

Illuminating Dark Spaces: The American Baptist Women Missionaries and the *Zenana* System in Assam

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Abstract

The system of seclusion of women in closed quarters called *Zenanas* was practiced throughout India including the north-eastern state of Assam. This practice was followed in India since early times which continued in the colonial period. The missionary women of the American Baptist mission in Assam endeavored to reach the women confined in the *Zenanas* and provide them with basic education and health care facilities. The interaction between the secluded women and the missionary women had a profound effect on the condition of the former. The paper explores the struggles of the missionary women to improve the lot of the women confined in *Zenanas* in Assam amidst a strongly patriarchal atmosphere. An attempt to highlight the changes brought about in the lives of the native women as result of the *Zenana* mission has also been made. Further, the complexities of the imperialist notions of missionary women and the impact which the *Zenana* mission was able to make on their lives have also been touched upon.

Keywords: *Women, American Baptist, Assam, Missionaries, Zenana, Patriarchy.*

Introduction

Towards the turn of the eighteenth century, the British rule came to be firmly established in India. This in turn encouraged Christian missionaries of different denominations to enter India and attempt to spread their faith having been granted formal sanction to carry out proselytizing activities in the country by the Charter Act of 1813. Assam was one of the most remote provinces of the North Eastern dominion of the British in India. It remained relatively isolated from the rest of the country because of limitations of transport and communication and unfavorable climate especially during the rains. However, gradual inroads into the region by the British led to the opening up of the province which was further intensified by the discovery of the Tea plant in 1823. This region also drew the attention of the Christian missionaries because they viewed it as a potential entry-point to the untouched far-eastern countries as they aspired to spread Christianity to China, Burma and Japan etc.

Though many different missionary denominations worked in the region at various times, it was the American Baptist Mission which was the most active. The impact of this particular mission was varied and enduring and not confined to conversions alone. Education, language, literature, and health facilities were some of the spheres which the mission revolutionized in the region. The American Baptist Missionaries worked for over a century in Assam since their arrival in 1836 and from the very beginning women missionaries were at the helm of educational, health-related and humanitarian services undertaken. Missionary women played an equal if not more significant role than men in propagating Christianity through various mediums in Assam. These women missionaries were not only a great support to the evangelist and educational mission undertaken in general but also towards the development of education and social conditions for the native women in particular. Nearly every mission center had at least one woman-missionary and some centers were left entirely in the hands of the women. It was at the initiative of the women missionaries that schools for girls were opened in several places. However, these tasks were not achieved easily. Missionary women had to work amidst even more restrictions than the men. Women had to make sacrifices of not only their own comforts but also that of their families and children. Missionary women were further burdened and limited by the patriarchal differences prevalent in the society of Assam and also ingrained deep in the policies and system of the American Baptist Mission itself. Despite these limitations, motivated by religious zeal and dedication, the missionary women continued their services in the face of all odds.

At the same time the condition of native women in erstwhile Assam was also quite pitiful. It is often assumed that the egalitarian tribal society of the north-eastern region accords a better status and position to women in comparison to other parts of India. But on studying the accounts left by the missionaries as well as other sources, the situation is found to be far from ideal. It was seen that both tribal or lower caste women as well as women of the higher castes were usually not educated. Social norms relating to women were generally aimed at dominating and controlling her. These norms were even stricter in case of the higher caste families. One of the most demeaning practices applied to women all around India and in Assam was the practice of seclusion. Women were kept away from the public eye in separate quarters of the home where no males other than those of the household were allowed to enter. These quarters were referred to as *Zenanas*. The custom was mostly upheld in the name of maintaining honor and respect of the womenfolk but in effect led to women being considered as inferior creatures devoid of intellect or self-will. So, any contact with these women could not be made by the missionary men. In such a situation, it was soon realized that the education of these women could be achieved through women alone. The practice of recruiting missionary women specifically to reach the native women relegated in the *Zenanas* was started in earnest. Missionary women took it upon themselves to improve the condition of the *Zenana* women and encourage the women and the family members to give up this

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repressive practice. This paper is a study of the *Zenana* system in Assam and the efforts of the American Baptist women missionaries to help the women affected by this system.

Objectives

The main objectives of this paper are to study about the prevalence of the *Zenana* system in Assam, to highlight the efforts of the *Zenana* mission of the American Baptist Mission in this regard in general and the contributions of the missionary women in particular, to discuss about the obstacles faced by the missionary women during the mission and to analyse the changes brought about the missionary women in the lives of the *Zenana* women. The paper will also attempt to study the effect of the patriarchal restrictions of both Western and Indian society on the efforts of the missionary women as well as their own restrictive notions of superiority.

