



EARLY SUGAR INDUSTRY IN KOTCHANDPUR AND ITS IMPACT ON COLONIAL SOCIETY

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Abstract: Sugar is a commonplace item in daily life. Local varieties of sugar have been used before colonial times, i.e. 1757. This study explores the colonial sugar industry's production methods, trading networks, and socio-cultural impact in Kotchandpur, which is part of the Jashore district of Bangladesh. Bengal's sugar industry, especially the date palm-based 'Dhulua sugar,' has received little scholarly attention, while the state's salt sector has been extensively recorded. This study recounts the early participation of European traders who switched from indigo to sugar production following the Indigo Revolt and locates relics of 19th-century sugar factories, particularly in Solemanpur, using historical documents, archaeological evidence, and ground surveys. Kotchandpur became a significant hub for the production and trade of sugar, exporting to Kolkata and Nalchiti through rail and river systems. It looks at how manufacturing methods have changed throughout time, highlighting the shift from conventional practices to contemporary sugar mills following World War I. The study focuses upon an attempt to understand the impact of the sugar industry on social life, such as on local employment, education, entertainment, and urban growth. How the Newhouse-McLeod family's participation had a big impact on Kotchandpur's 1883 transition from a rural village to a municipal town, observing this was also a focus. Overall, this research work highlights the social impact and conserving the industry's

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legacy and suggests methods for reviving the defunct sugar industry using contemporary methods and cultural preservation.

Keywords: *date-sugar industry, colonial period sugar history, dhulua sugar, trade system, social impact.*

Introduction

It is essential to incorporate six nutrients into a balanced daily diet (Gropper *et al.*: 2018: 29). These substances include sugars, proteins, fats, vitamins, mineral salts, and water. While these six ingredients in the diet contain a significant amount of sugar, both salt and sugar play important roles. Salt and sugar have been utilised as flavour enhancers globally since ancient times (Webb: 2001: 437). It is believed that Bengal was no exception. The origins and development of the salt industry in Bengal have been thoroughly examined. The salt industry was present in Bengal during the 8th century (Kudrass *et al.*: 2022). Similar to salt, Bengal served as a significant hub for the sugar industry.

While some studies have explored the origins of the salt industry, there remains a lack of substantial information regarding the origins, development, manufacturing process, and trade systems associated with the sugar industry in Bengal. Consequently, while the history of the salt industry in Bengal spans over a millennium (Kudrass *et al.* 2022), it remains uncertain whether the history of the sugar industry is comparatively recent or ancient. Date palm trees are predominantly found in the regions of Jessore, Rangpur, Faridpur, Kushtia, Madaripur, Rajshahi, Natore, Barisal, and Khulna in Bangladesh (Roy n.d.). The date juice and jaggery from Jashore district are still renowned. The Jashore district was once famous throughout Europe for producing sugar from date palm juice (Latif 1985). Kotchandpur served as the production and trade centre of sugar derived from date palm juice in the greater Jashore district (Frowde: 1908: 01; Latif: 1985: 64).

During the first half of the 19th century, some European traders settled down in Kotchandpur and its neighbourhood, intending to cultivate indigo (Latif: 1985: 64). Nevertheless, as a result of the Indigo Revolution in Bengal, these European traders were compelled to alter their business practices and began to produce sugar commercially rather than indigo (Hossain: 2020: 38; Latif 1985: 64). The existence of several ancient sugar factories in Jashore has made the Europeans of Kotchandpur knowledgeable about the traditional production of sugar from date juice or jaggery, especially *Dhulua sugar* (Hossain: 2020: 38; Latif 1985: 64). It can be inferred that the sugar industry began to prosper in Kotchandpur, located in the greater Jashore district, during the 19th century, due to the efforts of certain European and local traders.

Nevertheless, limited research has been conducted on the manufacturing process of sugar from date juice, the origins and the development of the industry, and its trade system in this region. Latif (1985) addressed the development, manufacturing process, and trading system and routes in his unpublished M.Phil thesis. Hossain (2020) wrote his book on the history of Kotchandpur and tried to note the development of the sugar industry of the region in a chapter.

However, none of them has historically and archaeologically focused on understanding the origins and impact of this industry on social life. Mainly, this study aims to discover the origin of the sugar industry in the Kotchandpur region of Jashore in Bangladesh with the help of both historical and archaeological evidence, and ground truthing as well. To achieve this aim, the study focuses on several objectives:

First, locating the proper Global Positioning System (GPS) location of the factories, as the numerous remnants of the sugar industry from that period are still visible in Kotchandpur and its neighbouring locations (Hossain: 2020: 40), and there exist certain archaeological artefacts that are interred beneath the surface of the ground.

Secondly, understanding the sugar manufacturing process from date palm juice in Kotchandpur and its neighbouring regions during the 19th century, and observing the differences between past and present manufacturing practices.

Thirdly, the development, commercialisation, trading routes, and comparison between past and present conditions of the sugar industry will also be focused on. These three objectives will help us to figure out our research aim, which was to understand the origins and impact of this industry on social life.

Mixed research methods have been employed, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods within the social sciences, and field surveys have been conducted to complete the study.

