

History And Historians: Selected References To Kandhamal

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Abstract

Kandhamal is one of the 30 districts of Odisha, comprised of two sub-divisions and 12 blocks with populations of 7,00, 000 where males are 3,50,000 and females are 3,50,000. Two significant communities inhabit the district, Kandha and Panos, and Kandhas are more than 50% of the total population. The history of Kandhamal is very obscure and has not been adequately studied by historians. Only some historians have studied some aspects of Kandhamal's history. Kandhamal has existed since the 3rd century BCE before. Kandhamal has a glorious past, and it supports the growth of the socio-cultural life of Odisha in general and Kandhamal in particular. Limited research has been done on Kandhamal by historians. In this paper, an attempt has been made to highlight those scholars who have researched Kandhamal.

Keywords: History, Historians, References, Kandhamal, District

Introduction: The second Rock Edict of Emperor Ashok, Jaugada, clearly says that the Attabhika region should not be disturbed and annexed. This Attabhika region is the modern Kandhamal region of that period where tribal were/are living with self-respect and independently. They had their local chief for peaceful habitation. But in the subsequent time, this region was under Bhanja Rajas/Kings for an extended period known as Khinjalimandala, comprising modern parts like Baudh, Sonapur, Dasapalla, Ghumusar and Angul.¹ The Bhanjas of Khinjalimandala were a line of vassal kings to Bhauma Karas, whose power was extended from the Ganges in the north to the Mahendragiri in the south.² The Chateswar inscription of 1220AD stated that Vishnu, the Commander of Anangabhima Deva III(1211-1238), went on an expedition that resulted in the defeat of the Kalachuris. After that, Boudh Sambalpur and Sonapur

came under the Ganga rule. From the decline of the Somavamsis to the rise of the Ganga, the history of Boudh and Kandhamal is ambiguous. There is a lack of information to explain clearly the relationship between the Muslims and Boudh-Kandhamal. There was a friendly relationship between Boudh and the Maratha Government in 1800AD. In the subsequent period, the British annexed the Boudh and Kandhamal region until the Indian Independence of 1947. The Boudh-Kandhamal district was formed on 1 January 1948 and continued till the bifurcation of Boudh-Kandhamal into two districts on 1 January 1994 as Boudh and Kandhamal districts.

Main Context: Some scholars have comprehensively done research on Kandhamal. I have discussed below citing some of the results as follows:

Orissa District Gazetteers of Boudh-Kandhamal, compiled by Shri Nilamani Senapati and Shri Durga Charan Kuanr in 1983, was published in the government press at Cuttack. They have discussed various aspects of Boudh-Kandhamal as it is considered one of the primary sources of Boudh-Kandhamal district. They have examined the pre-historical age to modern Kandhamal, people of various castes, communities, and religions, and also comprehensively discussed the district's Kandhas and Panos. Authors have critically examined the cultivation of different crops at different times by giving particular reference to irrigation, industries, the banking sector, trade & commerce, Communications, Economics, Revenue Administration, Education, local self-government, medical and public health, and public life.³

Boudh-Kandhamals Gazetteers has been divided into fourteen chapters. The first chapter gives a general introduction to Boudh-Kandhamal, and the second chapter narrates the history of Boudh-Kandhamal. In the following chapter, the authors discuss population, density, rural population, urban population, sex ratio, scheduled tribe and scheduled caste, fairs and festivals, and their dress and ornaments. The authors have again narrated the land, cultivation, irrigation, and natural calamities faced by the people of Kandhamal. Though Kandhamal has no heavy industries, the authors have discussed small-scale cottage industries and crafts developed in the district. The Boudh-Kandhamal Gazetteer also speaks on the banking and finance of the community, along with imports and exports, as well as trade and commerce practiced by the people of Kandhamal. Kandhamal district is not well connected with other places through different communication systems, but only road communication is available with state roads and PWD roads. The authors have narrated revenue administration historically. Ex-Zamindary,

labor, bonded labor, and wage have been discussed. Various departments were/are working in the district, such as Public Health, Electricity, Irrigation, forest, industries, etc. Kandhamal has been divided into local and urban administrative bodies like NAC and Zila Parishad, Panchayat Samiti, and Gram Panchayat. Again, in this Gazetteer the authors have mentioned police administration in the district and judicial administration. The beginning of Western education is also mentioned in this work, as well as the factors reflected in the growth of education in the district. This work also discusses Medical and health services comprehensively by narrating the functions of hospitals and dispensaries. Lastly, some important places of Kandhamal have been highlighted, such as Balaskumpa, Baliguda, Bandhavgarh, Belgharand, and Daringbadi, which are historically and naturally crucial in the district.