Review of Literature

Previous research writings have made several references to the *Zenana* system in Assam. For instance, Dr. Sheila Bora's paper titled "Impact of the American Missionaries on the Women of North-East India 1836-1900," published in the Proceedings of the North East India History Association in 1990, (Bora:1990) provides insights into the condition of women in Assam and the North-East during the arrival of American missionaries. The article also offers a brief overview of the *Zenana* system of education adopted by women missionaries due to the lack of formal educational opportunities. Furthermore, it highlights the social conditions and the transmission of Christian ideas to indigenous women. In another study, Adani Nguille's doctoral thesis, "Christian Missionary Perspective and their Role in the Transformation of Lotha Naga Women in North East India 1885-1950", (Nguille:2010) extensively examines the impact of Christianity on Lotha Naga women. Although focused on Lotha Naga women, this study provides valuable insights into the social impact of Christian education on women in general. The positive effects of Christian education include the abandonment of superstitious beliefs and the elimination of social evils that adversely affected women's status, particularly among various tribes. Moreover, there are numerous primary sources that shed light on the early history of the American Baptist Mission in Assam and the development of theological education. To name a few, Harriet Bronson Gunn's "In A Far Country," (Gunn 1911) Mary Mead Clark's "The Whole World Kin," (Clark 1907) and Mrs. P.H. Moore's "Twenty Years in Assam," (Moore 1901), "Further Leaves from Assam," (Moore 1907), "Autumn Leaves from Assam." (Moore 1910) and "Stray Leaves from Assam," (Moore 1916). These accounts offer vivid descriptions of the historical context and provide insights into the reactions of both local or native people and missionary women. Notably, these first-hand narratives written by women offer glimpses into the lives of not only the missionary women but also the native women of that era.

Discussion

The first part of the discussion centers mainly around two points i.e. what the *Zenana* system implied and what the approach of the missionaries towards it was. According to Helen Montgomery Barrett, "The general meaning of the word '*Zenana*' is the living quarters within a household, occupied exclusively by women especially of high caste families. However, it popularly refers to any kind of enforced seclusion of women in the *Zenana*, *purdah*, *harem*, *anpang*, and the like, wherever practiced. The *Zenana* system was enforced in an extreme form among the aristocratic Muslim and Hindu families of India. No interaction with any outsider was permitted to these hidden ladies." (Barrett 1910: 107) Mrs. Marianne Lewis has described the actual condition of the *Zenanas* as follows, "In every respectable Hindoo house a range of apartments is found set apart for the occupation of women. This is called the *Zenana* from the Persian word '*zen*', meaning woman. To this part of the house no man has access except the fathers, husbands and sons of the family; and from it no female member of the family beyond the age of childhood is allowed to pass unguarded. The apartments of the *Zenana* are usually dreary, ill-lighted, ill ventilated and miserably furnished rooms - these poor women enjoy little of their husband's society, they do not even sit or eat with them."¹(Lewis 1866) These women have also been referred to as *Purdah* women. The Christian missionaries undertook a mission for the upliftment and education of the women in the *Zenanas*. It is said that the *Zenana* mission was envisaged by Thomas Smith a Scottish missionary in 1854. It was formally started by John Fordyce in 1855. (Dey 2017: 110) The Church of England *Zenana* Missionary Society was established around 1880. It was initially a part of the interdenominational Indian Female Normal School Society which had been founded in 1852. The objective of this newly formed society was basically to spread the word of God among Indian women through various means. These included education imparted through schools or institutes for teacher training, medical and health services, visits to *Zenanas*, by setting up separate schools for Hindu and Muslim women and by employing Bible women.²The society had been managed by the Church of England till 1957 when it was amalgamated with the Church Missionary Society.³The American Baptist Mission first started *Zenana* work in Balasore in Orissa, India. Work under this mission was first started by Mrs. Smith in 1869 for educating the married girls at Balasore. One hundred and twenty-six women were taught in their *Zenanas* by Mrs. Smith and her assistants.⁴ (Bernard 1873)

