

'Voluntary' Relationships and Royal Gifts of *Pan* in Mughal Bengal*

This essay explores 'giving' and 'taking up' *pan* as an ambiguous and changing system of signs through which a ruler and his subjects could enact political relations in the somewhat public space of a South Asian court. (*Pan* are 'betel leaves', *Piper betel*, but the texts I will study suggest gifts of prepared 'rolls' of *pan*, containing ground areca nuts, catechu, a lime paste made from sea-shells, and perhaps spices as well.) This essay focuses on the Mughal period in Bengal, and on the first half of the eighteenth century,

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when governors (*nawabs*) of Bengal became practically independent of control from the Delhi court.

This essay is based upon four premises that apply equally to royal gifts of *pan*, to *khil'at*, or robes of honour, and to many other royal gifts of honour in the Mughal period.

The first premise is that despite the development of some bureaucratic systems to enable rule over a vast territory, courtly politics in the Mughal empire continued to be based upon personal relations to the emperor, and this 'patrimonial' dimension of the empire was repeated at lower levels of courtly politics within it.¹ The second is that to the extent that political relations in the Mughal polity were personal relations, they could be both represented by and constituted through royal gift-giving, because in general gifts from rulers 'embody every bit as much the persons as their relations'.² The third is that it is important to explore the rational, self-interested, 'calculative dimension' of gifts which so represented and constituted personal political relations;³ and that this 'calculative dimension' can be found in the two, potentially different perspectives of the donor and the recipient. Therefore, the public meaning of an act of gift-giving is subject to negotiation

and may remain ambiguous. The final premise is that to understand gift-giving in a particular context requires, as Stewart Gordon argues, a rhetorical analysis, first, of the changing relationship of the two participants, second, of the mediating artifact which they invest with meaning through the public encounter of giving and receiving, and third, of the audience for this encounter. ⁴

Royal gifts of *pan* were both like and unlike other Mughal royal gifts. Like many other gifts of honour in South Asia, royal gifts of *pan* participated in an asymmetrical symbolic process by which a ruler 'marked' the bodies of his subjects, thus both subordinating his subjects and honouring them in his polity. In some gifts of *pan*, however, there also was a special reciprocal gesture, 'taking up' *pan*, to indicate the acceptance of a particular command (or, possibly, of a new relation between subject and ruler). An expectation that 'taking up' *pan* was to be voluntary implied limits to the ruler's authority, through the possibility, however remote, that *pan* might not be 'taken up' and the command thereby might be declined. This essay examines both historical accounts and Bengali literary narratives to attempt to trace changing uses of royal gifts of *pan*. It

suggests trends in the Mughal period to give more emphasis to more finely graded, elaborate and expensive gifts of honour, and to impose new courtly ceremonies which expressed the Mughal empire's more absolute and bureaucratic authority. It will argue that the ceremony of giving and 'taking up' *pan* remained only marginally useful to the Mughals because, more than other gifting ceremonies, it signified personal choice on the part of the recipient. By attending closely to the politics of changing, ambiguous and contested meanings, this essay also shows where royal gifts of *pan* and the ceremony of 'taking up' *pan* were modified to express a more absolute authority, or were displaced towards peripheral, ephemeral or ambiguous relationships. It suggests a persistent thematic contrast between voluntarily 'taking up' *pan* in unofficial or improvised ceremonies, and the less conditional and sometimes coerced obeisance dramatized in official, imperial Mughal ceremonies.

Gifts of *Pan* as Royal Honours

In travelers' reports, histories, chronicles and literature from late medieval and early modern India there are references to royal ceremonies of giving *tambula*, that is, *pan*

leaves ('betel leaves') prepared with lime, shaved areca nuts ('betel nuts'), and spices.

Like gifts of robes of honour, gifts of *tambula* were used as signs of royal favour to constitute political relationships. Such gifts can be documented in South and Southeast Asia, and in both Muslim and Hindu courts.⁵

For example, gifts of *pan* and areca nuts concluded feasts arranged by Sultan Muhammad Tughluq for his nobles and for foreign visitors, and these gifts were received with expressions of homage.⁶ Ibn Battuta records the ceremony for this occasion:

It is their custom that the person to whom this [platter containing 'betel'] is brought out takes the platter in his hand, places it upon his shoulder and then does homage with his other hand touching the ground.⁷

Similarly, gifts of *pan* and areca nuts were part of the 'hospitality gifts' of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq when he arranged to supply food in kind and cash maintenance allowances to favoured foreign guests upon their arrival at his court. Ibn Battuta's

'hospitality gift' was fixed at 1,000 pounds of flour, 1,000 pounds of 'flesh-meat', and 1,000 'betel leaves', together with sugar, tubers and areca nuts.⁸ Hospitality gifts of *pan* and camphor also are described at the court of Vijayanagar,⁹ and in a variety of Mughal courtly settings.

Both in courts and in wealthy homes gifts of *tambula* also were customary to honour guests at their departure. A Sanskrit witticism states, 'Oh friend, there are a hundred-thousand good qualities of a *tambula*. It has, however, one great fault (*mahandoso*), viz. the sending away (of guests) after its bestowal.'¹⁰ At Ganjikota Jean Baptiste Tavernier received such a gift of from Mir Jumla, the 'Nawab' [*wazir*] of Golkonda, after showing Mir Jumla jewels which Tavernier hoped would be purchased by 'Abdullah Qutb Shah, the 'king' of Golkonda.¹¹ Peter Mundy, in India from 1628-1634, briefly mentioned gifts of *pan* to guests at parting, 'soe that when they send for Paane, it is a sign of dispeedinge, or that it is tyme to be gon'.¹² Nicolo Manucci (1653-1708) clearly described the etiquette of this practice:

It is an exceedingly common practice in India to offer *betel* leaf by way of politeness, chiefly among the great men, who, when anyone pays them a visit, offer *betel* at the time of leaving as a mark of good will, and of the estimation in which they hold the person who is visiting them. It would be a great piece of rudeness to refuse it.¹³

Like robes of honour, gifts of *tambula* differed in value, and thus they could indicate how much the recipient was favoured by the donor. Gifts of *pan* could differ by the number of *pan* leaves included. A text of *Dharmasastra* suggests that 32 leaves were appropriate for a king, 24 for a tributary prince, 6 for an enemy, and 4 for a common person.¹⁴ *Pan* leaves themselves also were graded by color, taste, smell and tenderness to the tongue.¹⁵

Moreover, *tambula* could include—in addition to the necessary ingredients of *pan* leaf, finely sliced areca nut, and lime made of oyster shells—a variety of very costly imported flavorings and ‘medicines’, among which we may list catechu, powder of lign-aloes,

ambergris, cloves, and rarest of all, camphor. Only 'the rich' used *tambula* prepared with these costly, additional ingredients.¹⁶

Courts distributed and consumed large quantities of *pan* leaves. In marginal notes to the travel account of John Huyghen van Linschoten, Bernard ten Broecke appends the following comment about the use of *pan* by Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar:

It is said that [Nizam Shah] . . . spendeth yearly thereof, to the valew of above thirtie thousand Milreyes. This is their banquetting stuffe, and this they make a present of it to travelers, and the Kings give it to their subjects.

To the rich mixed with their own hands, and to others by their Servants.

When they send any man of Ambassage, or when anybody will travel; there are certain Silke Purses full of prepared Bettele delivered unto him, and no

man may depart before it be delivered him, for it is a token of his passe

port.¹⁷

The *A'in-i Akbari* mentions bundles of *pan* of truly imperial dimensions: 'A bundle of 11,000 leaves was formerly called a 'Lahasa' which name is now given to a bundle of 14,000'.¹⁸ Associated with using *tambula* and giving it to others were costly implements: jeweled boxes in which the *pan* leaves were stored, trays with compartments for lime, areca nuts, spices, camphor, or other substances applied to the leaves, elaborately decorated tools to cut areca nuts into small pieces, and, of course, spittoons. Sets of these implements also are found throughout South and Southeast Asia.¹⁹ Like gifts of robes of honour, royal gifts of *pan* must have required economic organization to insure supply of the necessary ingredients for *tambula*, and supply of the implements by which they were prepared and presented. Nevertheless, one *tambula* looks rather like another, and I assume that for the same expense a ruler could have given them to a much larger number of people than he could have given robes of honour.

Like gifts of robes of honour, royal gifts of *tambula* could change the bodies of subjects who received them by leaving a trace of the ruler's own body; for the gift which carried the most honour was a *tambula* prepared for the ruler's use, and better, given by

the ruler's own hand,²⁰ and it was to be taken into the subject's mouth. We recognize an asymmetrical symbolic process usual to royal gifts of food, of perfumes and unguents, of robes of honour,²¹ and of *tambula*: 'marking' the subject's body with that of the king, and thereby both including the subject with other subjects also so marked, and subordinating him to the king, whose body, on the contrary, usually remains 'unmarked' by the body of the recipient.²²

Royal gifts of *pan* may have differed from other gifts of honour in one way.

Ordinarily *tambula* were valuable only when the *pan* leaves were fresh.²³ One cannot imagine that they were displayed as enduring signs of royal honours, as were robes of honour and the writs (*farman*) which robes of honour often accompanied. Can we assume that the ceremonial experience of 'taking up' *pan* included its consumption, and the bodily and mental effects of that consumption, as the *tambula* was 'enjoyed'?