Shri Sadananda Mallick wrote a poem, 'Kandhamal Kabya' in Odia language, published in 2003 at Banashri Sahitya O Sanskruti Parishad, Tumidibandh, where Shri Mallick narrated various aspects of Kandhamal in poetic forms. Shri Mallick discussed in poetic forms the geography of Kandhamal, peoples, villages, dress, ornament and food habits, turmeric cultivation, gods and goddesses, Kutia Kandha, dance and drama, music of Kandhas and Kandhamal, Tattoo, social life, Kandha language and Culture, Siva Temple of Jalespatta, Danda Nata & Patakhanda Puja.⁴

The Kandhas and Kandhamal-Studies in History and Culture, written by Shri Raghu Nath Rath, was published in 2010 at Amadeus Press, Bhubaneswar. Shri Rath was an administrative officer who was posted and spent many years in Kandhamal. He visited different places of Kandhamal, met Kandhas, and discussed various aspects of life of Kandhas. After accumulating information, he wrote this book where he comprehensively analyzed the origin and vocabulary of the Kandhas of Kandhamal, the Development of culture and Cultural change among the Kandhas where he discussed social change, political, cultural, and religious change that happened in the Kandhamal. Again, he narrated the Kandha crafts of Tumudibandha, where he debated woodwork, bamboo works skills and techniques, and materials from forest products like leaf plates and leaf cups from sal leaves. Shri Rath also discussed the education of Tribal Children in the District. Here, Shri Rath addressed the establishment of primary schools in different places of Kandhamal by the Colonial government. Christian missionaries also played an

essential role in the district's educational development. Missionaries also created awareness of education among the tribals. Author Shri Rath also described in that book that myths and legends are connected to the life of Kandhas of Kandhamal. Their Gods and Goddesses were worshipped throughout the years, clearly discussed by Shri Rath. It is observed that myths are connected with epic stories and folk tales, legends, rituals, gods and ghosts, supernatural beings, cultural heroes, and folk philosophy, also clearly visible in the day-to-day life of Kandhas. Shri Rath also describes the Kui Riddles, where he has quoted many riddles of the Kui language and their similarities in Odia and the English language. Horn dance is one of the most essential features of the Cultural life of Kandhas of Kandhamal. He has discussed the dress of dancers, dance form, Rhythm, and musical instruments like Changu, Mahuri, Dhola, and dala. Shri Rath also addressed that book on tribal art, where he narrated Kandha's art and crafts. The most crucial part of Shri Rath's work is his analysis of the pre-historic archaeology of the Kandhamal district, where he mentions the Mesolithic period, Neolithic period, and Chalcolithic period. Shri Rath discussed the Shakti Cult of Kandhamal, where he narrated the two deities named Pattakhanda and Baral Devi; both have Kandhamal district tribal origin. Shri Rath also addressed the source of the Bhanja dynasty and its Development by the Bhanja rulers.⁵

Tribal Society and Culture: Change and Continuity- A Study of Kandhamal District of Orissa written by Manmath Padhy and Prativamayee Mitra, published in 2010 by Omsri Saivani, Hyderabad. The authors have discussed various aspects of Kandhas of Kandhamal. They analyzed Kandha society, social customs, culture, and economy. The authors have addressed the history and legends behind the origin of Kandhas. The word "Kondh" has been discussed comprehensively, along with the advent of the Kandha tribe, social structure, and social systems like birth, marriage, and death rituals. The authors have again discussed some practices like female infanticide, Human sacrifice, and the change of social system with the entry of Christian missionaries to this region. Christian missionaries' role in establishing hospitals and dispensaries in different places of Kandhamal and establishing general schools and vocational

training schools are discussed critically. The social customs of Kandhas of Kandhamal are discussed through their habits of dress and ornaments being used in their daily life, Tattooing Kandha women in their face, food habits, drink like Mohua, date juice, and Palm juice being used by the Kandhas and as well as their recreation life with Dhangada Ghangidi dance, Dhap Dance, Dalkhai Dance, Ghumura Dance, Hunting Dance, Graha Dance, war Dance and music adopted by the Kandhas have been discussed with lucid and scientific way. Authors have pointed out the gods and goddesses worshipped by the Kandhas of Kandhamal. There they have mentioned Bura Penu and Tari Penu, Danzu Penu, Sandhi Penu, Loha Penu, Jugah Penu, Nadzu Penu, Jakeri Penu, Saru Penu, Jori Penu, Gossa Penu, Pidzu Penu, Sugu Penu, Munda Penuburbi Penu, Pitteti Penu, Pilamu Penu, and Gari Penu as well as they have discussed on various feasts and festivals like Chaita Parab, Kedu Jatra, Bali Jatra, Rani Parab and superstitions. Prof. Padhy and Dr.Mitra have discussed the Kandha economy, where they have analyzed various directions of the economic life of Kandhas. Agriculture is one of the most important occupations of Kandhas of the Kandhamal. Seasons of Agriculture, irrigation, cultivation methods, agricultural implementations, and production have been discussed. The authors also discuss trade and Commerce, the taxation system, and the economic exploitation of Kandhas.⁶