Like in other parts of India and elsewhere, the *Zenana* mission was undertaken in Assam as well. Though we know that the *Zenana* system existed in Assam however there are very few official records attesting to the same. Amongst the single women missionaries who served in Assam special mention may be made of a few. Maria Bronson and Orrell Keeler both contributed a great deal to educating women of the *Zenanas*. (Keeler 1886). It was because of the untiring efforts of these women that missionary women came to be allowed to interact with the women confined in the *Zenanas* of high- caste orthodox households. Many women of conservative families would have been denied the privilege of education had they not

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been helped by these two missionaries. The involvement of many other missionary women in educating women in the *Zenanas* can also be gathered from various sources. Elizabeth Vickland wrote that Mrs. Whiting had approached the Assamese women in Sibsagar (Vickland 1924, 1935). She is also said to have visited the Ahom queen's palace at Jorhat. Vickland also mentioned that Mrs. Barker had called on women living in Gauhati.⁵(Keeler 1886)

The problem of the *Zenana* system in Assam came to be noticed when the missionaries began their efforts of educating women. The primary objective of educating women was the fact that they had a critical role to play in the spread of religion and the belief that concrete changes in the faith and beliefs of the people would only be possible through the involvement of women. Another reason for educating women was the chauvinistic notion that Christian men would be useful only if they have wives with high ideals. These women were expected to take care of the homes perform the roles of mothers who would train their children with Christian ideals. So training prospective wives for Christian men was also an important consideration when educating women. The establishment of schools for girls was therefore given utmost importance.⁶

The missionaries found that in Assam it was not difficult to meet with and connect with tribal women and women of the lower castes in society. Interacting with these women was also not a problem as they were allowed to venture out of their houses since they had to contribute to the earnings of their households. However, the scenario in case of women of the higher castes was not as simple. Generally high caste families were financially well-off; thus their women were not required to earn a living. Lack of contribution to the economy of the family caused them to be restricted to the 'inner sphere' or the household. The extent to which this was followed was evident in the *Zenana* system. Missionary men were not allowed to meet the women in the *Zenanas* on any account. Thus, missionary women were consigned the task of entering these secluded spaces and provide the native high caste Hindu and Muslim women with primary education and in the process familiarize them with the ideas of Christianity. At first, access to women of the higher castes could only be gained on the pretext of teaching them some kind of needle-work or domestic skill.

The missionary women started educational efforts in Assam both in the formal and non-formal manner. It was hoped that with the help of education, women would be able to bring about changes in society starting from their individual homes by influencing their own families. The missionaries realized that the girls required the knowledge of basic home skills which could be taught through non-formal education. Vocational training of this sort would prepare the girls for the roles which they would eventually take up. Therefore, in the hostels of schools set up by the mission, girl students were trained to stitch and knit clothes, taught about bodily hygiene, how to prepare different kinds of food and to live a life of dignity.⁷(Nguille 2010:12) This non-formal education was not resisted by the native people as they didn't consider it a threat to their religious and social beliefs. This form of education was also supported by the missionaries who supported the view that women must be trained

in domestic skills to take on the roles of home makers. But the same cannot be said of formal education. Most people were not open to the idea of sending their girls to school where science, mathematics and other subjects were taught. They did not support the idea of women being taught these subjects and considered it unnecessary. Most opposition to education of women is seen to have come from high caste Brahmins (Hindu priests) and Mohammadens.⁸ These sections were not willing to send their girls out of the homes to be educated by the missionaries, be it non-formal education or formal. The native people were apprehensive that the missionaries would convert their women to Christianity. Their fears were not unfounded because the underlying objective of all missionary activities was the spread of Christianity. The prejudiced attitude of the missionaries was in fact quite evident at times. For instance, once a Babu (Indian clerk) wanted his wife to be taught to read and sew. But Ms. Keeler refused unless he allowed his wife to have religious instruction as well. The Babu had to eventually agree.⁹ This attitude of the missionaries may have further discouraged the native population to allow women to be educated. The tribal people of the hills also were not supportive of women's education. In the year 1840, Mrs. Bronson approached a Naga village to meet the women. On being questioned about the purpose of her visit by the chief, she informed him that she had come to educate the women. In reply he said, "You cannot teach our females. They were trained to bear burdens, to bring wood and water, and to make the salt by which we gain our subsistence. If they learn to read and sew, they must give up these labors and remain at home; then who will do this work; as it is our business to watch the village, hunt deer, and fight our enemies? Our young men can learn, but not our women; it is not our custom"¹⁰ (Nguille 2010: 70) This discriminatory attitude existed amongst the Garos of Meghalaya which was part of erstwhile Assam. Social stigma towards women extended beyond with holding them from educational privileges. It was noted that a man could beat his wife at his will, but if she protested or reciprocated, he had the right to abandon her. A woman did not even have the right to be seated equally with men. Women were also usually not permitted to eat before their husbands had taken their meals. So though *Zenanas* were not maintained by the hill tribes, but the condition of the women there was no better than that of the confined women. In this regard, Miriam R Burdette said "The freedom of the Garo woman differs from that of the Purdah-woman of the plains in kind rather than in degree. In both cases, the word of the man is the law that governs her actions. In many instances the Purdah-woman is hardly more bound to her apartments, than is a Garo woman to her work."¹¹ (Burdette 1866:192) The missionary women tried to bring about a change in this attitude towards women. When visiting the homes of the people the missionary women tried to make not only the men but also the women folk aware about gender discrimination.

