Daughter of Kashi – Queen of Jhansi

The Use of History of an Indian queen – the Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi from the time of Independence until today

Banaras dotter – Drottning av Jhansi
Historiebruket av den indiska drottningen - Rani Lakshmi Bai av Jhansi från självständigheten år 1947 tills idag

Victoria Lundin
Abstract

The purpose of this master thesis in history was to examine the use of history of an Indian queen, the Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. The Rani Lakshmi Bai was born in Banaras and married a king, the Raja of Jhansi. The Rani Lakshmi Bai fought against the British during the first war of independence year 1857-58. Recently, a memorial has been built at her supposed birthplace in Banaras, more than 150 years after her death. This development has raised several questions about the use of history of the Rani Lakshmi Bai. How has the use of history of Rani Lakshmi Bai changed? Why has it become relevant to build a statue of the Rani now and not before? The purpose of this study has been answered with the help of oral history and text analysis. Firstly, this has been done, by examining the knowledge of people from Banaras and Jhansi as well as through their perceived image of the Rani Lakshmi Bai. Twenty people from Banaras and four people from Jhansi have been interviewed. Secondly, the institutional level information has been examined which is presented in educational textbooks and newspapers like the local newspaper Aaj and the national newspapers The Hindu as well as The Times of India. The results show that the level of historical knowledge about the Rani is low, though the love and affection for her are great. The use of history of the Rani Lakshmi Bai has been as a freedom fighter, a role model in different contexts and a symbol, as well as an inspirational source of women empowerment. There is also a political use of the Rani. All these uses of history in combination with the increased economic interest in the neighbourhood of Assi in the city of Banaras made it relevant and possible to build a monument of the Rani Lakshmi Bai in present time.
# Table of Content

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................ 1  
1.1 Problematization ......................................................................................... 1  
1.2 Purpose and Research Questions .............................................................. 2  
1.3 Background .................................................................................................. 3  
  1.3.1 The Establishment of the British Colonial Rule ...................................... 3  
  1.3.2 Events of the Year 1857-1858 ................................................................. 4  
  1.3.3 The life story of Rani Lakshmi Bai ......................................................... 5  
1.4 Previous Research ....................................................................................... 8  
  1.4.1 Rani Lakshmi Bai in Indian Historiographies ........................................ 8  
  1.4.2 Previous Research on the Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai .......... 9  
  1.4.3 Examples of Previous Reaches on the Use of History of Monuments .... 12  
1.5 Theory ......................................................................................................... 14  
  1.5.1 Use of History ...................................................................................... 14  
  1.5.2 Theories of Nation, National identity and Nationalism ...................... 15  
  1.5.3 Theory of Myth .................................................................................... 17  
  1.5.4 Theory of Feminism and Gender ........................................................... 18  
1.6 Delimitations ............................................................................................... 19  
1.7 Method ......................................................................................................... 20  
1.8 Material ....................................................................................................... 23  

2. Presentation of Results Í The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai .......... 27  
  2.1 Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai .......................................................... 27  
    2.1.1 The People of Banaras Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai .......... 27  
    2.1.2. The People of Jhansi Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai ............. 30  
    2.1.3 The People of Banaras Source of Knowledge ................................... 31  
    2.1.4 The People of Jhansi Source of Knowledge ...................................... 34  
    2.1.5 The Rani Lakshmi Bai in Educational Textbooks ............................. 34
2.1.6 Newspaper articles about Rani Lakshmi Bai .......................................................36

2.2 The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai .................................................................38

2.2.1 The People of Banaras Perceived Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai ...............38

2.2.2 The People of Jhansi Perceived Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai .................42

2.2.3 The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai in Newspapers ..................................43

2.3 The Monument and Celebration of Rani Lakshmi Bai .......................................45

2.3.1 The People of Banaras Opinion about the Rani Lakshmi Bai Monument ..........45

2.3.2 Organisations’ Role in the Construction of the Monument in Banaras ..............47

2.3.3 Newspaper Articles about Rani of Lakshmi Bai Monuments ..........................49

2.3.4 The People of Banaras and Jhansi about the Celebration of Rani Lakshmi Bai ....50

2.3.5 Newspaper Articles about the Celebration of Rani Lakshmi Bai .......................50

3. Analysis and Discussion .........................................................................................53

3.1 Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai .................................................................53

3.2 The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai .............................................................60

3.3 The Rani Lakshmi Bai Monument .......................................................................63

3.4 Conclusions .........................................................................................................67

References
Appendix 1
Appendix 2
Appendix 3
Appendix 4
Appendix 5
Appendix 6
1. Introduction

This study is about the use of history of an Indian queen – a Rani\(^1\), who fought against the British rule in the first war of Independence in the year 1857-58. My first acquaintance with Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi was in the autumn of 2012. I was in the city of Banaras\(^2\) and shown a monument under construction. I did not know then that this was Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, a well-known historical character. There and then this unfinished monument did not interest me at all. It was just another monument. Later that year, in December a young woman was brutally raped in the city of Delhi. She died of her injuries, but the nation woke up and began to take the situation of Indian women more seriously. India can be seen as a country full of contradictions. It was only the goddesses Durga, who could save the earth from a demon when the male gods were not able to, and a woman has been Prime Minister but still women and girls in many ways are underprivileged. This situation, feelings and contradictions in combination with coincidence were the beginning of my interest in Rani Lakshmi Bai, a woman born in Banaras and married to the king of Jhansi. In Jhansi, the Rani went against the female norm and fought the British 150 years ago.

1.1 Problematization

In the year 1857-58, revolts against the British presence swept across the northern India. As a widow of the Raja of Jhansi, Rani Lakshmi Bai had a central role and led troops against the British in the province Jhansi, a city of today’s Uttar Pradesh. In this war, the Rani died as a martyr, but in many ways she is still alive in people’s memory through educational textbooks, fictions, television series and movies. In the year 2010\(^3\), 152 years after the Rani’s death, a monument was built in the neighbourhood of Assi in the city of Banaras. This monument is located in the backyard one stair up from the river Ganga and behind a Sanskrit school. Some people claim this as her actual birthplace. One enclosed garden has been constructed for the monument.\(^4\) Furthest into the middle there is a grand, golden statue of the Rani riding a rearing horse with her adopted son on her back and a sword in her hand. Beneath this statue, there is a description of her life.