Study Area and Its Background

The current study focuses on Kotchandpur (Figure 1.1), which emerged as a *thana* in East Bengal's greater Jashore district in 1772 and became the third municipality town after Jashore and Maheshpur in 1883 (Kotchandpur Upazila 2012) (Latif: 1985: 08). Kotchandpur remained a *thana* under the Jhenaidah subdivision following Bangladesh's independence until 1984, when it was elevated to an upazila inside the newly established Jhenaidah district. Located between 23°22'–23°33' N and 88°55'–89°06' E, it covers an area of 165.63 square kilometres. It shares boundaries with the

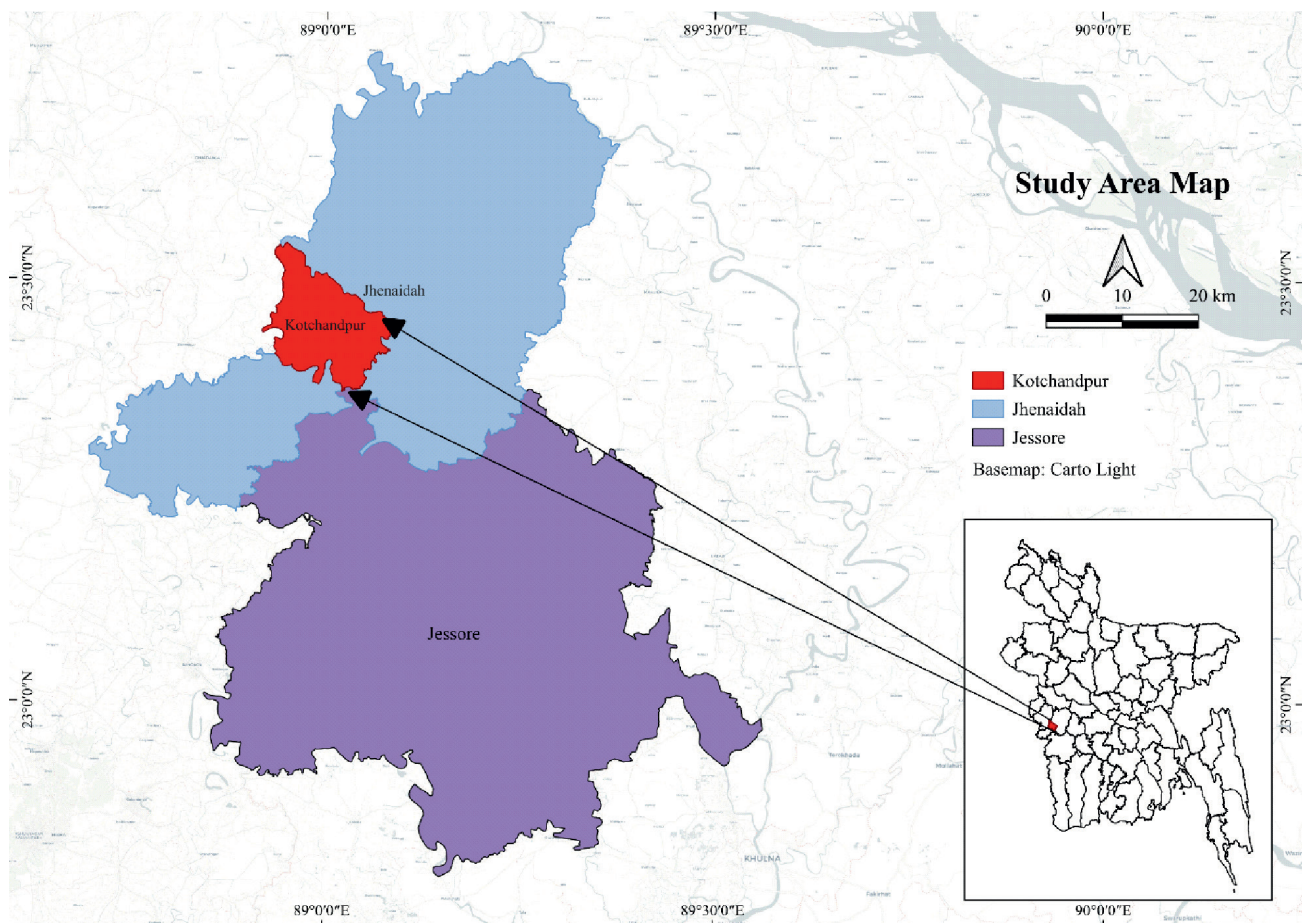


Figure 1.1: Map of Study area

upazilas of Jibannagar, Kaliganj, Maheshpur, and Jhenaidah Sadar. It is accessible by road and rail, situated 30 kilometres from Jhenaidah town and 230 kilometres from Dhaka. It is traversed by the Chitra and Kapotakkha rivers, as well as the Baluhar and Jaidia *baors* (oxbow lakes are referred to as *baors*) (Islam & Miah 2012). In the 19th century, the region developed into a major commercial hub (Latif 1985: 64).

The Sugar Industry of Kotchandpur

Agriculture and industry were the main drivers of the Jessore district's economy (Latif: 1985: 63). In Kotchandpur, agriculture and the sugar trade dominated the economy (Latif: 1985: 63). Domestic sugar production began when locals started making jaggery from date palm juice (Latif 1985: 64). Kotchandpur developed into a significant economic hub due to its proximity to the Kapotakkho and Chitra rivers. During British rule, indigo planters preferred to cultivate in Kotchandpur due to its close ties to Kolkata. The Dhoba Company, which was the first sugar factory of British India, constructed a sugar mill at Kotchandpur at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Hossain: 2020: 44; Latif: 1985: 03; Westland: 1874: 162). In 1842, the ownership went to Mr. Newhouse, a Scottish trader (Latif: 1985: 03). European traders turned to sugar manufacturing following the consequences of the Indigo Revolt of 1858 (Hossain: 2020: 38, 43). Sweet makers from Nadia entered the trade as well. All these traders initiated the commercial production of *Dhulua* sugar (Hossain: 2020: 38-39). About 100,000 maunds (3,732,412 kg) of sugar were produced annually by factories at Kotchandpur, accounting for one-fourth of Jessore's total production (Hossain: 2020: 37, 38; Latif 1985: 63). There were 63 factories by 1915, including ones held by Harold Clive McLeod, Das Company, Mr. Newhouse, and others (Hossain: 2020: 38; Latif: 1985: 65).