'Enjoyment' (*Bhog*) and the Thirteen Properties of *Tambula*

Dharmasastra describe thirteen qualities of a *tambula*, 'unobtainable even in heaven'. A *tambula* is:

. . . pungent, bitter, hot, sweet, salty, and astringent; it counteracts wind and is a vermicide; it removes phlegm and destroys ill smells, is an ornament to, and purifies the mouth; and it makes the fire of desire burn brightly.²⁴

We may analyze this list of qualities as follows. A *tambula* contains each one of the six flavors. Their balance gives it medicinal properties which act upon the three humors as follows: counteracting ‘wind’, removing ‘phlegm’, and stimulating the elemental ‘fire of desire’ and, we may presume, the humoral ‘bile’ associated with bodily ‘fire’.²⁵

Consumption of a *tambula* therefore has specific benefits which the verse lists: good breath and intestinal health, for example. More important, consumption of *tambula* also has a general effect upon the humors and elements of the body. By counteracting ‘wind’ it shifts the balance of the humors away from the ‘incoherent states’, ‘unrestrainable motions’ and ‘ignorance’ associated with an excess of this most problematic of the bodily humors.²⁶ By removing ‘phlegm’ and increasing ‘fire’ a *tambula* produces the benefits of

‘dry heat’. Among these benefits Arabic and European observers widely reported (or alleged) the effects of a digestive and aphrodisiac.²⁷ In fact, *tambula* were forbidden to classes of people whose ‘fires of desire’ should not be increased: ascetics (*yati*), celibate students, people observing funeral obsequies, widows and others who were engaged in vows requiring chastity, and menstruating women, for example.²⁸

There also were mental consequences of consuming *tambula*, for understanding and intelligence also were thought to be more acute if one was in the condition of ‘dry’ rather ‘wet’ heat. An Arabic medical treatise lists among the benefits Indians experienced from the dry heat of *tambula*, that it ‘raises the intelligence’. This text continues:

The Indians use it instead of wine after meals, which brightens their minds and drives away their cares Whoever uses it becomes joyful, he has a perfumed breath, perfect sleep by reason of its aromatic, the pleasure which it brings, and its moderate odour.²⁹

An early European traveler also reported both mental and physical benefits: ‘In this way [by chewing areca nuts and *pan* leaves] the head and stomach are cleared, and the gums and teeth strengthened . . .’³⁰ Finally, there were social benefits of having good breath.

This same traveler, Garcia da Orta wrote:

Chiefly when men go to have an interview with some person of quality, they approach chewing [*pan*] in their mouths, so as to give out a pleasant smell.

Among these people it is so detested to smell bad or musty that common people put their hands before their mouths so as not to give out an unpleasant smell when in presence of a person in authority.³¹

Because it causes bodily ‘fire’ to burn more brightly, while removing wind and counteracting phlegm, a *tambula* might have been both given and ‘taken up’ in order to produce the kind of person who could undertake a difficult mission, someone with the mental and moral qualities of intelligence and fortitude, as well as the physical ones of

good health and a capacity for passionate and energetic action, and someone who could be introduced with pleasure to courtly society because of his sweet smelling breath. I have found no Bengali text which explicitly provides this instrumental explanation for royal gifts of *pan* as a ‘tonic and prophylactic’, but such explanations are given for robing in a variety of contexts, because the donor’s ‘spiritual state’ was transferred by a garment he had worn or touched.³² Perhaps the idea needed no emphasis.

‘Taking up’ *Pan*

Whereas making gifts of *pan* to show honour—to Hindus, Muslims and Europeans alike, and to both subjects and visitors from abroad—was a custom widely practiced by South Asian Muslim rulers, an apparently specialized ceremony associated with some royal gifts of *pan* seems to have been regarded as an expedient for rallying non-Muslims, at least in the period of the Delhi Sultanate. This was the gesture of ‘taking up’ *pan* in order to symbolize acceptance of a particular command or assignment from the ruler. For example, Barani reports that in 1290 rebellious Hindu warriors, the ‘rawats and paiks’ of Hindusthan, ‘flocked around [Balaban’s nephew Malik Chhaju], and the most noted of

them received *betel* from him, and promised to fight against the standards of the Sultan' [Jalal al-Din].³³ Other authors emphasize the action of 'taking up' the *tambula*, not just passively receiving it from the ruler's hands, as the gesture signifying acceptance of responsibility for carrying out a particular, and often dangerous command.³⁴ We will see that references to 'taking *pan*' can be found in middle Bengali narrative literature from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, and the idiom 'taking up *pan*' to mean 'accepting a command' also exists in Hindi.³⁵ Of course, a latent possibility of the latter ceremony was its opposite: occasionally the subject properly might decline the ruler's command, by declining to 'take up' the gift of *pan*.³⁶ In this way 'taking up' *pan* recognizes a more limited authority than that of 'fealty', where the obligation to serve in theory was conditional (the ruler had to meet his obligations to provide a livelihood) but general.³⁷ The voluntary dimension of 'taking up' *pan*—no doubt limited in practice—opens more space for negotiation between a ruler and his nobles, and the ceremony in court might have sealed a bargain the two already had reached. In the next section I will describe the way one Bengali text from the latter half of the sixteenth century extends the

ceremony of ‘taking’ *pan*, by developing a potential for gifts of *pan* to be distributed to a large number of people.

Gifts of *Pan* in Mukunda’s *Candimangal*

This section will examine royal gifts of *pan* in the long Bengali narrative poem, *Candimangal* by Mukunda Cakrabarti,³⁸ a man widely acknowledged to have been the best author of all *Candimangal*, if not of all works in the genre of *mangal-kabya*.³⁹ Mukunda’s *Candimangal* was written in the second half of the sixteenth century.⁴⁰ During the period of Mughal rule in the following century and a half, it became well known and widely copied throughout Bengal. Although new *Candimangal* continued to be composed in this period, most later poets followed Mukunda’s model, at least in the region of Rarh, the deltaic plains south of the Ganga and west of the Bhagirathi rivers.⁴¹ One episode of this poem describes how Kalketu, an untouchable hunter dwelling on the agrarian frontier between the Bengal delta and the Chota Nagpur plateau, cleared the forest and established and settled a kingdom by the help of the goddess Candi. Mukunda’s version is unique in narrating that while founding his kingdom Kalketu gave *pan* to all subjects who came to settle.

I agree with Sukumar Sen that Mukunda Cakrabarti probably wrote his *Candimangal* before the first Mughal conquest of Bengal, which began in 1574, and ended with the Bengal army's rebellion against Akbar in 1580.⁴² True, an account of the poem's composition, found in some manuscripts, mentions the Hindu general and Governor responsible for later conquests, 'Raja Man Singh, ruler (*mahip*) of Gaur, Banga and Utkal' (north Bengal, east Bengal, and Orissa), and his departure from Bengal 'as the fruit of sins of his subjects'.⁴³ Raja Man Singh became *sipah-salar* (commander in chief) of Bihar late in 1587, and campaigned in Bihar in 1588-90, and in Orissa in 1590-94. He was made *subadar* (governor) of Bengal in 1594, and campaigned in east Bengal in 1594-98; in 1598 he received permission to return to his home in Ajmer and to govern by deputy.⁴⁴

The verse in which Raja Man Singh is mentioned describes how and why, after the Raja's departure, Mukunda fled from his home village in undivided Burdwan District, West Bengal, to the small Hindu kingdom of Brahmanbhum (probably somewhere in upland Midnapur District, and then at the border between Bengal and Orissa) where he received the patronage which allowed him to compose his poem.⁴⁵ But unlike Mukunda's near

contemporary Dvija Madhab, who composed his version of *Candimangal* in 1579, just prior to the Mughal rebellion against Akbar,⁴⁶ Mukunda does not mention Akbar. Nor does he mention any other Mughal noble, or describe Raja Man Singh's campaigns against the Afghans in Orissa, 1590-94, or the renewal of worship of Jagannatha at the Puri temple, which Man Singh's Orissan victories allowed.⁴⁷ These recent and important events presumably Mukunda would have heard of from eye witnesses, if in fact he had moved to and composed his narrative in Brahmanbhum only sometime after 1598. Sukumar Sen has questioned the authenticity of this verse, and he has proposed a period of composition ending in 1555/56.⁴⁸ In any case, I think that if the important role this text gives to royal gifts of *pan* reflects Bengali practice, it must reflect pre-Mughal, not Mughal practice.

In his narrative of the founding of Kalketu's kingdom, Mukunda outlines the problems of village headmen and rulers on the frontier of agrarian settlement in the Chota Nagpur peneplain. In a situation of labor scarcity, village headmen, who themselves were labor controllers, used their mobility to negotiate for better terms from alternative rulers.