---

\(^1\) Rani=queen. Jhansi ki Rani= Rani of Jhansi. The Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi is the full name, but there are several spellings and versions of it. Here, in this study the Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi foremost will be shortened with the Rani. Raja=king.

\(^2\) The city of Banaras is also known as Benares, Kashi or Varanasi etcetera. In this study the name the name Banaras is used. See further definition in Eck, Diana, L., (1983) Banaras  The City of Light: Singh, Rana P.B  Rana, Pravin S., (2006) Banaras Region  A Spiritual & Cultural Guide

\(^3\) Chandra, Swati, “Maharani Lakshmi Bai’s birth place lies in neglect.” Times of India 20131102, 20140201

\(^4\) See photographs of the monument in Banaras, Jhansi and Gwalior in appendix 6.
story, with the title Daughter of Kashi, Queen of Jhansi, in both Hindi and English. On each side of the surrounding walls, there is a famous poem Jhansi ki Rani by the poet Subhadra Kumari Chauhan and her life story in engraved pictures. During the spring of 2014 the monument cabin for payment outside the gate was not yet used, and the gate opened spontaneously for a couple of hours during the day.

The Rani Lakshmi Bai monument was built a long time after her death and around 60 years after India’s independence. This has raised many questions foremost about the use of history. How has the value of her historical persona changed so that it is important to signify in a monument? If the use of history has not changed, then why has she been neglected for so long? Has her symbolic meaning become more important for the citizen or the political parties of Banaras? Has this statue been planned for a long time and recently became possible to build? Have people known about that this was the Rani’s birthplace or is it newly constructed knowledge? Is she a forgotten freedom fighter or beloved by the people? Has the political situation changed, so that is more important to talk about the female freedom fighters? The building of this monument gives an opportunity to raise questions about how a historical character can be used for different purposes in different times.

1.2 Purpose and Research Questions
The purpose of this study was to examine the use of history of Rani Lakshmi Bai foremost in the city of Banaras and also in the city of Jhansi as well in an extended Indian geographical context. This will help to learn more about how a historical person can be used in different contexts and times. This will also contribute to find out more about the role of history as well as how history can be constructed in the society. This purpose was achieved by conducting this study at two levels. The first one was to examine the point of view of the people of Banaras and Jhansi and their relation with the Rani. At this level, it has been examined what people know about the Rani, as well as why is she important or neglected by the public. The second level of this study was to examine how the Rani has been pictured and used at an institutional level, like in educational textbooks and newspapers. Educational textbooks and newspapers are the sources where people usually learn about history, subjects and social issues that are important to the Indian society. Therefore, the study is conducted at two levels; at common person’s level and institutional level. These two levels of society have been

---

5 The poet, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan (1904-1948), was a poet, short story writer and a political activist. She was born into an orthodox Rajput family in Allahabad. Chauhan joined Gandhi’s non-violent movement, and was the first woman to court arrest in the struggle for freedom. Chauhan’s writings were women and nationalist-oriented. (Singh, Harleen., (2014) The Rani of Jhansi \ Gender, History, and Fable in India, p. 105)
compared to see which kind of use of history of the Rani is present in Banaras, Jhansi and in an extended geographical context. This will also give the opportunity to discuss how the use of history of the Rani can be a component to create a national identity, feminist identity or a political identity.

This will not be a study of the Rani Lakshmi Bai monument in Banaras per se. The study takes the statue as a reference, as an indicator of that the use of history of the Rani has changed.

The main research questions are:

1. Which use of history is there of Rani Lakshmi Bai in the city of Banaras and Jhansi, and how has it changed during the post-colonial time?
2. What knowledge do people of different age groups (from 20-77) from Banaras and Jhansi have about the Rani, and has this knowledge changed with time?
3. What kind of information does the institutional level like educational books and newspapers give about the Rani?
4. How do the people and the institutional view about Rani Lakshmi Bai interact?
5. Why is the monument of Rani Lakshmi Bai built now after 150 years of her death and 60 years after independence? What does this say about the use of history of Rani Lakshmi Bai and her place in the society?

1.3 Background
In the struggle against the British presence, the Rani was a part of a larger context. Here it will be described shortly how India became a British colony, the first war of independence and the life of the Rani. This background functions as a context for the reader and helps to compare the later presented results of the study.

1.3.1 The Establishment of the British Colonial Rule
At the time of the revolt in the years 1857-58, the British had been present in India for over 200 years. The presence of the British in India began with the East India Company, one of the many European trading companies in India. At that time, the Mughal Empire ruled India. The Mughal Empire existed from year 1526 until 1856, but during its last 150 years it was reduced and weakened. The Mughal Empire was weakened by several factors, for example,

---


3
interregional wars and invasions. During this time, Europeans increased their influence in the area. From the year 1756 the East India Company began to govern Indian territories, with the initial purpose to support the trade. The political instability of the early eighteenth century resulted in requiring a defensive of the company’s factories. This led to the training of Indian soldiers that were called sepoys. The sepoys complemented the Company’s army with a large number. It was essentially a mercenary army whose loyalty depended on the payment to the soldiers. The East India Company did treaty agreements with many Indian kings, Rajas, who approved British supremacy in return for of autonomy in their territories. These came to be known as Indian princely states.

1.3.2 Events of the Year 1857-1858

According to many historians, for example, Bose & Jalal the events of the year 1857-58 were a watershed in South Asian colonial history. The Indian fight against the British did not succeed, but the memories have lasted to modern days and became a source of inspiration for the national freedom movement. Depending on the tradition of the historians, the events of the year 1857-58 have been given many names and interpretations. British historians refer to it as the Sepoy mutiny or the Indian mutiny. Early twentieth century Indian nationalist referred to it as the *first war of independence*, the *Great Revolt* or the *National revolt*. However, military mutiny or civil revolt was common in early colonial India. There were many reasons for this conflict. One crucial reason was the use of the Enfield rifles introduced in the year 1857. The bullets were treated with the fat of cow and pig, and were polluting for both Hindus and Muslims. Another primary cause was the sepoys dissatisfaction regarding payment and their subordination to the British soldiers. One more reason which affected a wider section of the society was the nature of British administration, for example, the excessive taxes on the peasantry.

