive Handbook to the City. Academic Genealogies of a Bengali Folk Deity. Town and Suburbs; Pt. Bengal Past And Present Vol. History of Bengali language and literature. Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal. Remnants of Buddhism in Bengal. Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal December. Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus.

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Chapter 2 : People Â« puronokolkata

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Presumably, these would disappear. The troops were but human. A pig or a towl might easily be concealed. A little dishonesty is creditable in a militia-man. There was no rebellion in St. Elizabeth, but one fancies that many pigs and poultry died suddenly and were never seen again. It is also very con- soling to read of how many persons were shot for fighting for their freedom. The death list was quite a satisfactory one, but the casualties did not mainly occur in the field. They were the result of summary executions. The rebels were either executed when captured, or were tried before a properly prejudiced tribunal and shortly despatched out of this world. They were given the freedom of heaven. They were too dangerous for Jamaica. UTr who had put it into the minds of the slaves that the King had willed and commanded that slavery should cease in Jamaica at the end of ? The planters knew, the newspapers knew, everybody interested in the maintenance of slavery knew. It was the English missionaries, and especially thle Baptist missionaries, a most dangerous and blood- thirsty body of persons, men with no regard for morality, morality being the maintaining of the right of some men to hold numbers of their fellow-creatures perpetually in bondage. Three missionaries were actually arrested and marched off to gaol; the Rev. Williarn Knibb was chief among them. The gentlemen on the northside were quite persuaded that an insur- rection, which did not spread beyond the confines of a single parish, and which was quickly suD- pressed, must have been planned and put into exe- cution by educated Englishmen whose connection with the Baptist Church was a sufficient proof of high military gifts, diabolical treachery, and a cray- ing for bloodshed. The time for that sort of thing was gone. And though the newspapers of the period implor- ed that only men with a license should be per- mitted to preach anywhere in the island--whicil would have meant, and was intended to mean, that the religious instruction of the slaves should cease forthwith--such strong decisive measures were not taken. They let the arrested missionaries go free after a while: And they stopped executing rebels, for the very excellent reason that, while slavery still exist- ed, a live slave was of value, while a dead slave- he might have a soul, though that was extremely doubtful--was of no value to anyone on earth or any- where else. And so ended the last slave rebellion in Jamaica. IN these days one thinks of the Maroons as having Been a race of doughty warriors, not unlike the ancient Scotch Highlanders, secure in their mountain fastnesses, defiant of the lowland enemy, periodically making raids upon the estates in the valleys below, perpetually a cause of terror to the Government and to the! English inhabitants of Jamaica. T, some extent they were all this: The nucleus of that body of people was formed in the first instance by Negroes who had been slaves to the Spanish mas- ters of Jamaica. When the Spaniards had perforce to learc the island and flee to Cuba they gave free- dom to their slaves; and as the Spaniards hoped to return to Jamaica, these liberated slaves remained as the representatives of the Spanish owners of the island with the intention of harassing the English. In a word, these Spanish Negroes were to continue the war against the invaders, and their immediate reward was their liberty. To give the Maroons their due, they gladly fulfilled their obligations. Between them and their Spanish masters there had been a good deal of real friendship. Up into the mountains, therefore, which they knew very well, went the black men who regard- ed th. The English were the enemy. And war must be made upon an enemy. The Maroons on their part slaughtered every white man or woman that ven- tured to settle at any distance from the coast; it is said that they butchered every white person who came within striking distance of them, without dis- tinction of age or sex. Now and then they made treatie: A Jamaican his- torian states that, within half a century after the capture of the colony by the English forces, upwards of forty-four Acts were passed by the House of As- sembly against the Maroons, and nearly a quarter of a million sterling expended on efforts for their sup- pression. Slaves front the English plantations, imported from Africa, would often run away and join the Maroons. Thus the ranks of the latter grew in numbers. Then in the war-horn was sounded and the Maroons who by one means and another had

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managed to procure guns, ammunition and cutlasses broke into a big war and swept down upon the English settlements. The war dragged on for several years; the English planters and their subordinates must have felt that they were conducting a vast campaign against a terrible enemy. The Maroons probably rejoiced in the belief that they were setting all England at defiance, though: Land was granted to them in different parts of the country, notably in St. SUT there was to be no nonsense about the treaty between the Maroons and the English in The thing was to be done in good form and style, in proper language, with a flourish and a bow. The Maroons leader was one Captain Cudjoe, whose name is still remembered and mentioned in Jamaica. The head of the Island was Governor Trelawny. Russell; and in this wise the Articles of Pacification began: But he has rendered the sense of the proverb admirably. One likes to read the humble and holy observations of early eighteenth century slave-owners on the mind of God, and on the desires of good men. There is, too, in the Museum of the Institute of Jamaica an old iron gibbet containing the knees of a female, and Edward Long has suggested to us that it was considered agreeable to God. Granted that persons thus treated were probably regarded as desperate criminals, that leaders of an insurrection, obeah-men or women who had poisoned many persons on an estate, and others of that kind, would be starved or burned to death. Still, there were more humane forms of execution available, and the point is that those who did the starving and the burning seemed to have believed that they were doing something for the protection of religion, something pleasing to the mind of the Almighty, and decidedly a thing which all good men would desire. They regarded themselves as the best of men and they were certain they knew the mind of God. HOW did these Maroons appear to others, and what was their method of fighting? They are described as bold in appearance, swift and independent in movement, athletic in their habits. Bryan Edwards almost denies it. Others deny it also; most probably when the Maroons were at peace, and established on the land after the treaty of , which they observed until , they were spoken of in private rather contemptuously by the owners of estates and other representatives of the dominant classes of the country. When a few Maroons were around, it is probable that they were courteously treated. It was a case of "before Dawg, it is Mr. Dawg, but behind Dawg it is only Dawg," and sometimes common dawg at that. There must have been some cruel wretches amongst them, but that they were as a tribe guilty of an abnormal indulgence in cruelty amongst themselves during times of peace there is no evidence. On the other hand it is unquestionable that they were ruthless and bloody fighters. Bryan Edwards says so; he also affirmed that the Maroons had no nice sense of smell, that he himself had seen them eat some rotten beef which had been originally salted in Ireland--it really does not seem to matter where the beef was salted--that this beef was preferred because it was putrid, and that he had seen Maroons drink rum in preference to some He did not think much of their fighting. He asserted that they used to lurk in the woods, and ambush or rush at an unsuspecting enemy. And once, when the Maroons were helping the English to 10 , no Maroon was to come out when the battle between the soldiers and the rebels was proceeding. Edwards affirms that the commander of the English troops for some time suspected that the Maroons themselves were his assailants; it was discovered, however, that, "immediately on the attack, the whole body of them had thrown themselves flat on the ground, and continued in that position until the rebels retreated, without firing or receiving a shot. Or was it only a plan to let the English bear the brunt of the battle? It was afterwards discovered that they had 19

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Chapter 4 : Planters' Punch

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