The Manufacturing Process of *Dhulua* Sugar from Date Juice

The method used to extract juice from the date palm tree is essentially the same throughout Bangladesh, including in the Kotchandpur area. The description of the most popular approach is given below.

Gachtola I (Figure 1.2-i): Following the rainy season, when the weather is dry and clear, the *gachi*, who prepares the trees and gathers the juice, starts the first stage of *gachtola*. He climbs the tree and cleans its surface using a *dao*, a sharp tool. This preparation step, which lasts for around 15 days, is the first stage of extracting juice.

Gachtola II (Figure 1.2-ii): In this second stage, the *gachi* ascends once more while carrying a bamboo bag containing the *dao*, sand, and a wooden sharpening tool. He forms the cleaned section into the *chandi*, a crescent shape. Two *chandis* meet at a central canal after being sliced roughly 4 inches apart. An inch distant, a bamboo tube (*nali*) is fixed, and a nail (*khil*) is placed at the end of the canal (Figure 1.2-iii). The juice that runs through the *nali* during the night is collected in an earthen pot (*bhaar*) that is secured with a rope (*kana*). In the morning, the juice is gathered. The procedure is repeated after each tree has rested for four days (*jiran*). A *gachi* prepares about 80 trees every day during the season.

Collecting the juice (Figure 1.2-iv): The *gachi* and his helper go to the orchard early in the morning with empty *bhaars*, long bamboo bars (*baank*), and bamboo poles (*loga*). The *bhaars*, which are full of juice, are lowered from the trees. Based on quality, juice is divided into three categories such as *Jiran ros* (best quality), utilised for *Sandesh*, *Nadu*, *Nalen Patali*, and *Nalen Gur*, *Dokat* (second class), which is used to make *Dhulua* sugar or jaggery, *Ola*, the lowest quality, is used to make exquisite wine or country spirits.

Process of making jaggery from *Dokat* juice: Peasants utilise a straw hut called a *bain ghor*, which is usually present in every home, to

manufacture jaggery. Pans (*jalo*) are arranged on top of one or more stoves (*bains*) (Figure 1.2-v, vi, vii). The stove is lit when the juice gathered by the *baank* is poured into the *jalo*. After being cooked steadily for five to six hours, the fluid gradually thickens into mustard-flower-like yellow jaggery. The flavour is tested with *urki*, a bamboo and coconut-shell instrument. The pan is taken out of the fire when it is ready. Known as *beejmara* (Figure 1.2-ix), a worker uses a stick made of palm tree branches (*beejkathi*) to stir the liquid jaggery until the molasses turns white and soft (Figure 1.2-x). The final jaggery is either sold or kept. Farmers and labourers use *jhola gur*, the lowest-quality jaggery, frequently with hookah.

Manufacturing process of sugar from jaggery: Multi-story buildings known as sugar factories are situated on plots that range in size from one to three bighas (27,000 to 81,000 square feet). On the factory roof, moist jaggery is sun-dried. The factories have several stoves for boiling jaggery and iron chimneys. Before winter arrives, factory owners give *dadon* (upfront payments) to *gachis* in return for an assured supply of jaggery throughout the season. Factory warehouses are where the gathered jaggery is kept.

Manufacturing of Dhulua sugar: A huge clay pot (*nanda*) is positioned on the factory roof. Above the *nanda* is a bamboo rug supported by a triangular wooden frame (*tekat*). The *nanda* is filled with melted jaggery and exposed to the sun for two days. The liquids soak into the rug after rising. The rug is then covered with a native aquatic plant known as *pot-shyawla* or *chini-shyawla* (*Blyxa octandra*) (Latif: 1985: 71; Samhitās & Boddupalli: 2021). After three to five days, the plant turns white due to a chemical reaction caused by sunlight. Granules of sugar are visible after removal. *Mutano* is the procedure of scraping these using a sharp iron implement (*beki*). Until all of the jaggery has turned into *akra*, a reddish sugar, the sugar is sun-dried. The leftover residue is subsequently cooked into molasses, cooled

underground, and then processed again. Despite being less pure, *dhulua* sugar was well-liked in Kolkata because it is soft, yellowish, and moist (Westland: 1874: 167). *Jhola gur* is either smoked or utilised as animal fodder (Latif: 1985: 72). On the other hand, *paka* sugar, which is more granular and purer, was mostly made at Keshabpur rather than Kotchandpur, yet was highly demanded in Europe (Westland: 1874: 69-70).

The Initiation of Sugar Production in Contemporary Processes

Latif states that, “The process of whitening sugar was modernised after World War I. Milk and bone powder are used to process sugar in contemporary methods. Certain factories manufactured modern machinery and exported sugar with the assistance of Japanese and American experts” (1985:72). With this development, conventional approaches gave way to more effective and scientific procedures. In order to improve production quality and ease sugar exports, some manufacturers even started manufacturing contemporary machinery and profited from the experience of American and Japanese experts. The modern sugar industry in Bangladesh officially began in the 20th century with the construction of large-scale sugar mills like the Mubarakganj Sugar Mill in Kaliganj, Jashore, and Carew and Company’s mill in Damurhuda, Chuadanga. These mills, which were outfitted with cutting-edge machinery and manned by qualified scientists and specialists, established the groundwork for the nation’s modern industrial sugar industry.

Trading process and route for sugar produced in Kotchandpur

Kotchandpur served as the predominant market for sugar (Westland: 1874: 174). Numerous factories were located in the Solemanpur area of Kotchandpur. The majority of the sugar produced in this region was exported to Kolkata (Westland: 1874: 169-170). Approximately one-fourth of



Figure 1.2: The process of *Gachtola* to *Beejara*

i. Palm tree preparing process-*Gachtola*, ii. Ascending to the tree, iii. Tree Cutting process, iv. Collecting date juice from the tree, v. Pouring juice into the pan, vi. Heating the juice, vii. Yellow colouration, viii. Pouring hot jaggery into another pot to rub, ix. *Beejara* process, x. Jaggery foun after *Beejara*.

the portion was exported to Nalcchiti, located in the Jhalokathi district of Barisal division. The quantity of sugar exported to Nalcchiti experienced a gradual increase. Kotchandpur maintained effective communication with Kolkata via both river and land routes. The sugar, exported to Nalcchiti, was initially transported from Kotchandpur to Kaliganj for further distribution (Westland: 1874: 174).