Crucial to their interests were: an initial period of tax free possession to allow

development of cultivation, security of title to the land they would cultivate, permanency of settlement of the land revenue demand, absence of labor taxes, or additional cesses or taxes in kind, and their own control of agency for tax collection from subleasers (rather than tax collection by the ruler's officials).⁴⁹ Village headmen also considered the procedure for assessing the land revenue demand (more strictly, by measurement of the land, or more loosely, per plough), its remission for harvest failures, the schedule of its installments, and the security held for and the rate of interest assessed on unpaid installments of the land revenue due before the harvest had occurred.⁵⁰ On the other hand, a ruler's problems were how to satisfy the demands of various labor controllers coming to his territory with their dependants, given competition for scarce labor on the agrarian frontier, and at the same time how to establish direct and permanent relationships with those dependants (circumventing the mediation of village headmen). In Mukunda's narrative, Kalketu gives *pan* to show honour to all his subjects. I suggest that an expanded ceremony presenting royal gifts of *pan* to all subjects, rather than only to those

receiving special honour or accepting a specific command, was recommended in this text in order to create direct links between a ruler and his subjects.

In this text, ‘taking’ a gift of *pan* always symbolizes a willingness to obey the superior who gives. Several instances of gifts of *pan* help us to see the ceremony in different contexts. Candi commanded Visvakarma, artisan of the gods, to build Kalketu’s city, and with the command, also gave him *pan*. Visvakarma ‘held Candi’s instructions upon his head’ (*sire dhare ades*). Her instructions of course were oral. I assume this idiom indicates the *anjali* gesture of settling a burden upon the head to indicate acceptance of a command. We also are told that Visvakarma ‘held Candi’s *pan* upon his head’ as well.⁵¹

Gifts of *pan* could be made in the context of a particular command, or of an enduring relationship of fealty. When Visvakarma had built Kalketu’s city, Candi turned to the problem of providing it with settlers, and eventually asked Indra for assistance. Indra in turn commanded Drona to help Candi: ‘Take my *pan*, Drona. You will repay my salt. Quickly go with Candika.’⁵² Of course, salt was one of the wages of military service. To

be ‘true to ones salt’ meant to be loyal, and to ‘repay ones salt’ meant to perform the duties or to fulfill the responsibilities for which one had been engaged as a military retainer, in a relationship where a general fealty was expected of the inferior, and where continued fealty depended on the superior’s ability to provide the salt of remuneration.⁵³

Pan seems not to have been ‘given’ or ‘taken’ in relations of equality.⁵⁴ But Mukunda’s text suggests that the ceremony might be used beyond the context of a particular command, wherever a relationship allowed for the subject’s choice, and combined aspects both of fealty and of redistribution. Thus, we are told of Muslims, the first group of settlers in Kalketu’s kingdom, ‘Having taken the hero’s *pan*, all the Muslims settled; he gave them the western quarter.’⁵⁵ Royal gifts of *pan* could serve as the reciprocal of gifts of *bhet* given by potential subjects, gifts which in this text always precede a petition requesting the superior for particular assistance or for a new relationship. Thus, in Mukunda’s narrative when Kayasthas (the *jati* of writers) came to settle Kalketu’s kingdom, they brought ordinary gifts of *bhet*—curds, fish, and ghee in clay pots—to initiate a relationship. They promised to settle their dependents (*prajagan*), and

requested that Kalketu give them and their dependents *pan*, along with good lands well delimited, houses, paddy seed, and money to buy bullocks; and that he delay requiring them to repay loans.⁵⁶ Here the gifts of *pan* to Kayasthas closed the preceding bargaining between them and Kalketu, reciprocated their gifts of *bhet* to him, and initiated a series of much more valuable gifts from him to these honourable, literate and well-spoken subjects, the ‘ornaments of his city’,⁵⁷ and to their dependants, gifts upon which their settlement in his kingdom had been conditioned.

In the case of Brahman settlers, Kalketu provided gifts of *pan* without receiving from them any initiatory gifts of *bhet* which might have indicated their inferiority to him.

Kalketu’s gifts of *pan* to Brahmans also initiated a series of much more valuable gifts, for he had promised to give Brahmans houses and lands free of all revenue demands in perpetuity,⁵⁸ and he conveyed these gifts to them after purifying his own hands with mantras, *kus* grass, sesame seeds and water.⁵⁹ In the relationship thus initiated, Kalketu did not expect to command these Brahmans, even at some future date; instead he had promised to ‘be the servant of Brahmans, to fulfill the hopes of all and to accomplish the

honour of each one.’⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the gifts of *pan* from the king to Brahmins also instituted a redistributive economy. He gave them rent free land and houses, and from the Brahmins Kalketu received not the tangible gifts of *bhet*, nor the promise of future taxes, but their ‘judgment’ of *sastras*, and the intangible gifts of their blessing.⁶¹

Mukunda’s narrative suggests that Kalketu gave *pan* to all his subjects, both Muslim and Hindu, and both high-born and low. Gifts of *pan* were socially and religiously neutral symbols of inclusion in a kingdom which contained very different kinds of subjects.⁶² In one other place the text mentions gifts apparently distributed to all: ‘Dependants of various *jati* received houses as gifts (*imam*), settled, and were happy in the hero’s city. Kalketu honoured them and gave them beautiful clothes. Singing and dancing filled every house’.⁶³

Gifts of *pan* mark out the autarkic boundaries of Kalketu’s royal redistribution. Finally, in his city *pan* growers (*barui*, ‘who continually gave the hero *pan*’) also could count on a special relationship with him. He promised them that no one would take goods from them by force without their being able to call upon the king’s intervention, and that he would impose no unjust regulation upon them.⁶⁴ By synecdoche gifts of *pan* suggest the whole

redistributive economy of a little kingdom in both directions of redistribution, to and from the king; and they properly precede the more valuable royal gifts of rent-free land and houses, and the interest-free seeds and capital necessary to transform uncultivated land into productive fields.

I find only one mention of something like robes of honour and the gifts associated with them, and they were given only to a very specific set of recipients. To each of his panegyrists (*bhat*), who of course would be responsible for keeping records of his own honourable deeds, Kalketu gave ‘a pair of fine cloths (*khasa jora*) and a horse to mount’. They in turn ‘thought continually of the hero’s well-being’.⁶⁵

Unlike the Mughals’ imperial gifts of turbans, sets of courtly clothing, robes of honour, jewels, swords, and horses and elephants, gifts of *pan* were imagined in this text as being given to all subjects, rather than being reserved for a nobility. They suggest a direct relationship between king and subjects, even though the text also specifies a mediating role for Kayastha headmen over their dependants. But if Mukunda’s recommendation were put into practice, and gifts of *pan* had become commonplace, the

'value' of receiving them also would have decreased. Furthermore, as gifts they both sealed and veiled bargaining about the specific terms offered to settlers, a process which must have been intensely competitive, given general conditions of labor scarcity on the agrarian frontier. Therefore, behind the gifts of *pan* we may discern a price, or a series of prices, as the king divided his lands among subjects who were valuable to him in different ways and in different degrees; and as they in turn came to terms with him about the taxes he eventually had to collect, and computed both the economic value of his terms of settlement, and the degree of honour he would show them.

Alternatives to 'Taking up' *Pan* in Mughal Ceremony

Among the European travelers who describe the uses of *pan*, Bernard ten Broecke (a contemporary of John Huyghen van Linschoten who was in India in the years 1583-1589) seems to have been the last to notice its use in royal ceremony other than as a simple gift of honour, and his probably mistaken account of its use as a 'passe port' does not unambiguously refer to 'taking up' *pan* to indicate acceptance of a command.⁶⁶ Later

European travelers described gifts of *pan* as tokens of honour but not ‘taking up’ *pan* as a ceremony to signify acceptance of a royal command.

One reason may be that although the Mughals gave *pan* as signs of honour,⁶⁷ they apparently did not include ‘taking up’ *pan* among their imperial ceremonies. Abu‘l Fazl, in a well known passage, describes ‘regulations for the manner in which people are to show their obedience’. Akbar himself had introduced two new forms of salutation: the *kornish* and the *taslim*. In the former, the implied limit to royal authority in the gesture of ‘taking up’ *pan*—the possibility that the command might be refused and *pan* might not be ‘taken up’—was replaced by an unconditional submission to imperial authority, made as soon as the subject entered the presence of the emperor, and before any specific commands could have been given.