The second part of the discussion revolves around the methods adopted by the American Baptist missionaries for carrying out work in the *Zenanas*. For this work there were no fixed or ideal methods adopted. In most cases, Bible women were first sent out to speak with the *Zenana* women. Since the beginning the Bible women were indispensable for the *Zenana*

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mission and their roles are just as important as the missionary women. Isabella Watson's report states as follows, "A great deal of visiting has been done in the *Zenanas* and surrounding villages. The Bible woman first makes her visits, and before I enter these homes, permission is first had from the man of the house. I have made it a point never to enter a house unless permission is given. I have, however, made a few exceptions when the women have sent a special request."¹² The women were usually not receptive to Christian teachings as they followed the orders of their husbands to not encourage missionaries to influence them religiously in any way.¹³ From the 1860's *Zenana* work gradually opened up. Wives of missionaries sent appeal for more missionaries to be sent or at least funds to be sent so that national women could be employed for this work.¹⁴ In 1872, Frances Bronson, second wife of Miles Bronson on her return to Assam after fourteen years was much encouraged by progress in the *Zenana* work. She considered it a radical change and was motivated to continue working amongst the women of the *Zenanas*.¹⁵ Maria Bronson Cotes, daughter of Miles Bronson was directly involved with the *Zenana* work. She said, "It was thought a shame to educate girls; so, they are left in perfect ignorance, to do all the hard work in the burning sun. Higher classes keep their women shut up in small apartments. Oh, what a life these poor creatures lead and how unfit they are to train their own children. Even the educated are unwilling to send their wives to us."¹⁶ Missionary women not only encouraged women to come out of their homes but also to become organised and to stand up for their rights. One such example is the change in women's condition amongst the Lotha Nagas. This occurred mainly due to the educational efforts of Mr. & Mrs. Howard Houston. They came to Nagaland in 1949. Lotha Naga women who were so far confined to the homes began taking active part in the school, churches and societies. The American Baptist women missionaries actively supported the organization of women into associations in each church. Miss Bronson wrote that, it was in these associations that women got their first exposure to authority out of their homes. They learnt to lead others and gained knowledge of management. For the first time they could make decisions which was had so far not been allowed in Naga society before the coming of colonialism.¹⁷

In order to encourage the women of the *Zenana* to mingle with them and also to expose them to an environment outside the closed walls they were subjected to, the single women sent to Assam used to organize *Zenana* and 'purdah' parties¹⁸. Elizabeth Vickland narrated about the purdah parties held for *Zenana* women in the mission compound. She said the parties were great occasions for the secluded women, for they could come out and away from their apartments and be exposed to new surroundings. They visited the mission bungalows and were entertained by mission school girls. They were exposed to the many novel things during these visits. They got to see stereopticon slides of places in India, England and other places. They were shown Bible stories and sometimes slides about baby care. They were allowed to tour through the house, touch the piano, listen to records playing, handle knives and forks, china ware and so forth.¹⁹ (Vickland 1924:151-157) Therefore, the motive of these parties was to obviously expose women to western lifestyle. It also showed that

missionary women had a superiority complex and felt that indigenous culture needed to be transformed to meet Christian standards of civilization. In the *Purdah* or *Zenana* parties women of both religions were invited, but Muslims women were always a minority and there was no evidence of these women taking leadership. The women's clubs that were being organized among the *Zenana* women in the early 1900's were emphatic about not making religious distinctions.²⁰ Work in the *Zenanas* was considered an important part of missionary work. It was seen that generous grants were made by the mission for *Zenana* work. This was clear from the resolutions taken in Missionary Conferences. For instance, in one of the conferences it was voted to approve the recommendation that rupees seventy be granted for a woman-teacher in the girls' school while rupees four hundred and fifty was granted for *Zenana* work.²¹