Discussion

The findings of this study offer insights into the origin, development of the sugar industry of the colonial period in the Kotchandpur area of Jashore in Bangladesh, its manufacturing process, and its impact on social life. The data revealed some key

points that contribute to the understanding of the topic.

Understanding the Origin

The origin of the sugar industry is tough to examine because of a lack of proper evidence. Latif (1985) and Hossain (2020), both noted that the inhabitants of Kotchandpur and its neighbourhood areas had knowledge of a domestic process of sugar making from date juice. But none of them identified the actual origin. The terracotta evidence found in Chandraketurarh, an archaeological site located in West Bengal, India, indicates a very early origin of at least two thousand years. A fragment of a terracotta plaque from the first century CE shows that a peasant is collecting juice from a date-palm



Fig. 1.3: Image of terracotta plaque.

tree (Haque: 2001: 318) (Fig.1.3). Haque noted that, “The dexterous depiction of animals and trees was another notable aspect of the Sunga terracotta” (2001:86).

The location of Chandraketugarh is not far from Kotchandpur. The linear distance between these two places is 85.03 kilometres (Fig.1.4).

Observing these data, we can probably say that the existence of the date sugar industry in Kotchandpur and its surrounding areas dates back to the Sunga period or the first century CE.

Kotchandpur was the largest sugar market in the Jashore district. And, Solemanpur village (now a ward in the municipality town) was

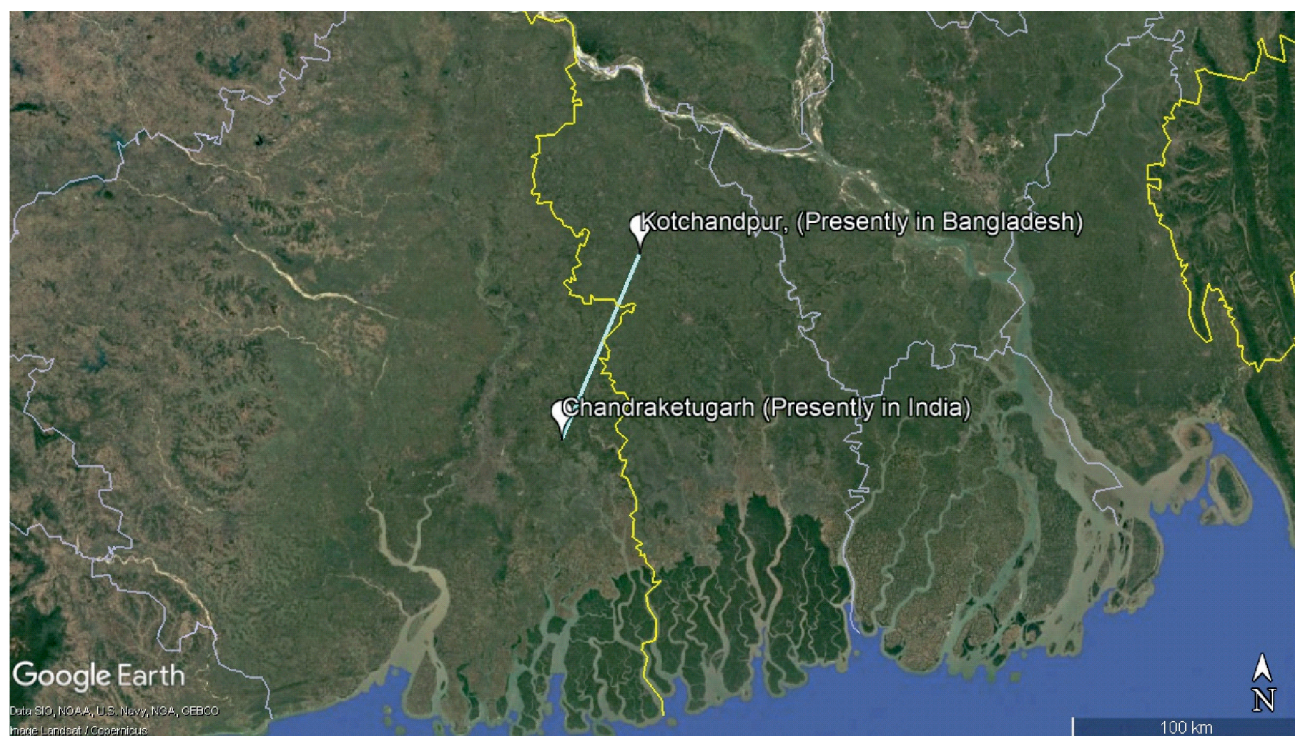


Fig. 1.4: Distance map between Kotchandpur and Chandraketugarh



Fig. 1.5: Kotchandpur Govt. Model Pilot Secondary School building (formerly, John Siniolab McLeod's house).

covered with factories (Fig.1.10) (Latif: 1985: 63). Some remnants of old factories are still found in different locations in the town. Most of them are demolished and abandoned. And, a few others are now reconstructed and are being used as homes for inhabitants.

The house of Newhouse, called *Shaheb bari*, was seen beside the river Kapotakkha (Fig.1.10). It fell into ruins naturally over time. The House of John Sinolab McLeod, a relative of the Newhouse family, is still standing beside the Kapotakkha River, and the building has been used as a school building (Fig. 1.5 and Fig.1.10).