The second ceremony of salutation, the *taslim*, is described as follows:

[It] consists in placing the back of the right hand on the ground, and then

raising it gently till the person stands erect, when he puts the palm of his

hand upon the crown of his head, which pleasing manner of saluting signifies that he is ready to give himself as an offering.⁶⁸

Since this was a ceremony to be performed upon receipt of a new command and upon taking leave, it can be compared to the gift of *pan* as a token of honour upon a subject's dismissal from court. Finally, for 'disciples' who would 'look upon a prostration before his Majesty as a prostration before God', Akbar allowed an optional form, *sijda* or full prostration, touching the forehead to the ground as in daily prayer.⁶⁹

Mirza Nathan's seventeenth century diary records how he used a combination of *taslim*, 'obeisance', and *sijda*, full prostration, to receive *farman*, imperial writs, when they were conveyed by a messenger from Prince Khurram. Mirza Nathan sent boats to convey the imperial messenger in state to the place where he was to be met, having erected velvet canopies there for a 'ceremony of obeisance' to be performed by himself and his subordinate Khans and Rajas. Mirza Nathan continues:

At the aforesaid place where Yakka Bahadur [the messenger] was sitting under the *shamiyanas* (canopies) he [Mirza Nathan] and all others, high and low, dismounted from their horses and elephants and began to observe the rites of obeisance from a distance of one arrow-shot. Reaching near Yakka Bahadur, Shitab Khan, the author of this book [Mirza Nathan], made three obeisances and prostrations of gratitude (*taslim wa sijda*) and then he placed the Farmans respectfully with his two hands over his head and again performed the rites of obeisance and prostrations of gratitude, and put on the robe of honour. After offering royal salute for the third time, he took the Farman for Mirza Bahram [who had not willingly accepted the authority of Prince Khurram] and thrust it on the head of the aforesaid Mirza, and he was made to perform his obeisance with his face turned toward Jahangirnagar [where Prince Khurram was residing]. Then Raja Lakshmi Narayan and after him Raja Satrajit were made to observe the rites of obeisance.⁷⁰

Imperial writs, *farman*, embodied the presence of the emperor or princes of the Mughal lineage, and were received with *taslim*, the obeisance which was reserved for the emperor; optionally, they might be received with the full prostration of daily prayer. Mirza Nathan's diary also describes a Mughal noble taking an imperial *farman* 'by both his hands, and plac[ing] it on his head with great respect'. Others honoured *farman* by 'placing them on their heads and eyes', before performing 'the necessary formalities of obeisance'.⁷¹

Compared to 'taking up' *pan*, Mughal imperial ceremonies for the receipt of *farman* reveal the dynasty's aspirations to display a more centralized and bureaucratic authority, by the honour given to writs. In this passage Mirza Nathan also vividly confirms evidence from Mughal paintings that coercion was used in courtly ceremonies to compel proper obeisance from refractory subjects.⁷² The more absolute authority apparent in being 'made to perform obeisance' should be contrasted with the voluntary acceptance of a new command or a relationship which we often see in the ceremony of 'taking up' *pan*.

Equally important to Mughal courtly ceremony were a rich array of expensive gifts, including robes of honour, horses, riding elephants, jeweled swords, standards, kettle drums, turbans, and jewelry; gifts which conveyed new honours accompanying new titles and responsibilities.⁷³ Expensive and finely graded gifts of honour, presented to selected nobles who had displayed conspicuous loyalty and ability in their service, reveal the dynasty's concern to display more exactly hierarchical relations of honour, but to do so only among their noble subjects.

Replacements for the Ceremony of 'Taking' *Pan* in Bengali Literature

The following remarks are based on an initial sampling of Bengali verse narratives from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I argue that in these centuries Bengali literature closely followed Mughal courtly ceremony and emphasized royal gifts of clothing, jewelry and horses to accompany royal commands, rather than royal gifts of *pan*.

'Taking' *pan* to signify acceptance of a command does not continue to have the same emphasis in *Candimangal* texts later than Mukunda's. Mukunda, for example, gives a precise account of the how the merchant Dhanapati first declined *pan*, and then accepted

it under duress, when commanded by his *raja* to journey to Sri Lanka.⁷⁴ Neither Dvija Madhab (1579) nor Ramananda Yati (1766) mentions the merchant's 'taking *pan*' on this occasion. Dvija Madhab does write that Dhanapati 'took the command upon his head', suggesting only the *anjali* gesture.⁷⁵ In the description of Dvija Ram'deb (1649) we see both 'receiving' *pan*, and 'binding a favour' to the head, but does 'receiving' *pan* still indicate acceptance of a command? Certainly *pan* is only the first of two 'honours' given to the merchant by the king.

[The merchant] gave presents and honoured the jewel of kings. He bent his knee to the ground and pressed his palms together. First, the merchant received a *tambula* made with camphor. Then his heart's worries were greatly relieved.⁷⁶

No command to journey to Sri Lanka so far had been given. When it was given, Dhanapati objected at some length, until the king himself reiterated his command and

further 'favoured' (*prasad karila*) the merchant with a jeweled ring. Then the merchant 'could not remain'. Apparently in a ceremony of taking leave, 'the merchant bound the favour (*prasad*, apparently the ring just given) of the king tightly to his head', and then departed.⁷⁷ If the gesture of 'binding the favour' to the head still indicates acceptance of a command, the 'favour' itself no longer is *pan*, but the much more valuable present of a jeweled ring.

Very often in later texts gifts of turbans or robes of honour, together with other costly royal gifts, are described instead of gifts of *pan* to convey new honours which accompany new commands, or new relations or responsibilities. I have found no *Candimangal* written after Mukunda's in which Kalketu distributes gifts of *pan* to his new subjects. Mukunda's near contemporary, Dvija Madhab (1579), however, does also emphasize gifts of clothing which establish direct relations between Kalketu and all his dependants:

The headman went with all his dependants, and with his officers, advisors and Brahmans; they went to meet the hero [Kalketu] and he saw them.

The hero gave the headman a horse and palanquin, and wrapped the heads of all his dependants with silk scarves (*pater pachara*).⁷⁸

In contrast, Dvija Ram'deb (1649) restricts gifts of royal honours to the headman alone:

They arrived at the court [of the hero] in Gujarat. They offered presents (*bhetila*) before the hero, and bowed to him. The dependants looked on the hero with delight. He gave the headman a royal turban (*raj'pag'sir*) for his head. The headman received horses and a palanquin, and departed.⁷⁹

The mid eighteenth century author Ramananda Yati (1766) suggested the importance of written records by his mention of a royal clerk. Otherwise he elaborated upon the works of authors later than Mukunda by replacing *pan* with lavish royal gifts:

The hero spent money and established homes and homesteads, and people came, and became his followers. The clerk wrote on papers, the treasurer examined everything; maidservants and menservants ceaselessly came and went.

Everyone tied his horse with a tether, and wore a turban and pair of cloths, and had a mace-bearer to run before him. They had companions to flatter them and hold umbrellas over their heads, and their watchmen carefully stayed awake.

In plaster-walled houses learned Brahmans recited *puranas*; they had beds and bedsteads, palanquins and litters, cloths and ornaments beyond counting, and hundreds of embroidered carpets.

Qadis recited in Persian, while cavalry soldiers paraded Arabian horses, and Turkish [ponies?⁸⁰] galloped by. Their old men and womenfolk recognized Iraqi [and?] . . . horses, while army officers sat . . .⁸¹

In the new city imagined by this author, everyone apparently received some extravagant honours, though learned religious elites, Hindu and Muslim, and cavalry soldiers are singled out for special favours.

When *pan* is mentioned, often the one who gives *pan* is less than a king. A seventeenth century author, Kabi Krsnaram Das, describes 'taking' *pan* in a context which clearly is not royal. In his *Ray'mangal* (written sometime after 1677) a merchant wished to build ships, but could not arrange it by himself. His helmsman and navigator (*karnadhar*) therefore gave *pan* to two shipwrights, Visvakarma and Hanuman in human disguises, and took them to the merchant, who in turn 'satisfied' them with unspecified 'favours'. Later, we are told, the merchant gave the navigator a 'head to foot' set of clothing (*siropa*) as a sign of his favour when the ships had been completed.⁸² Here, not even the merchant, but only the merchant's navigator gives *pan* to initiate a relationship of employment.

We may conclude with a few brief examples from Ghanaram's *Dharmamangal*, an early eighteenth century text (1711).⁸³ *Pan* is used to accompany commands and to show honour to relatively lowly people in this text. A minor, local *raja* gave hunters *pan* with the command to trap a man-eating tiger, for example.⁸⁴ In a revealing case of its use, Lau Sen's mother secretly gave wrestlers *pan* with the command that they break her son's limbs in the ruse of teaching him wrestling, so that he would be unable to leave home to prove his masculinity and to win his fortune as a warrior. The wrestlers agreed: 'Having tied the *pan* securely, the wrestlers did obeisance' and went to find Lau Sen.⁸⁵ Perhaps the most important case of giving and taking *pan* in Ghanaram's text occurs when the evil minister Mahamad offers the royal army *pan* with the request that someone spy on Lau Sen's city of Mayna in preparation for attacking and looting it. At first, no one takes up the *pan*, partly because they fear Lau Sen's Dom soldiers, and partly because the minister's plans contravene an explicit directive from their king Gauresvar.⁸⁶ In these latter cases we are far indeed from gifts of *pan* in a public, courtly ceremony. A sign of voluntary acceptance is necessary because the accompanying command violates dharma.

In general in Ghanaram's text kings give much more valuable honours to more important subjects. It will take us too far afield to trace all the gifts kings distribute to subjects who have accepted new responsibilities in this text, but gifts of clothing are conspicuous. For example, Gauresvar, the 'lord of Gaur', sent Som Ghos, who because of trust 'ate *pan* from the king's hand', to collect taxes from the locality ruled by Karna Sen (Lau Sen's father), who had failed to send regular remittances of his taxes. 'He gave Ghos two shawls and a pair of turbans. As a present (*bakshish*) he again gave him a horse to mount, and a trumpet, a banner, and a written command. Gop [the *jati* title of Som Ghos] did obeisance and departed'.⁸⁷ Similarly, the prefect of police, after falsely reporting to the king's minister that he had killed the baby Lau Sen as ordered, received 'a pair of shawls, a turban (*sarband*), and a set of clothing' (*siropa*) from the minister.⁸⁸

In eighteenth century Bengali literature, sets of clothing, turbans, shawls, cloths embroidered with golden threads, rings and other jewelry, horses, palanquins, banners and trumpets all appear in various combinations as royal gifts which show royal 'favour' to subjects who have accepted royal commands and new responsibilities. Exactly as with

Mughal gifts of honour, this rich array of literary gifts makes it possible for authors to reflect the exact degree of honour being shown their recipients. Only Ramananda Yati maintains Mukunda's dream that all subjects would be bound by gifts to their common king, but his text emphasizes expensive and luxurious goods as signs of the king's favour.