On May 11, 1857 the revolt began and spread in foremost northern India. Different groups from the countryside as landlords, peasants, and princes took up arms. They had different

---

11 Chandra, Bipan., (1989) *India’s Struggle for Independence*, p. 40  
reasons to fight the British. However, there was never any coherent strategy.\textsuperscript{16} The rebel activity was marked by strong anti-British feelings and had a lot of support from the people. But, the country as a whole was not behind the sepoys. There were Indian rulers who expected their future to be safer with the British presence.\textsuperscript{17}

In the aftermath of the British conquest, the British claimed on unified sovereignty, including control over the military. This came into effect on August year 1858 when the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act and transferred all authority from the East India Company to the British Crown.\textsuperscript{18} The consequences of this transfer were, for example, related to military and economic aspects. Another consequence was that Indian nationalism began to grow. The development of Indian nationalism in the nineteenth century was a result of the response towards the British power. All Indians, from every religious or cast background became conscious of the foreign white British that ruled their land, without any contact with the native people.\textsuperscript{19} The revolt increased the fear and racism among the British. After the uprising, the British built separate spaces in cities for themselves.\textsuperscript{20}

1.3.3 The life story of Rani Lakshmi Bai

Myth and facts are often closely mingled in the stories of the Rani.\textsuperscript{21} Lebra - Chapman means that myth and legend in India are often more important than facts. Legends flourish because of their close connection with folk culture and the lack of literate traditions. The majority of the Indian population has relied on oral spread of cultural norms between generations. This factor is the significance of mythmaking in India. The classical literary tradition of India has a religious base rather than historical.\textsuperscript{22} Authors like Lebra - Chapman and S.N Sinha agree that the Rani was born in the year 1835, probably November 19, in the city of Banaras in a Brahmin family. However, the date and year are not precise. She was named Manikarnika and called Manu. Manu's mother died in her early age. After some years, they moved to Bithur. According to Sinha and Lebra - Chapman, there she played with the boys like Nana Sahib and Tatya Tope\textsuperscript{23}, who came to have leading roles in the revolt of 1857-58. Manu learned to read

\textsuperscript{17} Chandra, B., (1989) p. 32 ff
\textsuperscript{18} Metcalf, B. & Metcalf, T., (2012) p. 96 ff
\textsuperscript{19} Wolpert, S., (2004) p. 247
\textsuperscript{21} Lebra Chapman, J., (1986) The Rani of Jhansi I A Study in Female Heroism in India, p. 15
\textsuperscript{23} Nana Sahib and Tatya Tope were two of the leaders in the revolt of 1857-58. Nana Sahib was the adopted son of the last peshwa (Brahmin leader) of the Maratha Empire. Sahib led the revolt in Kanpur. Tatya Tope was a friend of Nana Sahib and a military leader in the revolt.
and write, which were unusual for a girl, even in her social class at this time. She learned
horse riding as well as how to use weapons.24 One famous story about Manu’s childhood was
when her friends went out riding an elephant. Manu also wanted to ride an elephant, but the
boys refused her. Upset, she said that one day she will have ten elephants.25 This anecdote
exists in different versions.

When Manu reached puberty, it was time for her marriage. The Raja Gangadhar Rao of Jhansi
was widowed and childless. Many Indian sources agree that the marriage was celebrated in
May 1842, when Manu was eight years old. At the wedding, she took the name Lakshmi after
the goddess of wealth and victory. In the year 1851 the Rani gave birth to a son who only
lived for three months. Shortly after, the Raja died of illness. Before the Raja died, he and the
Rani adopted a son, a five year old boy. This occurred when the British authorities planned to
annex the state, according to the *Doctrine of Lapse*.26 The *Doctrine of Lapse* meant that a
princely state, after the death of a ruler without a biological successor, would come directly
under the British rule.27 Jhansi lapsed to the British rule in May 1854, even if the Rani
protested against the annexing in every way that she could. After the annexation, the Rani was
given a pension and moved from the Jhansi fort into her residence in the city. There she
pursued with religious worship and charity.28

On June 5, 1857 the sepoys revolted in the regiment of Jhansi.29 The morning after, the troops
were under control, but in the afternoon sepoys again attacked the officers. Captain Gordon
asked the Rani for help, but the sepoys threatened to put her to death. The sepoys attacked the
fort, but the British managed to keep it safe. The British requested that the Rani took charge
over the kingdom until the British were able to restore the authority.30 On June 8, 1857 the
sepoys attacked the fort again. The sepoys promised the British safety if they surrender, but
made them prisoners. The sepoys ordered to kill all Europeans, including women and
children. The Rani was accused of being part of the massacre. However, most authors do not
find her participation believable.31

---

Against the Raj* Ì– The Rani of Jhansi Regiment, p. 16
The Rani had to restore peace and order and at the same time she had to fight enemies. The Rani administration of Jhansi was enthusiastic and keen, for example, she disturbed food and clothes to the poor. The Rani regularly went beyond the city wall to the goddess Lakshmi temple. She moved among people in the town, sometimes in a white widow’s sari, but most of the time she wore a style of dress more suited to an active life. She did not behave like an orthodox Brahmin widow. However, there were invasions from the neighbouring state Orchha. In this situation, the Rani prepared to meet the attackers, and appeared in military attire for the first time. After the attacks from Orchha, the Rani realised that she could not fight these enemies without help from the British. At this moment, she wanted support from the British and had no intention of fighting them. The Rani tried to sustain a positive relation to the British government. Between late October 1857 and March 1858 the Rani became disappointed with the British failure to respond. She felt a growing anxiety that the British might capture and try to hang her, because of the massacre. The Rani joined the revolutionary sepoys. At this time, General Hugh Rose was on the way to Jhansi. General Rose had been ordered to take control of the revolt in Jhansi. The British held the Rani responsible for the mutiny and the massacre of Englishmen in Jhansi. The Rani was convinced that she would not get justice from the British. She decided to fight and preferred an honourable death in the battle field.

The British force arrived in Jhansi on the morning of March 21, 1858, and the attack began. The Rani asked Tatya Tope for help, but he failed although he came with 22,000 men. However, the defeat encouraged the Rani, and she supervised the defence. General Rose stormed the fort on the morning of April 3, 1858. The next day Jhansi went under British control.