The broken parts of the earthen jar or scaffoldings (Fig. 1.6), used for collecting date juice and storing jaggery, are found beneath the surface over a large area in the town. A demolished factory building is also seen at Taherpur, a neighbourhood of Kotchandpur, where wine was manufactured from jaggery (Latif: 1985: 72).

Understanding the Manufacturing Process

A significant difference is identified between the old and modern sugar-manufacturing processes. In the 19th century, sugar manufacturing started commercially in Kotchandpur. The sugar made out of date juice in Kotchandpur was called *Dhulua* sugar, which was impure and of worse quality than *Paka* sugar. It is worth mentioning that the purer form of sugar, called *Paka* sugar, was manufactured in the southern part of the Jashore district.

The manufacturing process of *Dhulua* sugar consists of five consecutive steps. It was tough to maintain quality and cleanliness in the steps. After the First World War (WWI), two sugar mills were established in 1933 in Natore and Dinajpur with modern technologies, which are regarded as the first sugar mills in now Bangladesh. In 1938, a large sugar mill was established at Darshana, Chuadanga, with contemporary machinery. Another modern sugar mill was established in 1965, during the Pakistan period, at Kaliganj in

Jhenaidah. All these mills produce sugar out of sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) (Yamane 2025). The quality, taste, and purity of sugar produced in these mills were far better than those of the old factories of Kotchandpur. Quality, colour, and taste are maintained scientifically in chemical laboratories of modern mills. The production cost was also low.

Understanding the Trading Routes

Trading systems and routes are very interesting to study. The sugar produced in the Jashore district is exported to two different places: Nalchiti (now an upazila in Jhalokathi district) and Kolkata (then the capital of India, now the capital of West Bengal) (Figure 8). Sugar produced in other parts of the district, except Kotchandpur, found its destination in Nalchiti. Kotchandpur supplied the product to Kolkata single-handedly. Kolkata demanded *Dhulua* sugar for native consumption.

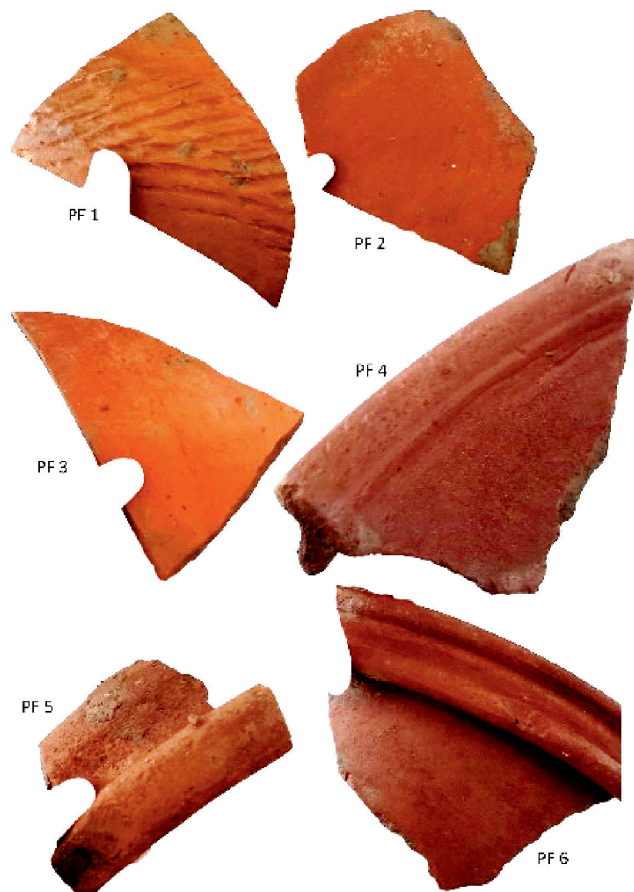


Fig. 1.6: Broken pieces of pottery.