Royal gifts of *pan* to all subjects might have been possible, as Mukunda had described them, but in eighteenth century Bengali literature they usually suggest a small honour, because the degree of honour a gift carried depended upon its rarity and value.

(Alternately, they may suggest a command which one ought not to accept, from a person whose authority to give it ought to be doubted.) In Ramananda Yati's narrative royal gifts were oxymorons, extremely valuable and conveying great honour, and yet given to all and so commonplace, and his description of them therefore was utopian.

Mughal and Post-Mughal Gifts of *Pan* in Bengal

Turning from literature to narratives which at least claim to have a more direct relationship with contemporary events, one finds abundant references to gifts of *pan* to show honour, but very few to 'taking up' *pan* to indicate acceptance of a command. Still,

occasionally, gifts of *pan* continued to be ‘taken up’ to mark the affirmation of relationships and the acceptance of commands, despite the apparent absence of this gesture from official, imperial Mughal ceremony. In this section, I explore a few cases of ‘taking up’ *pan*, most of which occurred in Bengal. I will argue that the ceremony of ‘taking up’ royal gifts of *pan* often seems to have been either modified, or else displaced towards more peripheral, ephemeral or ambiguous relationships.

It is not surprising to find mention of giving *pan* to relatively peripheral people in the context of giving a directive which might have been declined, exactly as contemporary Bengali literature suggests. The *Malda Diary and Consultations* of the English East India Company, for example, records an instance of giving *pan* to Indian merchants in the context of such a directive. In 1681 when the English finally had paid bribes sufficient to receive permission to collect cloth from Indian merchants at their new factory at ‘Englezavad’, Jam Sher Beg, the Mughal ‘*Krori*’ (*karori*, the officer in charge of collecting revenue in a *pargana*, the Mughals’ lowest level of revenue administration), ‘called our Picars [merchants] giveing them Bettle and good words and bid them goe to us at our

new Factory and prize their goods to us &ca'.⁸⁹ The word 'bid' and the gifts of 'Bettle and good words' suggest persuasion rather than, or as well as command, and some degree of choice on the part of the Indian merchants.

On the other hand an interesting example of modifying the ceremony of 'taking up' *pan* appears in Mirza Nathan's diary, where the modification signified that the recipient of *pan* had no choice. The incident happened early in his career. Musa Khan, Masnad-i-'Ala, was the son of 'Isa Khan, who in turn was the leader of twelve, mostly Afghan 'lords of the soil' of eastern Bengal, with whom the Mughals contested for sovereignty early in the seventeenth century. At first, both son and father appeared to submit to the Mughals, and were treated with leniency by the Governor, Islam Khan. Shortly thereafter Musa Khan, the son, apparently gave secret support to a conspiracy against the Mughals among his own men. The leader of these rebels was Husayn Khan, who defeated a Mughal army sent by the Governor himself. Nathan relates how the Governor, Islam Khan, reacted when he heard news of his army's defeat:

When this news reached Islam Khan, he sent for Musa Khan, Masnad-i-'Ala, and administered a sharp rebuke to him which was in fact more painful than a wound inflicted by a sword, and said,—‘This is a rose sprung from your garden. Husayn Khan is your product and now you must exert yourself to dispose of him’. Musa Khan, greatly perturbed by these words, took a *dao* (big knife) and a piece of *pan* (betel leaf) from Islam Khan and sent 200 war boats belonging to himself and his own brothers, under the command of one of his tribesman [sic.] named Alu Khan Afghan, a trustworthy officer of Musa Khan.

Explaining the situation in turn to Alu Khan, Musa Khan made clear what the Governor had meant by adding the ‘big knife’ to the roll of *pan*: ‘There is no way out of it except victory or death’. Thereafter Alu Khan defeated and captured Husayn Khan, and Mirza Nathan concludes that as a reward for this service, ‘Islam Khan paid many tributes to Musa Khan and comforted him’.⁹⁰ One senses that this was an embarrassing and perhaps a

threatening episode for the Governor. After all, his own leniency might have been blamed for his army's loss. No written *farman* is mentioned; the order to Musa Khan seems to have been oral. Perhaps 'taking up' *pan* was used in this case to signify acceptance of an oral command given in a situation where neither the superior nor the inferior could have desired a written record and official scrutiny of what he had done, at least until after suppression of the rebellion. But the brilliant improvisation of adding a 'big knife' to the roll of *pan* clearly indicated the Mughals' claim to unquestioned authority.

As Mughal power declined in the eighteenth century, however, precisely that aspect of the gesture of 'taking up' *pan* which had made it undesirable for Mughal imperial ceremony—the implicit recognition of the subject's choice and agency—sometimes again seemed important to chroniclers. James Tod's summary of the *Annals of Marwar* gives a vivid example from the decision forcibly to expel and replace Sarbuland Khan as Governor of Gujarat in 1730, after he both had used force to collect a variety of additional taxes from the merchants of Surat, and had concluded an unauthorized treaty with the *peshwa* Baji Rao.⁹¹ To find a noble willing to undertake this task, according to the chronicler, the

Emperor [Muhammad Shah] had a *beera* (roll) of *pan* placed upon a golden salver, which a court official 'bore in his extended arms, slowly passing in front of the nobles ranged on either side of the throne . . .'. At first, 'no hand was stretched forth' because courtiers feared they would be defeated by Sarbuland Khan. But after a long moment of imperial distress, Maharaja Abhay Singh of Jodhpur finally 'stretched forth his hand, and placed the *beera* in his turban. . .'.⁹² But was this scene of a subordinate noble's sudden, heroic and honourable response only a literary device of the chronicler? It tells us nothing of the complex factional rivalries at Delhi and in Gujarat, rivalries which pitted Sarbuland Khan against his Mughal opponents at the court (and the *peshwa* against Maratha warbands he had agreed to help suppress).⁹³ The chronicler does immediately add a list of imperial honours and payments made to Abhay Singh, prior to his setting out.⁹⁴ It is hard to believe that they had not been the subject intense and prior negotiations.⁹⁵

In another incident giving and 'taking up' *pan* was transformed to mitigate the dishonour of having to relinquish an office. In 1748, after his decisive victory over a combined Afghan and Maratha force at Ranisarai, Nawab Alivardi Khan decided to give his

grandson Siraj-ud-daula the office of Governor of Azimabad (Bihar), and to make a Bengali Kayastha, Jankiram, deputy governor, the person who actually would bear the responsibilities of this office locally in Azimabad.⁹⁶ One of Alivardi's nephews, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, however, already held the office of deputy governor. Therefore, after Siraj-ud-daula and Jankiram had been invested and given suitable robes of honour and other presents, the Nawab improvised a ceremony by which Sayyid Ahmad Khan semi-publicly and 'voluntarily' would relinquish his office to Jankiram:

. . . to regain Sayd-ahmed-qhan's good will to this arrangement, as well as to soften his mind, Djankiram received orders [from Alivardi] to wait upon him, and to ask his consent in a respectful manner. Sayd-ahmed-qhan graciously granted it, although highly humbled by a transaction that exposed his character; and he gave him a *Biry of Paan*, according to the custom of India, in token of that consent; his intention being to avoid everything that might disoblige his uncle; and it is remarkable that Djankiram went by the

Viceroy's [Alivardi's] order, in company with Sadr-el-hac-qhan [Sadr ul Haq Khan, Darogha or supervisor of the Sadr 'Adalat, the provincial judicial administration] to give more weight to his submission.⁹⁷

This improvised ceremony seems to have been useful precisely because Jankiram's symbolic 'submission' to Sayyid Ahmad Khan, enacted by taking *pan* from him, partially veiled Sayyid Ahmad Khan's loss of office, and the public exposure of his loss of favour with the Nawab Alivardi. This veiling was possible because the ceremony's expected dramatization of a choice was displaced from the recipient of *pan* to the giver.

In the ambiguous and ambivalent relations of courtly politics at the end of Mughal rule, the meaning of gifts of *pan* could become problematic, even when they ostensibly were given to show honour or favour, without any context of command. During Siraj-ud-daula's final months as Nawab of Bengal and Bihar in the spring of 1757, he was confronted with Clive's victories at Calcutta and Chandernagore, with the increasing support for the English among members of his court, and with the demand by the English

that he deliver agents of the French East India Company to them. Hoping to retain a relationship at a distance, in a ceremony of departure he gave the Frenchman Monsieur Jean Law *pan* from his own hand, before requesting him to depart from Murshidabad to the northwest to escape the English. Nawab Siraj-ud-daula suggested that he would send for Law 'if there should happen anything new'; but Law is said to have told him plainly 'that this is the last time we shall see each other'.⁹⁸ A few days later, in a fit of rage Siraj-ud-daula threatened the *vakil* of the English (their legal representative at his court) that he would extirpate their race from his kingdom, but later that day he repented this rashness, and summoned the same *vakil* and gave him *pan*, apparently in the vain hope of veiling his own enmity and allaying theirs.⁹⁹ No command accompanied either gift; although both ostensibly were gifts of honour, the contexts were friendship in the former case and enmity in the latter; but both suggest Siraj-ud-daula's ambivalent desire for relationships which he also thought had become impossible.