Another point which is very relevant to the discussion is the problems and mindset of the missionary women. Even though missionary women made inarguable contributions to uplifting the condition of women in the *Zenanas* and in general however they were often not given their due share of recognition. The mission board was reluctant in the beginning to assign the title of missionary to the women workers. On visits to the *Zenanas* they were clearly demarcated from the Bible women whom accompanied them. It was the Bible woman who first approached the family and asked the permission of the male members to meet the women of the household. Only then were the missionary women were allowed to come forward. They were usually referred to as 'lady visitors' rather than missionaries by the mission boards and societies. (Semple 2003: 33) It was only later that single women began to be sent out into the field by the Women's Baptist Foreign Mission Society (WBFMS) prior to 1913 and by the Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (WABFMS) from 1914 to 1950. Even when women were finally appointed as missionaries they had to work under the supervision of a male missionary and were often paid less salary in comparison to their male counterparts. Never the less, *Zenana* work also had a positive impact on the missionary women. As stated by Geraldine Forbes, "The greatest impact of this plan was on the women missionaries themselves who, drawn from the 'surplus' of genteel single women in England, would otherwise have been competing for the few available positions of governesses." (Forbes 1986: WS2) So, the *Zenana* mission provided the missionary women with a way to break away from the stereotypical roles and responsibilities expected of them. Through this way they were able to make a difference not only in their own lives but also of those many native women who were languishing in the *Zenanas*.

Despite all the humanitarian work undertaken by the missionary women, it was seen that they were deeply influenced by the racial differences. Geraldine Forbes states that, 'Significantly, women missionaries of the period were not only the helpmates of the imperialists but were themselves imperialists reenacting the drama of the colonizer and the colonized within the confines of the *Zenana*.'²² (Forbes 1986 WS2-WS8) This is a very important observation. When we consider the methods employed by the missionary women in working

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with the women confined in the *Zenanas*, their prejudice towards native women is evident. The missionary women though in pursue of noble objectives were not free of the occidental cultural superiority attitude which considered Indian people and culture as inferior. So, instead of recognizing the traditions and ways of native women as unique and different, the missionary women tried to impose western notions and mannerisms on them in an attempt to modernize and civilize them. They introduced native women to ideas of femininity and housekeeping which the latter were not familiar with. In addition to conversion, the task of the missionary wives was “to remake ‘native’ women into ‘good wives and mothers’ modeled on the norms of metropolitan and evangelical norms of femininity.” (Haggis 2008: 110) Evangelization was linked with the idea of civilization and being brought into social equality with Western women and into positions of respect in their own societies through Christianity. (Roberts 1997, 130) The idea of meeting and speaking with Naga women always interested the missionary women. However, they were shocked upon actually meeting them because Naga women were often naked as it was their way of life. The appearance and behavior of these women was often viewed as immodest which offended the Western sensibilities of the missionary women who considered their views of femininity as ideal and did not recognize those of the Naga women. Mary Mead Clark who was a missionary in Nagaland wrote that Naga women encouraged men to participate in violent practices such as ‘head hunting’.²³ So, she tried to instill in the Naga women ideals of being good wives. Housework was portrayed as ideal work for women while work in the fields was seen as undignified. The native women were taught about Western ideas of home making, midwifery and cookery. On one hand missionary women praised Naga women for being unrestricted like the women in the plains, on the other hand they wanted women to be devoted and tied down to their homes. These ideas were contrary to each other and served to only to decrease the freedom of Naga women.²⁴ (Pathak 2014: 12) This in a way may have led to further difficulties on part of the native women in discovering and asserting their identities on their own terms. Bringing an end to the *Zenana* system was not an easily achievable feat and missionary women toiled hard to remove deep rooted discrimination. In addition to opposition from the natives overcoming their own biased notions and allowing a more liberal perspective in educating women were some of the hurdles which the missionary women struggled with. However, the missionary women tried their best to provide education, basic skills and primary medical and maternity aid to women within the *Zenana* itself.

Conclusion-

The efforts of American Baptist missionary women in implementing *Zenana* work undoubtedly brought about significant transformations in the lives of native women who were previously confined to seclusion. These women faced isolation and the denial of rights due to the rigid orthodoxy upheld by high caste Hindu and Islamic families in the plains, as well as the patriarchal clan structures prevalent among the hill tribes of Assam. Through the dedicated

endeavors of these missionary women, particularly those associated with the American Baptist Mission, native women were provided access to primary education and became aware of their fundamental rights and privileges.