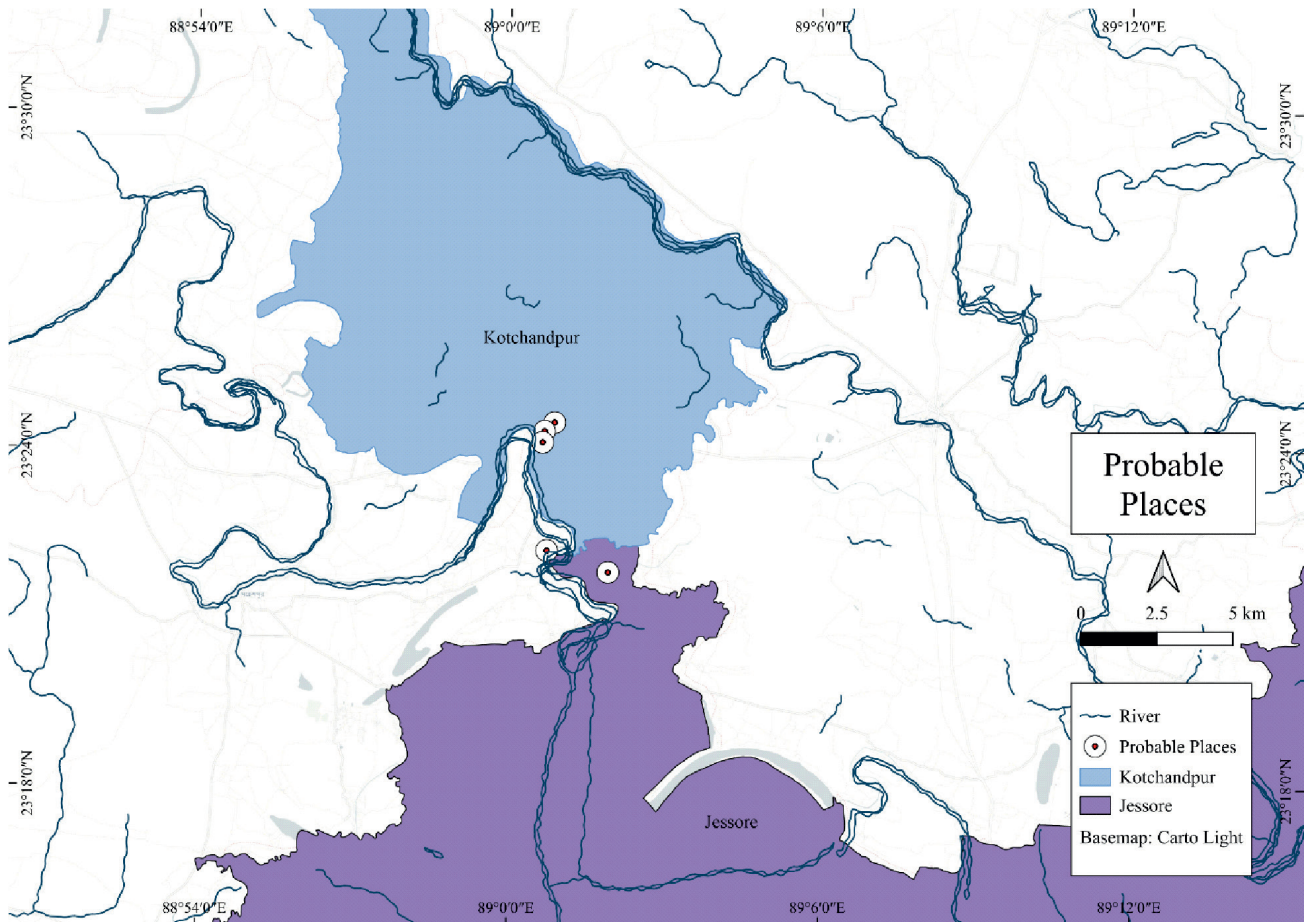


Fig.1.7: Probable sugar industry places and river.

Demand for *Dhulia* sugar increased gradually in the eastern parts of Bengal. That led the production to be exported to Nalchiti from Kotchandpur (Westland 1874: 170). Though most of the production used to be exported to Kolkata, one-fourth of the production that used to go to Nalchiti started to increase gradually (Westland 1874: 172).

Dhulia sugar that was produced in Kotchandpur, is transported to Kolkata via both waterways and roadways because these two places were strongly connected both by road and river (Figure 8). Boats, launches, and steamers were moved between Kotchandpur and Kolkata. The sugar that went to Nalchiti, was brought to Kaliganj. From Kaliganj, the sugar was shipped and sent to Nalchiti (Figure 8). A railway connection was established in this region in the early 20th century. Then the connection

with Kolkata and other parts of Bengal became stronger than before.

It is notable to mention that natives of Kolkata used to consume *Dhulia* sugar. *Paka* sugar has no demand in Kolkata. It was exported to Europe from Kolkata (Westland: 1874: 170). *Paka* sugar was primarily produced in the southern parts of the district, such as Keshabpur. Keshabpur, now an upazila of the Jashore district, was the second-largest sugar manufacturing place after Kotchandpur.

Understanding the Impact of the Sugar Industry on Social Life

Job Opportunities: The development of an industry in any location frequently opens the door to raising the local standard of living. The development of new job opportunities contributes to the realisation of that goal. Kotchandpur's sugar industry was not different in this context. Despite

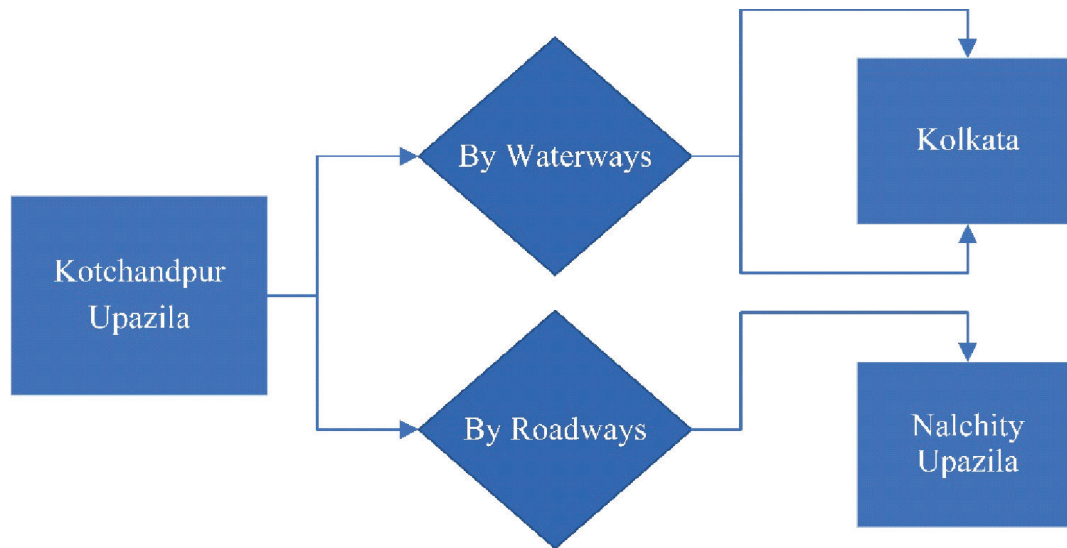


Figure 8: Trade route among Kotchandpur, Nalchiti and Kolkata.

the fact that the inhabitants of that era are no longer with us, we can still learn about their way of life from historical documents and archaeological artefacts. Alongside these historical sources, the memories and narratives preserved in the local community still keep parts of that history alive.