---

33 Lebra – Chapman, J., (1986) p. 71
34 During this time, women lived their lives inside the domestic sphere. In the nationalistic and anti-colonial struggle women also struggled for their rights. During the 19th century women participated in discussions regarding their social position in the society. Women from the educated elite formulated the grounds for feminist thinking in India. (Hannam, June (2013) Feminism, p. 65-66) Even in present time the role and situation of women in India is problematic. Anu Aga described women’s situation can be described with the help of the split of rich and poor in India, the differences are big. In the overall view, women can work in in any sector, but women are disadvantaged in terms of literacy rates, labour participating and earning. There are rebelling women that goes against the stereotypes as dutiful wives, daughters and mothers. However, these women are in minority. (Anu Aga, (2012) Women in India: from shadows to excellence in ed. Ashok S Kolaskar and Motilal Dash: Women and Society. The Road to Change, p.13) The last 60 years, a numerous laws have been created to empower women and give them a status equally to men. (Kolaskar, Ashok S – Dash Motilal,(2012) Women and Society: The Road to Change p.xi)
35 Lebra - Chapman, J., (1986) p. 75ff
38 Chandra, B., (1989) p. 33
control, and the fort was occupied on April 5, 1858.\textsuperscript{40} According to Lebra - Chapman, there are different versions of how the Rani escaped the fort. One version, often presented in Indian texts has been that the Rani jumped with a horse and her son on her back from the fort.\textsuperscript{41} Another version that Sinha has written is that the Rani dressed as a man and along with her followers left the fort in the night of April 4, or the morning of April 5, 1858. In any case, the Rani rode along the road leading to the city of Kalpi. In Kalpi, they planned to resist British force, but they failed. Then, the revolutionaries moved in the direction of Gwalior, where they first succeeded.\textsuperscript{42} On the June 18, 1858 the British attacked the revolutionaries and forced them to retreat. In this action, the Rani died. The final battle was fought on June 19, 1858. The Rani had been riding a horse, got stuck by bullets and fell. Some say that the Rani survived about twenty minutes. The arrangement was done instantly after her death for burning her body. General Rose stated that the Rani was not killed on the field, but was carried off the ground and ordered a funeral pile which she fired by herself.\textsuperscript{43} Another version of the legend is that the Rani deliberately chose death over life under British rule.\textsuperscript{44}

1.4 Previous Research

In the first part of the previous research, it has been sought out how Indian historiographies have dealt with the Rani. What is important to describe about the Rani in a historiographical context? After that, the more specific use of history of the Rani will be presented as well as examples of use of history of monuments.

1.4.1 Rani Lakshmi Bai in Indian Historiographies

Bose & Jalal have shortly written about the Rani in the historiography \textit{Modern South Asia}. The Rani\textsuperscript{\text{"}o} kingdom Jhansi was annexed in 1853, and then she led her people in a fierce struggle against the British and died on horseback. Directly after a short description of the Rani\textsuperscript{\text{"}o} deeds, they have also described other revolutionaries.\textsuperscript{45} Metcalf & Metcalf gives even less consideration to the Rani. Here she is mentioned in passing as one of the leaders.\textsuperscript{46} The historiography of the Indian freedom fight by Bipan Chandra, who wrote that the Rani did not join the rebels instantly. Chandra continues that the revolt was not planned by her as well as it was not planned by most of the leaders. Chandra described the Rani as the most outstanding

\textsuperscript{40} Sinha, S.N., (1980) p. 73-77
\textsuperscript{41} Lebra – Chapman, J., (1986) p. 92-93
\textsuperscript{42} Sinha, S.N., (1980) p. 77ff
\textsuperscript{43} Sinha, S.N., (1980) p. 87-90
\textsuperscript{44} Lebra – Chapman, J., (1986) p. 122 ff
\textsuperscript{46} Metcalf, B – Metcalf, T., (2012) p. 103
leader of the Revolt. Apart from some admirable exceptions like the Rani, the rebels were poorly helped by their leaders. When describing her deeds, Chandra uses the words said by General Hugh Rose that ņshe was the only man among the rebels.őStanley Wolpert was concise in the descriptions of the Rani in his historiography of India. In the chapter of the unification, modernization and revolt (years 1848-58), the Rani is mentioned in parentheses, in the context of the Doctrine of Lapse. Here the Rani is described as having proved herself to be braver, bolder, and better than most revolutionaries while she was fighting on horseback, and she is known as the ņJeanne of Indiaû.

There are some texts where the Rani is not mentioned. There are two books regarding Banaras where the Rani should have been mentioned. One is Banaras ņ The City of Light by Diana L. Eck, with a historical and spiritual approach covers the city area by area, but no mentioning of the Rani or her birthplace. The other work is Banaras Region ņ A Spiritual & Cultural Guide by Rana P.B Singh & Pravin S. Rana, but again with no mentioning of the Rani. Another example where the Rani is not mentioned is in Christophe Jaffrelot’s work about the Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics. In the previous research, it can be seen that the Rani has been used as a symbol for the nationalist movement.

In these historiographies and other examples of texts the Rani was briefly mentioned or not mentioned at all. Those authors who wanted to describe the development of India in a wider perspective did not give much attention to the Rani. Maybe they consider her less important for the actual historical development. To summarise this part, the historiographies have presented the Rani in a hesitant way.