Still more ambiguous is the following incident recorded by Ghulam Husain Khan. In 1763 he began to believe that Nawab Mir Qasim was holding him 'as a kind of pledge for

my father's good behavior, and as an hostage for that of my brother', both of whom had absented themselves from the Nawab's camp. Too ill to move himself, and under suspicion for his extensive contacts with the English, Ghulam Husain Khan reports that he 'was very near despairing of my life and honour'. Secretly he arranged that his one remaining brother also should depart the Nawab's camp. Later, when he had recovered his health, Ghulam Husain Khan seized an opportunity to bow to the Nawab before Mir Qasim entered his private chambers. Nawab Mir Qasim gave him two rolls of *pan* from the Nawab's own supply, and suggested ominously that it was a good thing he the Nawab had done to allow *both* of Ghulam Husain Khan's brothers 'to take some rest and enjoy themselves for a while'. Thoroughly frightened, Ghulam Husain Khan in turn feigned applause for the Nawab's kindness and generosity, along with thanks for the great honour shown him by the gift of *pan*.¹⁰⁰ Here the excessive favour shown by a gift of *pan* from his own hand veils the Nawab's profound distrust, which is only hinted at verbally, and Ghulam Husain Khan's expressions of gratitude similarly mask his sudden terror.

I have found no evidence from Bengal that *pan* was given or ‘taken up’ in order to constitute relations of fealty among rebels against Mughal rule. Although negative evidence never is conclusive, perhaps the late seventeenth century zamindari rebellion of Sobha Singh on the western frontier of Mughal Bengal can serve as an example. The most nearly contemporary Mughal history of the rebellion is silent about the procedures used to recruit followers.¹⁰¹ Gautam Bhadra’s analysis of origins of the rebellion emphasizes the ways the zamindar may have found a core of support among poor people from the *jati* of Bagdis in his zamindari in western Midnapur, to which *jati* his lineage apparently retained special ritual ties, and to which it once may have belonged.¹⁰² In contrast, Aniruddha Ray emphasizes the ways leaders of the rebellion attempted to project themselves as kings, and failed nevertheless to control looting of merchants by their peasant followers. About recruitment of peasants to the rebellion Ray astutely comments: ‘Peasants after the fall of a rebel would always point to the fact that they had paid [taxes] only to a king—and had, in effect, only approved the transfer of power that had effectively changed hands’.¹⁰³ Perhaps their participation in a ceremony of voluntarily

'taking up' *pan* to join a rebellion would not have served peasants' interests of self-protection in case the rebellion were to fail.

Conclusion

This essay explores ambiguous, changing and contested meanings in royal gifts of *pan*. Throughout South Asia, *pan* was given both in courts and in wealthy families to show honour to a great variety of recipients. Like gifts of robes of honour, some royal gifts of *pan* constituted relationships by changing the bodies of subjects who received them, leaving a trace of the ruler's body in the subjects' bodies. The gift which carried the most honour was a *tambula* prepared for the ruler's use, and better, given by the ruler's own hand, and it was to be taken into the subject's mouth. By asymmetrically 'marking' subjects, royal gifts of *pan* from the ruler's hand constituted them as inferiors in their relationship to him, while transferring to them some of the ruler's virtue and authority. On the other hand, an apparently specialized ceremony associated with some royal gifts of *pan* seems to have emphasized the recipient's independent agency. This was the 'voluntary' gesture of 'taking up' *pan* in order to symbolize acceptance of a particular command or

assignment from the ruler. Finally, because they were thought to cause 'fire' to burn more brightly, while removing wind and counteracting phlegm, *tambula* might have been both given and 'taken up' as a tonic and prophylactic, in order to produce the kind of person who could undertake a difficult mission, someone with the mental and moral qualities of intelligence and fortitude, as well as the physical ones of good health and a capacity for passionate and energetic action, and one who could be introduced with pleasure to courtly society because of his sweet smelling breath.

In Mukunda's sixteenth century *Candimangal* we saw that by metonymy the acceptance of a gift of *pan* could acknowledge entering into an enduring and generalized relationship between subject and ruler. In this narrative gifts of *pan* marked out the autarkic boundaries of royal redistribution. But behind the royal gifts of *pan* to all of Kalketu's subjects, we discerned a series of prices, as subjects and the king negotiated terms of settlement on the agrarian frontier. Further, if gifts of *pan* could have become so commonplace as to be given to all subjects, the 'value' of receiving them also would have decreased.

Mukunda mentions ‘taking’ *pan* in a variety of other courtly settings, human and divine, to indicate acceptance of a royal command. In Bengali literature written after Mukunda’s poem, ‘taking *pan*’ is mentioned less frequently, and tends to be displaced to relationships more peripheral and ephemeral than those of a court. In this later literature kings use a rich array of gifts—including clothing, weapons, jewels, horses, palanquins, banners and trumpets—to show royal favour. This rich array of gifts usually is given to a few subjects who have accepted royal commands and new responsibilities, not to subjects in general. Because giving and ‘taking’ *pan* in general are not motifs necessary to the stories being told, variations in how and where these motifs are used are more likely to reflect changing customs than to have been made for literary or rhetorical purposes.

Evidence from texts more closely linked to historical events also suggests that royal gifts of *pan* probably became less important in the course of Mughal rule in Bengal. One reason seems to have been that, as Bengali literature suggests, gifts of *pan* were displaced by more elaborate, finely graded, and expensive gifts of honour, gifts which better conveyed the promised advantages of obedience to a few favoured subjects. But

another reason seems to have been that the ceremony of ‘taking up’ *pan*, and its implicit recognition of a subject’s ‘voluntary’ agency, often may not have served the interests of Mughal rulers, who organized courtly ceremonies to express a more absolute authority.

Mughal ceremonies for receipt of new offices or responsibilities privileged written *farman*, the writs of office which provided a permanent record of new responsibilities; whereas in the few records I have found of the ceremony in Mughal Bengal, *pan* appears to have been ‘taken up’ in the context of accepting oral directives. When ‘taking up’ *pan* was used in Mughal ceremony, sometimes the ceremony was modified to express a more absolute authority, as when the Governor of Bengal Islam Khan gave his refractory Afghan subject both *pan* and a big knife to indicate the choice of obedience or death. ‘Taking up’ *pan* to indicate voluntary acceptance of a directive seems to have been displaced towards more peripheral or ephemeral relationships, as when the ‘Krori’ (*karori*) Jam Sher Beg gave *pan* to silk dealers (*paikars*) while bidding them to supply the English East India Company at a new factory. Giving and ‘taking up’ *pan* sometimes were used in order to produce ambiguity in a relationship; as when Nawab Alivardi devised a ceremonial gift of

pan for one of his nephews, to indicate the nephew's 'voluntary' relinquishment of an office from which he in fact had been removed.

Even without the context of a command and its acceptance, the meaning of a gift of *pan* depended on the relations which were its context, and on the motives of giver and recipient, as in the very different meanings of Siraj-ud-daula's almost simultaneous gifts of *pan* to the Frenchman Monsieur Law and to the *vakil* of the English. So too with 'taking up' *pan* in the context of a directive: in that context, however, we persistently have noted some degree of choice to accept or decline to 'take up' both *pan* and directive. An expectation of choice on the part of the recipient remains, at least in the background, even when that choice explicitly was denied by a modification to the ceremony, or when it explicitly was displaced from the recipient to the giver. I do not argue that personal choice—and its concomitant negotiation of the price for obedience—was an essential and unchanging part of the ceremony of 'taking up' *pan*. I do suggest that the ceremony of 'taking up' *pan* remained useful because it usually signified personal choice on the part of the recipient, and that it remained marginally useful even though rulers in Mughal courts

gave much more emphasis to ceremonies which stressed a less conditional obedience to a more absolute authority.

¹Stephen Blake, 'The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals', in *The State in India 1000-1700*, ed. Hermann Kulke (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 278-303.

²Maurice Godelier, *The Enigma of the Gift*, trans. Nora Scott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 105.

³Arjun Appadurai, 'Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value', in *The Social Life of Things*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 13.

⁴Stewart Gordon, 'Ibn Battuta and a Region of Robing', in *Robes of Honour: Khil'at in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 1-30.

⁵P.K. Gode, 'References to Tambula in Indian Inscriptions', in *Studies in Cultural History*, 3 vols. (Hoshiarpur: Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, 1960-1) 1:113-20; Gode, 'Studies in the History of Tambula—Use of Tambula outside India between A.D. 650 and 1900', in *Studies in Cultural History* 1:121-9; Dawn F. Rooney, *Betel Chewing Traditions in South East Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 8-11.

⁶Ibn Battuta, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, 4 vols. (Cambridge: published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1958) 3:670-1.

⁷Ibn Battuta, 3: 737.

⁸Ibn Battuta, 3: 738.

⁹'Narrative of the Journey of Abd-Er-Razzak, Ambassador from Shah Rokh', in *India in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. R.H. Major (New York: Burt Franklin, n.d. [1964?]), p. 31.