As already mentioned, the sugar industry created a huge number of job opportunities in this region, now it’s time to explore it. And to jump into that discussion, we have to focus on the Newhouse family, as they have a great influence on it (Fig.1.9). Newhouse was an English descent, married to Bridget Newhouse, and came and settled down in Kotchandpur to start the sugar trade (Latif: 1985: 03). His wife, Bridget, was from Suffolk, England. They had several children born in Kotchandpur, but survived only one daughter named Margaret Sarah. Newhouse and his wife owned several factories in Kotchandpur and its neighbourhood places. A young man from Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland, named John Sinolab McLeod, came to Chougacha as a manager.

Margaret was married to John in 1850. After the death of Mr. and Ms. Newhouse, all the factories came into the ownership of John. John contributed to the expansion of the sugar industry, like his father-in-law. John and Margaret had three

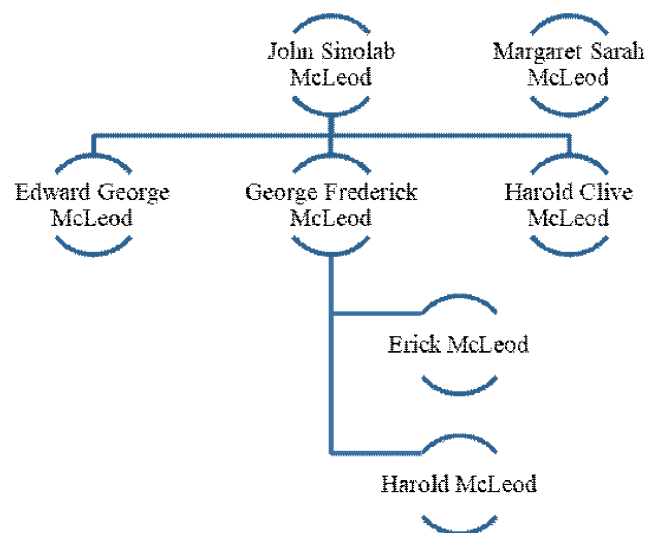


Fig. 1.9: McLeod family tree (till 1955).

sons: Edward George McLeod, George Frederick McLeod, and Harold Clive McLeod. Edward and Harold Clive were unmarried, and Frederick had two sons. Among Frederick’s two sons, Erick McLeod was unmarried, and Harold McLeod was married. Except for Harold, all members of the McLeod family died in Kotchandpur, and he migrated to New Zealand in 1955.

As the sugar industry started to be developed by the hands of the McLeod family, traders from different parts of the country started to come here. The population started to increase

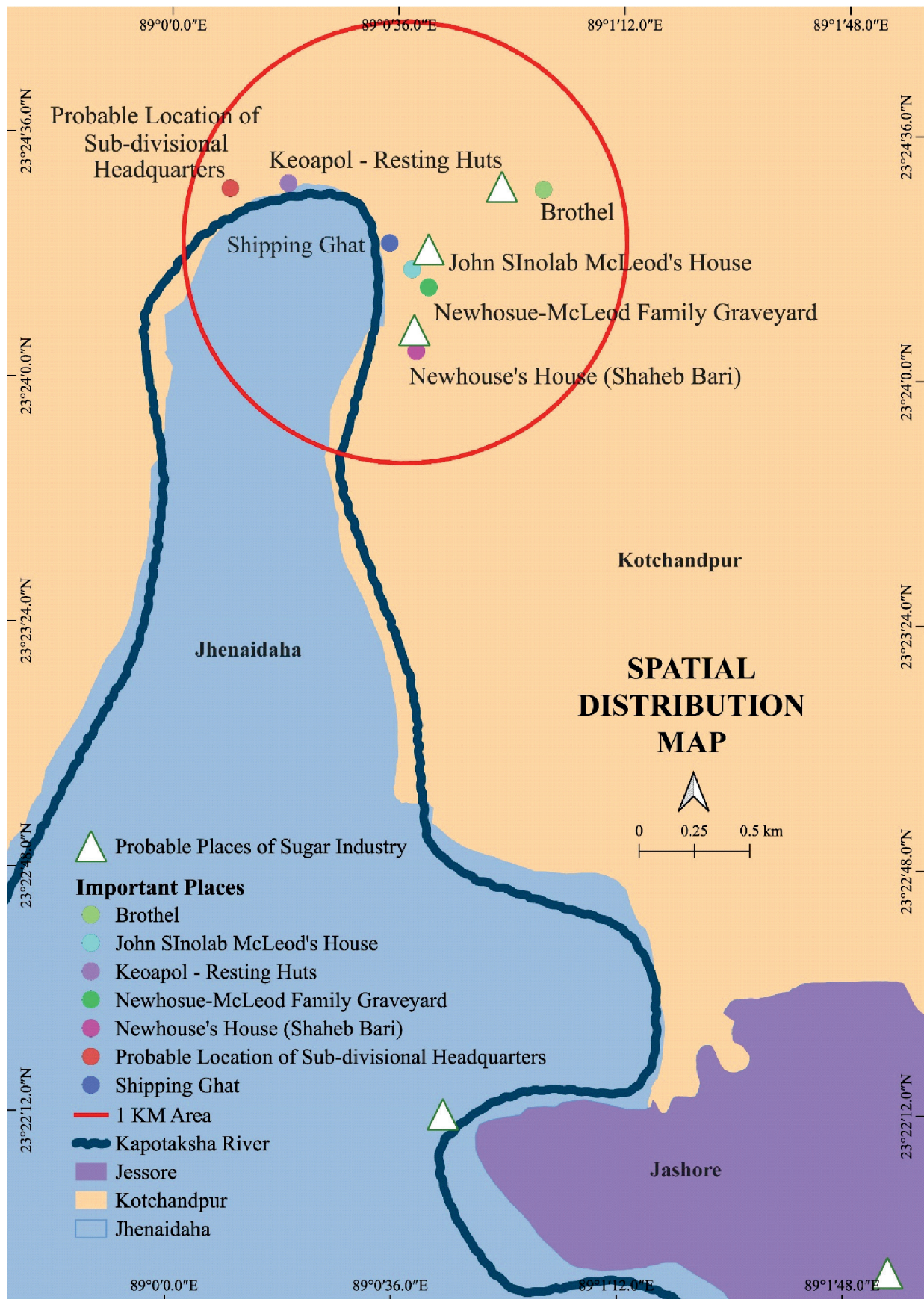


Fig.1.10: Spatial distribution map.

day by day. Factories needed lots of skilled and unskilled workers, merchants, cultivators, etc., to be run properly. This is how a huge number of job opportunities are created. And, Kotchandpur started to urbanise from a village and was declared a municipality in 1883.