1.4.2 Previous Research on the Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai
The historical studies of the Rani are few, at least in English. However, it is evident that the Rani has been used since her death until today, in many different ways. One of the few that has done extensive research on how the Rani has been used in various contexts is Joyce Chapman - Lebra. There are other writings too, for example, one recent study in the field of literature by Harleen Singh. Singh examined how the Rani’s character has been used in different ways in the literature. The role that the Rani has been given in the Indian society can be expressed by the quotation of S.N Sinha:

49 Eck, Diana, L., (1983) Banaras ņ The City of Light
51 Jaffrelot, Christophe., (1996) The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s
Rani Lakshmi Bai's place in history is secure. She was the embodiment of freedom. She showed her countrymen the path of liberty. Although revolt failed, and her great ambition of liberating her great motherland from foreign bondage could not be fulfilled, yet her brave action and deeds have made her name immortal. By sacrificing her life on the altar of the country's freedom, she has become a martyr.\textsuperscript{52}

Lebra - Chapman writes that the Rani follows the pattern of how a historical person becomes a legend, a myth. After the death of a martyr, he or she will become an inspiration for songs, poems and later the legend appears in drama, statuary, arts and cinema. A legend that integrates with folk- and popular culture will eventually be absorbed into the collective memory of a nation. The Rani has been connected to older myths and Hindu religion, because of the tradition of comparing heroes and heroines to the gods and goddesses for example to goddesses Durga and Shakti.\textsuperscript{53}

Lebra - Chapman gives examples, how the Rani has been used in different context and time. During the first three decades of the twentieth century the Rani became a symbol, metaphor and model for revolutionary nationalists and resistance against the British. The Rani became a model for the ideal self-sacrifice for the nation. In poems of resistance from the 1930s, the Rani was used as a source of inspiration for freedom fighter. During the 1940s any mentioning of events from the year 1857-58 inclusive the Rani was prohibited.\textsuperscript{54} The Rani's name became so symbolic that the female brigade of the National Indian Army, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, was named after her. Bose encouraged women to take the Rani as a role model of honour and heroism. Bose chose the Rani as a symbol to create a nationalistic feeling and an imagery of powerful, efficient women and to develop the characteristics of active leadership and responsibility.\textsuperscript{55}

One example of the political use of the Rani after the independence was during an election campaign by the Congress Party. In a campaign film from the early 1980s, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was portrayed as a reincarnation of the Rani. This interpretation gained credibility because both were born on the same date, November 19. However, perhaps the most significant theme in post-independence interpretations of the Rani was the role in

\textsuperscript{52} Sinha, S.N., (1980) p. 98
\textsuperscript{53} Lebra - Chapman, J., (1986) p. 119-123
\textsuperscript{54} Lebra - Chapman, J., (1986) p. 142-146
uplifting the status of women. She has become an important feminist symbol, a model for all women. The Rani had an effect on the self-image of Indian women. Women for the first time began to regard themselves as equal to men rather than second-class citizens.\textsuperscript{56}

The Rani has been widely used in poetry and literature, which has been examined by Harleen Singh. British authors have pictured the Rani as a bloodthirsty, because of Rani’s involvement in the massacre. In British fiction, the Rani has also been portrayed as a whore. To describe India as a disloyal wife, to the English husband or a prostitute was a typical theme in the colonial literature.\textsuperscript{57} In the year 1901, another version was given in the novel \textit{Lakshmi Bai Rani of Jhansi: The Jeanne D’Arc of India} by Michael White. Here she was compared to the European model of heroic and saintly womanhood \textit{Jeanne d’Arc}. White’s novel highlights the individualism embodied by the Rani as a heroic Aryan confronting the British.\textsuperscript{58} In this novel, the Rani is a figure of cohesion rather than a division between the Indian and the British.\textsuperscript{59}

Singh continues that the Indian literate versions of the Rani have been a part of a larger political project to create national motivation towards independence. In creating a nation out of an obviously disparate linguistic, cultural, ethnic and social landscape, nationalist history finds sources from the past. Nationalist history portrays the Rani as a stabilising figure that brought order, purpose and unity to the rebellion and the nation. Singh analyses, for example, the historical poem \textit{Jhansi ki Rani} by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, which have retold the Rani within the Indian nationalism and became a part of the nation’s cultural heritage in Hindi.\textsuperscript{60}

The poem \textit{Jhansi ki Rani} from year 1930 has become an essential component of the curriculum of Indian schools. The line "Khoob Lari Mardaani woh to Jhansi wali Rani thi ī it was the Rani of Jhansi who fought like a man" became the identifying refrain for the Rani. It personifies the promise of independence in the figure of the Rani, shifting between femininity and masculinity. The poem functions as an allegory of modernity within the Indian tradition, a woman that both perform a mother’s duty and her service as a queen.\textsuperscript{61} This example of Hindi

\textsuperscript{56} Lebra – Chapman, J., (1986) p. 149-152
\textsuperscript{57} Singh, Harleen., (2014) \textit{The Rani of Jhansi} \textit{Gender, History, and Fable in India}, p. 34ff
\textsuperscript{58} Singh, H., (2014) p. 67-68
\textsuperscript{59} Singh, H., (2014) p. 89
\textsuperscript{60} Singh, H., (2014) p. 95
\textsuperscript{61} Singh, H., (2014) p.105-106
literature is significant in articulating the rebellion as a foundational moment for the nation, binding different languages and politics together in unity.\textsuperscript{62}

In the previous research about the Rani, it is evident that the Rani's historical persona has been widely used in various contexts. Lebra \textsuperscript{62} Chapman's approach is wide which show mythological, nationalistic, political and feminist ways to analyse the Rani. Singh analyses the Rani from two perspectives, the British and the Indian. The Indian analyse has the theory that the Rani has been used in creating a feeling of the Indian nation with the help of literature. However, Singh\textsuperscript{62} study is from the field of literature. Firstly, the previous research confirms that a study about the use of history is possible. However, the found previous research about the Rani, at least from a history point of view was not newly updated. Because of the recent activities in Banaras around the monument of the Rani, an updated research is necessary. One can also notice in the previous research that the Rani has been used in many contexts, which is questionable and almost makes her a chameleon. Secondly, the previous research makes room for a new approach, the people\textsuperscript{62} opinion and use of history of the Rani, which has not been done before.