The missionary women not only imparted knowledge in subjects such as literature, mathematics, and science but also provided training in practical skills like needlework and knitting. By introducing native women to aspects of Western culture, the missionary women instilled a sense of liberation, enabling them to recognize the possibilities it offered. Consequently, the women missionaries not only motivated native women to assert their rights but also encouraged men to embrace the concept of education for women and understand the detrimental effects of female seclusion. As a result of the *Zenana* education efforts, many higher caste families began sending their daughters to attend schools established by the missionaries. Gradually, women were allowed to step out of their homes and even engage in various forms of employment. They began to organize themselves and assume public roles, a concept previously inconceivable before the arrival of the missionaries. The *Zenana* system of education initiated by the American Baptist Mission proved beneficial for both native and missionary women. The missionary women gained recognition in their own right, breaking free from stereotypical roles and pursuing work of their choice. This made a substantial difference not only in their own lives but also in the lives of countless secluded women in India.

End Notes:

- ¹ Marianne Lewis, *A Plea for Zenanas*, pamphlet included in Baptist *Zenana* Mission documents, London, 1866.
- ² *Catalogue of the Papers of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society*, University of Birmingham, 1987, p.1.
- ³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴ C. Bernard., *General Report on Public Instruction in Bengal, 1871-72*, Calcutta, 1873, p.380.
- ⁵ Orrell Keeller., *Report on Women's Work in Assam in The American Baptist Missionary Union's Jubilee Conference held in Nowgong, December, 1886*. p.187.
- ⁶ *Report of the Secretary Treasurer*, Assam Baptist Missionary Conference, Fifteenth Session, Sibsagar, 1917, p.56.
- ⁷ Adani Nguille., *Christian Missionary Perspective and their Role in the Transformation of Lotha Naga women in North East India 1885-1950*, Unpublished Phd Thesis, Assam University, Silchar, 2010. p.12
- ⁸ *Letter from Mrs. Scott*, Baptist Missionary Magazine, May 1872, pp.180-181.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ *Journal of Mrs. Bronson, 22nd March, 1848* as quoted in Adani Nguille *Christian Missionary Perspective and their Role in the Transformation of Lotha Naga Women in North East India 1885-1905*, Unpublished Phd thesis, Assam University, 2010, p. 70.

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- 11 Miriam R. Burdette., *Work for Garo Women*, Assam Baptist Missionary Conference, Jubilee Conference, Nowgong, 1886, p. 192.
- 12 *Isabella Wilson's Report*, Assam Baptist Missionary Conference, Gauhati, 1907, p.44.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 F.H. Bronson., *Assam after Fourteen Years*, Baptist Missionary Magazine, 1872, pp. 492-495.
- 16 *Letter from Miss Bronson*, Baptist Missionary Magazine, 1872. p.181.
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Purdah* refers to the practice of women donning veils to protect them from the eyes of outsiders. *Purdah* is practiced by both Hindu and Muslim communities. It is a practice believed to preserve and protect the dignity and purity of women.
- 19 E. Elizabeth Vickland, *Through Judy's Eyes*, Judson Press, Philadelphia, 1924, pp. 151-157.
- 20 E. Elizabeth Vickland., *Daughter of Brahma: A Tale of the Brahmaputra Country*, (ed and introduced by Liza Das) Anwasha, Guwahati, 2005 (first published in 1935), pp.158-161.
- 21 *Article Seven of the Assam Baptist Missionary Conference Report*, Ninth Session, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1907, p.3
- 22 Forbes, Geraldine H. 1986. 'In Search of the 'Pure Heathen': Missionary Women in Nineteenth Century India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 17, WS2-WS8, Review of Women Studies.
- 23 Forbes, Geraldine H. *The Most Manly and Virile Missionary Ground In the Empire, American Missionaries amongst the Nagas*, J.P. Naik Memorial Lecture, Centre For Women's Development Centre, p.12
- 24 Suryasikha Pathak., *Less Freedom Equals Emancipation: Femininity and Sexuality in Colonial Northeast India*, paper presented at Association of Asian Studies Conference, Philadelphia, March, 2014 as quoted in Geraldine Forbes., *The Most Manly and Virile Missionary Ground In the Empire, American Missionaries amongst the Nagas*, J. P.Naik Memorial Lecture, Centre For Women's Development Centre, p.12.

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