¹⁰Gode, 'Studies in the History of Tambula: History of the Verse about the Thirteen Qualities of Tambula', in *Studies in Cultural History* 1:145.

¹¹Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, ed. William Crooke, trans. V. Ball, 2 vols. (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1977; first published 1925) 1:229.

¹²N[orman] M[osley] Penzer, *Poison-Damsels* (New York: Arno Press, 1980), p. 228, quoting from Peter Mundy, *Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-67*, ed. R.C. Temple, 5 vols. (1907-36), 2:96-7.

¹³Penzer, p. 238, quoting Niccolao Manucci, *Storia do Mogor, or Mogul India, 1653-1708*, trans. W. Irvine, 4 vols. (1907-8) 1:62.

¹⁴Gode, 'Studies in the History of Tambula: Some Beliefs about the Number of Ingredients in a Tambula', in *Studies in Cultural History* 1:140-41. Gode translates from the *Jotirribandha* by Sivaraja or Sivadasa.

¹⁵Abu'l Fazl 'Allami, *The A'in-i Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann and H.S. Jarrett, 2nd rev. edn., ed. D.C. Phillott and Jadunath Sarkar, 3 vols. (New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1989; 1st pub. 1927-1949) 1:77.

¹⁶Penzer, pp. 196, 202.

¹⁷Penzer, pp. 223-4, quoting from *The Voyage of John Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 2 vols. (1885) 2:62ff. I have used Penzer's corrections to the English translation. Was Bernard ten Broecke simply confused about the use of *pan* as a passport? It seems more likely that the gifts he noted were also part of a ceremony of departure. A *milreis* (1000 *real*) was a Portuguese money of account. If the *real* was equal to a *crusado*, then it also was equal to between 1 and 1.25 rupees. The alleged annual expenditure of about 30,000,000 rupees for *pan* is an astronomical amount.

¹⁸Abu'l Fazl, 1:78.

¹⁹Penzer, pp. 203-9; Rooney, p. 11; Henry Brownrigg, *Betel Cutters from the*

Samuel Eilenberg Collection (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1992), p. 28.

²⁰See Ibn Battuta 3:680, the account of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq's reception of Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad, a descendent of the 'Abbasid caliph: 'He took betel-nut with his own hand and offered it to him; this was the highest mark of the Sultan's consideration for him, for he never does that with anyone'. See also Penzer, p. 223, quoting van Linschoten: '. . . & this [the king's chewing *pan* while giving an audience] is a great honour to the Ambassadour, specially if he profereth him of the same Bettele that he himself doeth eate'.

²¹Ibn Battuta, 3:669, describes gifts of bread in 'private meals' from Sultan Muhammad Tughluq's own hand, and reception of such gifts with the same ceremony used for reception of gifts of *tambula* at a 'public meal'. For unguents see Philip B. Wagoner, "Lord of the Eastern and Western Oceans": Unguents, Politics, and the Indian Ocean Trade in Medieval South India', (MS of paper prepared for delivery at the 50th Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Washington, D.C., March 26-29, 1998).

²²I take the term 'marking' from McKim Marriott, 'Constructing an Indian Ethnosociology', *India through Hindu Categories*, ed. McKim Marriott (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), pp. 19-20. Reciprocal gifts were possible; for an example see Gavin R.G. Hambly, 'From Baghdad to Bukhara, from Ghazna to Delhi: the *Khil'at* Ceremony in the Transmission of Kingly Pomp and Circumstance', in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 212-13, describing Muhammed bin Tughluq's receipt of a robe from and gifts of robes to a descendent of the last caliph in Baghdad.

²³Penzer, p. 211, quoting Ibn al-Baitar: '. . .the leaves once dried go to dust for lack of moisture'; see also p. 219, quoting Tomé Pires: 'Dry, it is good for nothing, for its virtue is so subtle that, when dry, it has neither flavour nor taste'.

²⁴Gode, 'Studies in the History of Tambula: History of the Verse about the Thirteen Qualities of Tambula', in *Studies in Cultural History* 1:145. The source is Jalhana, *Suktimuktavali* (1258); I have slightly changed Gode's translation. A variant of the verse

also is quoted by P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmasastra*, 2nd ed., 5 vols. in 8 (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1968-77) 3, part 2, p. 735, fn. 1751.

²⁵Mariott, p. 12.

²⁶Mariott, pp. 12, 15-16.

²⁷Penzer, p. 210, quoting Ibn al-Baitar, who in turn quotes al-Idrisi; p. 216, quoting 'Abdu-r Razzaq; p. 217, quoting Ludovico di Varthema; pp. 217-18, quoting Duarte Barbosa.

²⁸Gode, 'The Attitude of Hindu Dharmasastra towards Tambula-Bhoga (Enjoyment of Betel)', in *Studies in Cultural History* 1:134-5.

²⁹Penzer, pp. 210-11, quoting Ibn al-Baitar or 'Abd Allah ibn Ahmad, *Traité des Simples par Ibn El-Beithar*, trans. L. Leclerc (Paris, 1877-83).

³⁰Penzer, p. 192, quoting Garcia da Orta, *Colloquies on the Simples & Drugs of India*, trans. Sir Clements Markham (London, 1913).

³¹Quoted by Penzer, p. 197.

³²Jamal J. Elias, 'The Sufi Robe (*Khirqā*) as a Vehicle of Spiritual Authority', in *Robes of Honour*, pp. 275-89. See also *Legitimacy and Symbols: The South Asian Writings of F.W. Buckler*, ed. M.N. Pearson (Ann Arbor: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1985); Bernard S. Cohn, 'Representing Authority in Victorian India', *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays*, 2nd impression with corrections (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 632-82.

³³Zia-ud-Din Barani, *Ta'rikh-i Firuz-Shahi*, trans. H.M. Elliot, in *The History of India as Told by its own Historians*, ed. John Dawson, 8 vols. (London: Trübner and Co., 1867-77) 3:138; Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 125.

³⁴Shahpurshah Hormasji Hodivala, *Studies in Indo-Muslim History: A Critical Commentary on Elliot and Downson's History of India as Told by its own Historians* (Bombay: [Bombay Book Depot?] 1939), p. 265.

³⁵Brownrigg, p. 28: ‘The betel quid became the symbol of a particular task or charge. “Who will take this up?” the ruler would ask, and the courtier who accepted the betel quid thereby committed himself to undertake the task in question. This practice still survives in the expression “pan ka birha uthana” (“taking up the betel”) which means the acceptance of responsibility’.

³⁶For a literary account of an initial refusal to ‘take up’ *pan* during the rebellion of Sarbuland Khan in 1718, see James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajast’han*, 2 vols. (Delhi: K.M.N. Publishers, 1971; first published 1829-32) 1:78-9.

³⁷Gordon, ‘Ibn Battuta and a Region of Robing’, pp. 4-11.

³⁸I have cited throughout as CM the following edition: Kabikankan Mukunda-biracita, *Candimangal*, Sukumar Sen sampadita (Nay Dilli: Sahitya Akademi, 1975).

³⁹J.C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press at the University of Oxford, 1948), pp. 69-74.

⁴⁰Sukhamay Mukhopadhyay summarizes the controversies about Mukunda's dates; see *Madhyayuger Bamla Sahityer Tathya o Kalakram* (Kalikata: Bharati Buk Stal, 1993), pp. 121-35.

⁴¹Jatindra Mohan Bhattacharjee, *Catalogus Catalogorum of Bengali Manuscripts*, pt. 1 (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1978), pp. 60-62 lists more than 60 dated and complete manuscripts, and more than two hundred undated and/or partial manuscripts. For a discussion of Mukunda's influence on later authors of *Candimanga*, see Asutos Bhattacharya, *Bamla Mangalakabyer Itihas*, sastha samskaran (Kalikata: A. Mukharji ayand Kom. Praibhet Limited, 1975), p. 540.

⁴²For a summary of the Mughals' first campaign in Bengal, see *The History of Bengal*, vol. 2, *Muslim Period, 1200-1757*, ed. Jadunath Sarkar (Dacca: University of Dacca, 1972; 1st pub. 1948), pp. 185-207.

⁴³CM, *pad* 6, p. 3.

⁴⁴*The History of Bengal*, vol. 2, pp. 206-13.

⁴⁵The locations of both places are discussed by Sen, 'Bhumika', in CM, pp. 19-24.

⁴⁶Sudhibhusan Bhattacharyya, 'Bhumika', in Dvija Madhab racita, *Mangalacandir Git*, Sudhibhusan Bhattacharyya sampadita (Kalikata: Kalikata Bisvavidyalay, 1952), p. 52; and for the reference to Akbar, text, p. 7.

⁴⁷Hermann Kulke, 'The Struggle between the Rajas of Khurda and the Muslim Subahdars of Cuttack for Dominance of the Jagannatha Temple', in *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa*, ed. Anncharlott Eschmann, Hermann Kulke, and Gaya Charan Tripathi (Delhi: Manohar, for the South Asia Institute, New Delhi Branch, Heidelberg University, 1978), pp. 324-9.

⁴⁸Sen, 'Bhumika', in CM, pp. 28-29. Most other scholars favour a date towards the end of the century.

⁴⁹CM, *pad* 127, p. 75: the terms Kalketu proposes to the headman Bulan Mandal.