1.4.3 Examples of Previous Reaches on the Use of History of Monuments

A monument of Kristina Gyllenstierna was built in the year 1912. After her husband\textsuperscript{62} death in the year 1520 Gyllenstierna led the defence for Stockholm palace against the Danish king.\textsuperscript{63} Charlotte Tornbjer, questions why this monument was raised in the year 1912, and why it is forgotten today. How has this female historical character been used? Tornbjer examines how gender is constructed through the symbolisation of this historical character. In the early twentieth century, an organisation with a political interest in a stronger Swedish defence collected money for the statue and constructed a story about her life. In this construction, she was especially praised for being a woman who dared to take on the role as a man and defend the palace. The only man in the palace was a woman, they said.\textsuperscript{64} Even if the organisation declared as non-political, they insisted that she was a unifying symbol for the nation, which is an ideological and political use of history. In the 1920s schools were encouraged to celebrate her, because of her potentials as a role model for young women. However, in the late 1920s

\textsuperscript{62} Singh, H., (2014) p.129
\textsuperscript{64} Tornbjer, C., (2009) p. 243-244
the ideological use of Gyllenstierna became nationalistic which appeared likely to dishonour her as a national symbol.\textsuperscript{65}

Tornbjer concludes that the monument of Gyllenstierna did not match with the construction of gender that whereby the women are associated with peace and care in the home. However, Gyllenstierna did not act foremost as a woman, because the way she acted was masculine. Tornbjer explains this with a theory which argues that women who temporarily serve in war do not give a threat to the social norm. These women occurred in national stories during the nineteenth century in France and Germany. The women who participated in these wars were widows or maidsens. Therefore, at the time of war, they already lived outside the norm. If they did not die as martyrs, as Jeanne d’Arc, they were reintegrated into family life.\textsuperscript{66}

The example of Gyllenstierna resembles in many ways to the Rani. There are several aspects of the Gyllenstierna example, which are interesting to examine in this study. Can it be like that the Rani could be able to fight the British because she was already outside the norm? Is it a risk of the Rani to be forgotten, like Gyllenstierna, when being a symbol for so many different environments?

According to Jonas Frykman and Billy Ehn monuments are symbolic objects of power that with a public placing confront people with an ideological message in their daily life. The people are attracted thereby to believe that the values that are represented by the monument are general. Monuments do in a masked form portray a structure of power. They stand as moral pointers, telling how the world should be like.\textsuperscript{67} Kyrre Kverndokk writes that the presence of a monument represents events that are considered important for the future, as well as for its memorable past. Monuments connect space and time with interpretations of the past. This creates a space of appearance where the politics get visible throughout its physical placement they claim a connection between the place and the event or character the monument represents. The place gets a historical meaning, and thereby a statue creates powerful claims of the past and the place.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{65} Tornbjer, C., (2009) p. 248-251
\textsuperscript{66} Tornbjer, C., (2009) p. 248-249
\textsuperscript{67} Frykman, J – Ehn, B., (2007) \textit{Att tolka det förflutna och besvärja framtiden}, p. 26
\textsuperscript{68} Kverndokk, Kyrre., (2007) \textit{Minne, monument och jubileum. Fredmotivets uttrycksformer under hundraårsfirandet av unionsupplösningen} in \textit{Minnesmärken. Att tolka det förflutna och besvärja framtiden}, p. 263
1.5 Theory

In the previous research, it is clear that the use of the Rani is broad. Therefore, theories about the use of history, nation and nationalism, myth, feminism as well as gender will be presented in this chapter. Later these theories will be utilized in the discussion and analyse of the results of this study.

1.5.1 Use of History

Klas-Göran Karlsson writes that the *use of history* is a history didactic concept where the communication of history is central. The important question is: for whom and by whom is the history written?\textsuperscript{69} Peter Aronsson defines the use of history as the process that is a part of the culture of history. The use of history activates parts of the culture of history used to definite processes of meaning and explains the context of actions.\textsuperscript{70} The use of history can work as a framework to examine the relation among how class, gender, age, ethnicity. The use of history does also work as a framework when studying how culture of history in a varying degree becomes a part of mobilising resources in the definition of the own group and their claim.\textsuperscript{71} In this study, the use of history was used as a framework to examine the transformation of the Rani, in which context is she important, for whom and why? How is the knowledge of the Rani tendentious, and for which purpose? Karlsson writes that the communication of history cannot be analysed in a proper way without considering whom that produces and consumes history. In this study the most interesting is how the consumers have used the historical character of the Rani, and how the producer writes about her. Karlsson continues that, at the structural level there are the traditional mediums of history, the educational system and media, as well as a new channel as movies. The question of how history appears as consciousness, meaning, memory, monument and myth has traditionally been held outside the traditional discipline of history. However, these issues are considered important today. The relevance of examining the use of history is to be able to study history related to existential, morally, political, ideological, and commercial needs and interests. History can have different meanings for individuals and the society. Numerous categories of people use history and interpret it in various ways, depending on their ethnical background, gender, education, age. However, it is the one or those with authority in society, has represented the interpretation of history and the usage of history. At the same time, it is

\textsuperscript{69} Karlsson, Klas-Göran, (2009) \textit{"Historiedidaktik: begrepp, teori och analys\textsuperscript{ö} in Historien är nu: En introduktion till historiedidaktiken}, p. 37

\textsuperscript{70} Aronsson, Peter, (2004) \textit{Historiebruk \textsuperscript{I} att använda det förflutna}, p. 17

reasonable to assume that common historical knowledge and thinking do not have to be related to authority, but also tradition and culture.\textsuperscript{72}

### 1.5.2 Theories of Nation, National identity and Nationalism

In the previous research, there were several links between the Rani and thoughts about nation and nationalism. What kind of meaning can a historical character like the Rani have for the nation, for the national identity and nationalism? Anthony D. Smith proposes that the concept nation can be defined as a named human community residing in a perceived homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a distinct public culture, and common laws and customs for all members\textsuperscript{73}

Benedict Anderson proposes that the nation can be defined as an imagined political community, both in their limitation and sovereignty. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in their minds of each lives the image of their communication.\textsuperscript{74} Nations are based on language which Anderson calls print-communities, that is, reading publics literatures, mainly novels and newspapers which portrayed the imagined political community in sociologically vivid and easily identifiable way.\textsuperscript{75} With the ability to print and produce television series and movies, history and myth can be broadcasted to a widespread public, which then can feel a shared, imagined relationship to, for example, the Rani. By asking the respondents where they have learned about the Rani, it gets visible, which channels that create this imagined feeling of belonging to a nation through a symbol like the Rani.