“Tribal Acceptance and Alien Construction- Medium of Christianity in Kandhamal District” was written by Dr. Sadananda Nayak and published in 2012 by the LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany. The book contains six chapters, including an introduction and a conclusion. In the introductory chapter, the author critically examines literary works on kandhamal done by other scholars, the aims and objective of the work, and methods of study. In the second chapter, the author nicely narrated the growth and development of Christianity in the Kandhamal District. Dr. Nayak has discussed the geographical location, distribution, and early history of Kandhamal. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to reveal the historicity of Kandhamal and its terminology. This Kandhamal district was a sub-division of the Boudh-Kandhamal district with three sub-divisions: Boudh, Balliguda, and Phulbani. Taking Balliguda and

Phulbani sub-divisions, the Kandhamal district has been formed as the Kandha population is a dominant community. The origin of Kandhas, their faith, and their belief have been discussed.

In the next chapter, Dr. Nayak elaborately discusses the social background before the entry of Christian missionaries into this district and also narrates their preaching and social reforms. In the 3rd chapter of this book, Dr. Nayak has discussed missionary activity. He has discussed the social life of Kandhas and Meriah's sacrifice and subsequent conversion to Christianity, the development of missionary centers in Kandhamal, health centers run by missionaries, and clinical services done by apostles to grow Christianity in the district. Dr. Nayak has discussed the impact of Christian missionaries and Christianity in this district. After conversion to Christianity, progressive ideas developed among the Christian people, and women's liberation started with equal opportunity shared between men and women. Abolition of human sacrifice and social evil eradicated. Christian practices like marriage, death rituals, and dress and food habits have been changed. Moreover, education was developed rapidly in the district.⁷

Some Aspects of Tribal Science & Technology, a book written by Dr. Chittaranjan Mishra and published by JEC Publication, Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh in 2023, where the author has vividly discussed various traditional skills and ideas being adopted by the Kandhas of Kandhamal for the production of foods and other articles. Here, author Dr. Mishra narrated the evolution of tribes and tribals in historical periods. He has discussed various definitions of tribes given by social scientists. After that, the author described the tribes of Odisha and Kandhamal. He has discussed different aspects of Kandha life like their village, House, family, clan, kinship, puberty, pregnancy and childbirth, name-giving ceremony, marriage with various systems, divorce, death ritual as well as ornaments, language, vegetables, cultivation, drinking, position of women and tattooing. In the same book, the author mentioned the tribal political system where the author has narrated on village Headman or Mutha Head, Muthas under Kandhamal sub-division, G. Udayagiri Taluk, Balliguda Taluk, Daringbadi maliah and Kutia Kandha Mutha. Dr. Mishra has discussed the economic life of Kandhas of Kandhamal by analyzing agriculture, collection of Forest products, cottage industry, cattle-herder type, and trade. Dr. Mishra has vividly discussed tribal agriscience and technology to emphasize the importance of tribal skills and knowledge in

producing food and goods. There, the author narrated about preserving seeds and preparing mahua wine. The author discussed the climate, flora, fruit tree, and ethno-medicine of Kandhas of Kandhamal. He mentioned the causes of disease, Mexico-religious therapy and biomedical therapy, sources of medicine, preparation, and treatment preservation. In tribal science and technology, the author mentioned the construction of their houses, house decorations, cow shed, pig stay, and goat stay. The author has discussed the above issues of Kandhas of Kandhama.⁸

Conclusion: The above discussions indicate that several historians have researched Kandhamal in various aspects of Kandhamal. So many works have been done by scholars on different parts of Kandhamal, but the above scholars have done a job exclusively on Kandhamal. Several articles and research papers have been published in other journals and periodicals, and books have been edited as book chapters on various issues of Kandhamal. This work is a small attempt to highlight works and scholars who have contributed academically to researching Kandhamal. More research is needed in all aspects of the Kandhamal district.

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