⁵⁰CM, *pad* 126, p. 75: the complaints of Bulan Mandal against the King of Kalinga.

See also *pad* 129, p. 76: the harsher treatment of subjects proposed by Bharu Datta, a rival headman.

⁵¹CM, *pad* 117, p. 70; *pad* 118, p. 71.

⁵²CM, *pad* 122, p. 73.

⁵³Dirk H.A. Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput & Sepoy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 19-20; Stewart Gordon, 'Robes, Kings and Semiotic Ambiguity', in *Robes and Honor*, pp. 380-83.

⁵⁴Candi, for example, did not attempt to offer her rival and co-wife Ganga *pan* when she attempted, without success, to secure Ganga's assistance in settling Kalketu's kingdom. See CM, *pad* 120, p. 72.

⁵⁵CM, *pad* 130, p. 77.

⁵⁶CM, *pad* 134, pp. 79-80.

⁵⁷CM, *pad* 134, p. 79: *prasanna sabhar bani, likhapara sabhe jani, bhabyajan nagarer sobha.*

⁵⁸A promise made to the headman Bulan Mandal; see CM, *pad* 127, p. 75.

⁵⁹CM, *pad* 132, p. 78.

⁶⁰CM, *pad* 127, p. 75.

⁶¹CM, *pad* 132, pp. 77, 78.

⁶²'All the Musalmans' (CM, *pad* 130, p. 77) include 'ten or twenty lineages' (*biradare*) of men who 'continually read the Qur'an', and various jati of Muslim artisans who 'know neither the fast nor daily prayer'. 'All the Brahmans' who received *pan* (*pad* 132, p. 77) similarly include both pure (*kulin*) lineages and lowly genealogists, astrologers, and various renunciate beggars. 'All the dependants' of Kayasthas, to whom Kalketu was

requested to give *pan* (*pad* 134, p. 80), apparently include several untouchable jati and his town's prostitutes (*pad* 136, p. 81).

⁶³CM, *pad* 136, p. 81.

⁶⁴CM, *pad* 135, p. 80: *barui nibase pure, baroj nirman kare, mahabire nitya dei pan/ bale yadi keha nei, birer dohai dei, anucita na dei bidhan//* Is it odd that in the same *pad*, *tambuligan*, who assemble *tambula* from *pan* and areca nuts and who 'continually give the hero rolls [of *pan*]', were not given a similar promise? But we are told that they 'receive no royal oppression (*raj'pira*)'.

⁶⁵CM, *pad* 133, p. 79.

⁶⁶Penzer, p. 223-4, quoting an interpolation of 'the learned Bernard ten Broecke' in *The Voyage of John Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies* (London, 1885) 2:62 ff.

⁶⁷For example, François Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire AD 1656-1668*, trans. Archibald Constable, 2nd ed. revised by V.A. Smith (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint

Corporation, 1983; 1st published 1934), p. 364. Bernier describes in the imperial camp a separate tent for '*betlé*' which Aurangzeb distributed 'as a mark of royal favour'.

⁶⁸Abu'l Fazl 1:167.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰Mirza Nathan 2:706.

⁷¹*Ibid.* 1:215-16; 297.

⁷²Milo Cleveland Beach and Ebba Koch, *King of the World: The Padshahnama*, with translations by Wheeler Thackston (London: Azimuth Editions, Sackler Gallery, 1997), Plate 6-7, 'The Submission of Rana Amar Singh of Merwar to Prince Khurram', commentary, pp. 31, 34, and Fig. 17, p. 120.

⁷³Mirza Nathan 1:263, describing conveyance of the office of governor of Bihar upon Mirza Ibrahim Beg.

⁷⁴CM, *pad* 331, p. 188: ‘Feeling oppressed at heart, the merchant does not take the roll [of *pan*], and the king’s eyes become red with anger. So, understanding what was expected [*karyyer gati*], the merchant Dhanapati takes the *pan* and, with the *anjali* gesture, touches his head’.

⁷⁵Dvija Madhab racita, *Mangalacandir Git*, p. 196. Compare Ramananda Yati biracita, *Candimangal*, Anilabaran Gangopadhyay sampadita (Kalikata: Kalikata Bisvabidyalay, 1969), p. 249.

⁷⁶Dvija Ramadeb-biracita, *Abhayamangal*, Asutos Das sampadita (Kalikata: Kalikata Bisvbidyalay, 1957), p. 259.

⁷⁷Dvija Ramadeb, p. 261.

⁷⁸Dvija Madhab, p. 64.

⁷⁹Dvija Ramadeb, p. 76.

⁸⁰Reading *tangan* in place of *taian*.

⁸¹Ramananda Yati, pp. 177-8. I cannot understand two words in the last half of the last *tripadi* verse: *irakhi eyabuseya* [?], *ghora cine buro meya, jamadhar basiya hain* [?

This final word might be emended to rhyme with *tangan* if my emendation of *taian* in the previous footnote is correct.]

⁸²Krsnaram Das, *Rayamangal*, in *Kabi Krsnaram Daser Granthabali*, Satyanarayan Bhattacarya sampadita (Kalikata: Kalikata Bisvabidyalay, 1958), pp. 172-3, 175, 176. The date of composition of his first work, *Kalikamangal*, is 1676/77; see Satyanarayan Bhattacarya, 'Bhumika', pp. 20-21.

⁸³Piyus Kanti Mahapatra, 'Bhumika', Ghanaram Cakrabarti-biracita, *Sridharmmamangal*, Piyus Kanti Mahapatra sampadita (Kalikata: Kalikata Bisvabidyalay, 1962), p. 9.

⁸⁴Ghanaram Cakrabarti, p. 216.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 588-9.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30: *ghoser dosala dila sar'bandh jora/ bak'sis karen puna caraner gora// nag'ra nisan dila likhan par'yana, biday haila gop kariya bandana.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁸⁹ 'The Malda Diary and Consultations (1680-82)', ed. Walter K. Firminger, in *Journal and Proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal* (New Series), Vol. 14 (1918), nos. 1 & 2, p. 140, Englezavad Diary, entry for 12 Oct. 1681. The *paikars* were middlemen who distributed advances to weavers and collected cloth from them.

⁹⁰ Mirza Nathan 1:142, and for the complicity of Musa Khan in the attack of Husayn Khan against the Mughal force, pp. 107, 121, 128, 132.

⁹¹ For summaries of this event see: Andrea Hintze, *The Mughal Empire and its Decline* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 1997), pp. 237-38; William Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, ed. Jadunath Sarkar, 2 vols. bound in one (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation,

1971; 1st pub. 1921-2) 2:197-206.

⁹²Tod 1:78-9.

⁹³Irvine 2:205; Stewart Gordon, *The New Cambridge History of India* II.4, *The Marathas 1600-1818* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 121-2.

⁹⁴'18 lacs of Rupees from the Treasury and fifty cannon of various sizes', according to Irvine 2:205.

⁹⁵Cf. Hintze, p. 271: 'Only the promise of lucrative posts or the prospect of immediate enrichment could act as incentives for nobles to obey transfer or campaign orders from Delhi.'

⁹⁶Kalikinkar Datta, *Alivardi and his Times* (Calcutta: The World Press Private Ltd., 1963), pp. 84, 43 fn. 251.

⁹⁷Ghulam Husain Khan, Tabatabai, *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin: a history of the Mohammedan power in India during the last century*, trans. Haji Mustafa [pseud.], 4 vols. (Lahore: Oriental Publishers & Booksellers, 1975; 1st pub. 1789-90) 2:68; Abdul Majed Khan, *The Transition in Bengal, 1756-1775: A Study of Saiyid Muhammad Reza Khan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 229n., 344.

⁹⁸Rajatakanta Ray, *Palasir Sarayantra o Sekaler Samaj* [The Plassey Conspiracy and Contemporary Society] (Kalkata: Ananda Pab'lisars Praibhet Limited, 1994), p. 210; Ghulam Husain Khan 2:227. Neither Law nor William Watts reports the conversation; probably it should not be read as literally true. See Sushil Chaudhury, *The Prelude to Empire: Plassey Revolution of 1757* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000), p. 150.

⁹⁹Rajatakanta Ray, p. 212; letter from Scrafton to Walsh, 21 April 1757, in *Bengal in 1756-1757*, ed. S.C. Hill, 3 vols. (Delhi: Manas Publications, 1985; 1st pub. 1905) 2:351. The *vakil* was the Agra merchant Umichand; see Sushil Chaudhury, pp. 124-9, and for Umichand's close connection with Luke Scrafton, p. 107.

¹⁰⁰Ghulam Husain Khan 2:451-2.

¹⁰¹Ghulam Hussain Salim, *Riyazu-s-Salatin (A History of Bengal)*, trans. Abdus Salam (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyati-i Delli, 1975; 1st pub. 1903), pp. 231-43.

¹⁰²Gautam Bhadra, *Mughalyuge Krsi-arthaniti o Krsak-bidroha* [Agrarian economics and peasant rebellions in the Mughal period], dvitiya samskaran (Kalikata: Subarnarekha, 1991), pp. 158-61.

¹⁰³Aniruddha Ray, 'Revolt of Shobha Singh: A Case Study', *Bengal Past and Present*, Part 1, July 1969, pp. 220-21; Part 2, June 1970, pp. 58-72; for the quote, Part 2, p. 65.