Theories about the nation have been used because the assumption that the use of Rani can be a part of the history, the myth that creates the feeling, the imagination of a nation. The Rani could be one of the aspects of bringing people together in a shared history, and common myth, which in extension creates a national identity. Smith defines the concept national identity as the maintenance and continual reinterpretation of pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that form the distinctive heritage of the nation, and the

\textsuperscript{72} Karlsson, K., (2009) p 38-41
\textsuperscript{73} Smith, Anthony, D., (2003) 
\textsuperscript{74} Anderson, Benedict., (2006) \textit{Imagined Communities}, p. 6
\textsuperscript{75} Anderson, B., (2006) chapter 3
identification of individuals with that heritage of the nation, and the identification of individuals with that heritage and pattern.⁷⁶

Smith defines nationalism as an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population some of whose members deem it to constitute an actual or potential ̓nation̔⁷⁷ Nationalism as a movement, emphasis on cultural gestation and cultural representation. It is common for the ideologies of nationalism to rediscover their history. This by the revival of its language, the cultivation of its literature, especially drama and poetry, the restoration of crafts, native dance and folk songs. National flags and anthems have the function to typify the particular qualities of the nation to invoke a sense of unique history and destiny among the population. Every nation has a national flag, a capital city, a joint celebration of holidays or celebrations for past heroes that gives a sense of belonging to a nation. The show of national symbols serves to express, represent and strengthen the definition of the nation, and to unite the members inside the borders through a joint imagery of shared memories, myths and values. The ideology of nationalism serves to give force and direction to both symbols and movement.⁷⁸ Here the Rani can function as a symbol that works for a feeling of nationalism, and can be a part of this common imagery, myths and values.

According to Bipan Chandra India, is a ̓nation-in-the-making̔ Several political, economic, social and cultural forces have interacted to make India into a unity, and the Indian people have become conscious of their unity and shared struggle against the colonial domination.⁷⁹ Nations in Europe were based on ethnicity or formed around language and culture which were essential elements in the formation of the nation. In India, other colonies and semi-colonies, it was the movements against colonialism or the efforts to avoid colonialism, which shaped the nation. The difference between the European and the Indian path of nation formation also enables us to define the nation in the particular Indian historical context. The Chinese, for example, do not use the term ̓Chinese nation̔ but ̓Chinese people̔ to express the national entity. Because the Indian national movement was born in the nineteenth century, India uses the nineteenth century word nation to mean the same thing, Indian people. Indian nation and nationalism were not the product of, or nor based on ethnicity or common race, language,

religion or culture, nor the rise of capitalism or modern industry. Though aided by centuries of historical development, nation and nationalism were the products of the colonial impact and the anti-colonial struggle for freedom.80 The alleged importance of the Rani may have sprung from this that she was fighting for what was to become a national movement against the British. Therefore, she may have become an important historical person for the nation.

1.5.3 Theory of Myth
In the previous research, it was clear that the myth is a probable factor in the historical stories about the Rani. According to Diana L. Eck mythology, provides maps of their world for the people and cultures. Myths, while they may be imaginative stories, are at the same time true stories that orient people in the reality in which they live. Myths tell the tale of the human questions and concerns about life and death and our human experience. They tell the tale of cosmic creation, the birth of the earth, and the deeds of gods and heroes.81

According to Mircea Eliade, the mythification of historical prototypes gives the famous epic songs and heroes that shows exemplary behaviour and are formed after the image of the heroes of ancient myths. The historic character of the person celebrated in epic poetry is not in question. But their historicity does not for a long time resist the process of mythification. Myth is the last, not the first stage in the development of a hero. The memory of a historical event or a historical person survives in popular memory for two or three centuries at the most. This is because popular consciousness finds difficulty in recalling individual events and figures. The memory of the collective is not correct history, with time it gets modified.82 It is clear how myth is a common factor in India, which is shown in Eck’s India a Sacred Geography, where Eck argues how the divine, sacred and mythology provides a map of the world. The mythology and topology clearly overlap or diverge in the shaping of an imagined landscape. This is a significant factor in India, where the long-windedness of Hindu myth is so vast and complex that it has created a radically locative world view.83 India’s landscape is alive with myths and stories. Some of the stories are known locally or regionally while others are part of the mythological traditions known throughout the land. In short, every story has a place, and every place has a story.84

81 Eck, Diana, L., (2012) India Ñ A Sacred Geography, p.51
82 Eliade, M., (2005) p. 42ff
Smith also discusses the development of heroes and myth. According to nationalist’s models, valued qualities are only found in the heroic histories of the past. For example, Jeanne d'Arc, one of whom Smith calls Messiah-saviours. Jeanne d'Arc became regarded as an example of national virtue, but also representative of the people. She lived close to the people, shared their lifestyle as well as spoke for them against the interests of the nobles and was seen in retrospect as the instruments of a national destiny. Heroes like Jeanne d'Arc provide models of conduct, and their deeds are real quality examples, worthy of imitation in each generation. Whether historical or legendary, this kind of hero has been elevated by popular memory above everyday politics and the struggle of history. In some way, these heroes revealed the inner goodness of the nation and exemplified its qualities and its hopes.\textsuperscript{85} These kinds of myth-memories have been corresponding through two types of media and imagery. The first phase, in forms of art, music and literature, this emphasised the quality examples of heroes and heroines. In the second phase, the focus shifts to rituals and ceremonies at specific sites, monuments, sculpture and architecture.\textsuperscript{86}

1.5.4 Theory of Feminism and Gender

Noticed in the previous research, the Rani has been discussed in questions of women empowerment in India. The Rani has had a role as a symbol in uplifting women’s statues in India as well as an important feminist symbol. The basis of all feminist discourses is to expose the that women suffer from various gender inequality because men seek to reserve the leading role in the society.\textsuperscript{87} Can this gender equality as well as the uplifting of women’s status be seen in the use of history of the Rani?

Women’s subordination to men is called the patriarchal system. There are many feminist analyses about the reasons for the male dominance in the society. Several feminist analyses discuss the biological differences of the female body, sexuality and the ability to give birth, which have been one of the historical reasons for women’s subordination in society.\textsuperscript{88} The Rani was a queen, which gave her other opportunities as well as deeds than common women. As seen in the previous research by Tornbjer, women who already lived outside the traditional norm were not a threat to the norm. The Rani was both a mother as well as a queen who tried to protect her state. The Rani had the opportunity to take on this role while it might not be

\textsuperscript{86} Smith, Anthony, D., (2003) p. 224  
\textsuperscript{87} Ransom, Paul., (2010) \textit{Social Theory}, p. 281  
\textsuperscript{88} Ljung Marga,., (2010) \textit{Feministisk teori} in \textit{Moderna samhällsteoriet i Traditioner, riktningar, teoretiker}, p. 225ff
possible for a common during that time. Have the Rani had the function as an inspirational source to break the subordination of women?