Entertainment: According to Patel & Desai (2012), asserts that in a demanding work environment, having fun at work is expected and perhaps required to relieve the stress and anxieties of daily life. Happiness and cheeriness accompany the fun. It is essential for workers to be productive at work, and having fun at work makes workers more productive (Kamalan and Sutha 2017). Thus a working class flourished oriented to the sugar industry. Lots of workers and officers used to work in factories. Workers and officers had to work all day long and needed to have entertainment. Labourers and workers used to meet their sexual needs at a brothel (Fig.1.10). Two theatre clubs named *Kheyali Natya Songho* and *Baniapara Theatre Club*, were established in the early 1900s. The office building of *Kheyali Natya Songho* is still located at the heart of the town. Mainly, officers used to go to the theatres to entertain themselves.

Sugar Trading: Colonialism opened a vast opportunity for sugar trading in this area. *Dhulua* sugar made in Kotchandpur was exported to Kolkata and Nalchiti (Westland: 1874: 169-170). Railways were introduced in Kotchandpur and its neighbourhood later in the early 20th century, which led to the expansion of trading routes and paced the trade system a lot.

Urbanisation: Colonialism contributed a lot to this area. Kotchandpur was a village beside the Kapotakkha River. The Newhouse-McLeod family developed the *dhulua* sugar industry in Kotchandpur and its neighbourhood, which led to the urbanisation of the village. Due to urbanisation, communication, and administrative facilities, Kotchandpur became a sub-division headquarters of the Jashore district in 1861 (Fig.1.10). But the

subdivision headquarters shifted to Jhenaidah in 1863. Jhenaidah became a district of Bangladesh in 1984, and Kotchandpur is an upazila of the district now.

Some elite class businessmen and owners of factories, led by Edward George McLeod, first realised the need for a municipality in this town (Latif: 1985: 14). They reached out to the Governor of Bengal in this regard. Finally, the Lieutenant Governor permitted to establishment of a municipality in Kotchandpur. Consequently, Kotchandpur Municipality was established on 1st July, 1883.

Education: After the establishment of the sugar industry, colonialism also influenced the education system in Kotchandpur also. Till 1850, educational institutions were run traditionally there (Latif: 1985: 34). In 1863, a minor school started to function in Kotchandpur. This minor school was upgraded to a full-fledged High English School in 1898, and in 1901, it became affiliated with the University of Calcutta (Latif: 1985: 35). The government started to aid the high school in 1911. Now, the school is named Kotchandpur Government Model Secondary School, and it is functioning from John Sinolab McLeod's abandoned buildings. Three primary schools were also established respectively at Solemanpur, Dudhsora, and Barabamandaha before 1900.

Steps to recover the lost industry

Using contemporary, scientific, and well-organised manufacturing procedures is crucial to reviving Kotchandpur's lost sugar industry. Product quality and production efficiency can be improved by combining traditional knowledge with modern technologies. Preserving the historical identity of the industry can also be greatly aided by archaeological exploration/excavation and conservation of abandoned manufacturing buildings and related heritage sites. These refurbished locations might be used as

educational and cultural assets, drawing tourists and scholarly attention. Government programs, including financial incentives, technical training, and policy support for small-scale producers and local entrepreneurs, are essential to this rebirth. Such actions might open the door to this historically important industry's sustainable regeneration.

Importance of Exploration/Excavation

The Kotchandpur area is enriched with lots of archaeological sites and heritage. Broken pieces of earthen pots or scaffoldings are lying underneath the surface, covering a huge area. The family graveyard of the Newhouse-McLeod family is still seen, but is getting demolished due to natural reasons. Latif (1985) noted that there are four tombs in the graveyard, but one of them is not identifiable. Remnants of old factories are also found in different places in the town. So, proper archaeological excavation is needed to uphold the history of the colonial sugar industry of this area. After the proper excavation, the archaeological and historical artefacts can be stored and displayed in a museum there. By the museum, people, researchers, and students can be able to learn the history of the area properly.

Conclusion

The Kotchandpur sugar industry, in the colonial era, was crucial in forming the socioeconomic, cultural, and urban landscape of the larger Jashore area. This industry has been largely ignored in scholarly debate, especially from archaeological and historical viewpoints, despite its historical significance. By revealing the beginnings, growth, production methods, and trading networks of the 19th-century date palm-based sugar industry, with an emphasis on *Dhulua* sugar, this study fills that study gap. In addition to correctly identifying visible relics and buried artefacts, the research has effectively recorded the GPS coordinates, for mapping, of former sugar factories using

historical data, archaeological evidence, and ground truthing. The results trace the trading networks that connected Kotchandpur to Kolkata and Nalchiti, highlighting important distinctions between ancient and modern sugar production techniques. It was discovered that the Newhouse-McLeod family in particular played a significant role in the industrialisation and urbanisation of the region. Education, entertainment, jobs, and general community development were all impacted by the sector. Systematic archaeological/historical exploration and heritage conservation are essential to honouring and preserving this past. Additional investigation, such as tracking down the McLeod family tree, may promote cross-cultural interactions between Bangladesh and Scotland and assist the research enthusiasts in this field.

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