One other important perspective is the on deriving from the sociological field that the mother role and gender identities, are a reproduction from one generation to the next. Gender and gender structure is part of the feminist discussion which means that the gender is something that is created and the gender identity for both men and women becomes wry. The gender differences between women and men are socially constructed and are far away from the biological differences. Ideas about masculinity and femininity are created, rehearsed or played out through education, the mass media, and religious beliefs. The Rani performed deeds that were both in the female gender norm and in the masculine gender norm. How is this working together with the complexity of the women question in India? This gender role(s) that the Rani performed, can this have any impact on girls and boys in India today? Gender roles are here considered constructed. The different characteristics that the Rani had are from both the female and the masculine gender norm and might spread to the people and have an impact on what is regarded good behaviour for women and men. Padma Anagol writes that Indian feminists did not want a gender-free world. They saw two sexes, with differing bodies and roles in reproduction, and varying degrees of physical strength and hence advocate complementary roles. Further, Indian feminists did not like the so-called utopian feminism that puts women in the role of men. Indian feminists advocated a world where women gain the same respect, dignity and justice for labours they perform, however different they may be from men. Since the turn of the century Indian feminism meant empowering women to realise their full potential as women without implements, and this was not about making women the same as men. Apparently, the Rani goes against the Indian feminism, because she took on a manâ€™s role. How are the people dealing with that she is taking on a manâ€™s role, or more correct taking on both a masculine and feminine role? As previously noted, the Rani has been used in uplifting the status for women, here called women empowerment. Is the Rani still a symbol in the women empowerment in India?

1.6 Delimitations
This study focuses on the post-independence period, year 1947 onward. The previous research covers the use of history of the Rani in the pre-independence period, and therefore it is more
relevant to focus on the post-independence period. The earliest source was dated year 1952 and the most recent year 2014, which created a natural time limitation. There will be no research about the Rani’s life and actions during the first war of independence. Due to this delimitation, there was no apparent reason for the use of archive material. There are no relevant archives in Banaras that have important material for this study, except the archive where the newspaper articles are present. The archives that have suitable material for example letters and document from her lifetime are in the state archives of Lucknow and Allahabad, which are several hours from Banaras. Because of the shortage of time and long distance, it was not possible to pay these archives a visit. Analysis of novels and poetry has already been done by several authors and will not be examined in this study.

For a non-Hindi speaking researcher in India, there are limitations, for example, which kind of material is possible to use in this study. Many sources were available in English and translator could be used to translate interviews, poems, newspaper articles in Hindi or Urdu. However, still many sources are in any of the Indian languages, which mean that there are sources that cannot be considerate.

1.7 Method

This study is based on a qualitative research approach. Here, a combination of oral history using semi-structured interview guides, as well text analysis of sources like newspaper articles and educational textbooks, are used.

The oral history was made within the method of qualitative research. In qualitative research strategy words are in focus not numbers, when collecting and analysing data with the purpose to describe the social world. This approach was considered as suitable to fulfil this study’s purpose. Here the aim was to come close to the people’s opinion of, and the relation to this historical character which oral history makes possible. Qualitative research cannot be as generalizable as quantitative studies. However, it is generalizable to the theory and the study will, hopefully, produce knowledge of how historical characters as the Rani can be used. Twenty-four respondents were interviewed from different age groups and educational level, if the responses of these people are similar to each other that could be generalizable to a larger population. As well if the respondents supports the theory, which then can indicate that the result can be discussed at a more general theoretical level.

---

According to Bryman oral history is a method to describe an individual’s inner feelings, how they interpret, understand and define the world around them. In an oral history interview, the informant is asked to reflect on particular events or periods of their life. One of the positive effects of oral history according to historians like Paul Thomson, is that it gives the chance for groups that does not normally has the opportunity to be a part of historical research. Either because of their lack of power or because they are typically regarded as unexceptional. Oral history can also give a chance to focus on the daily life of people, instead of the institutional level. Alessandro Portelli confirmed that oral sources give information about illiterate people or social groups whose written history is lacking. Thomson writes that the oral history opens up to a more just and democratic history, where people from the under-classes, the poor and defeated gets a voice. This provides a more realistic and fair reconstruction of the past.

The method of oral history has some difficulties that must be taken into consideration. Bryman points out that the main problem is being biased because of memory lapses and alterations. The human capability of memory is discussed by Thomson, which means that humans forget, and the longer time since the event happened, the less we do remember. However, it is not obvious that people remember less over a longer period, humans forget most directly after the event. Immediately after the event, for only a couple of minutes we have something close to a photographic memory. The loss of memory during the first nine months is as great as during the next thirty to forty years. However, the memory process also depends on the interest. After the age of eleven and especially after the age of thirty, the memory begins to decline. The problem of memory ability is, however, not much more severe for interviews with older people in normal health than younger adults.

There is a critique of oral history as an unreliable source. Thomson arguments against the critique that we cannot be sure that the accepted hierarchy of sources likes letters, reports, diaries and documents like newspaper articles are correct either. The important question is, who wrote these documents and for which purpose? A source can be more reliable when it comes from the researcher's field work and just because a source is printed, does not mean

---

that the source is better.\textsuperscript{101} Portelli means that oral sources are credible, but with a different credibility. The importance of oral evidence may not lie in correct fact, but rather in the imagination and symbolism of the respondent’s point of view. Therefore, there are no false oral sources. The diverse character of oral history consists the contradiction that wrong statements and facts still can be true, and this truth may be equally as important as factual, reliable account. Portelli continues that the oral sources are not objective. The sources of oral history are always the result of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee as well as the interviewer’s purpose. Written documents are fixed and do not change once we have found them. However, oral testimony can never be the same twice. This is a typical problem for oral communication in general, but especially true in an interview.\textsuperscript{102}

Three interview guides were constructed with a semi-structured approach. Semi-structured interviews do have particular topics that the researcher wants to discuss. Here the respondent has influence of how to answer the questions and in which order. Issues that are not in the guide can be asked, depending on the respondents’ answers. All questions will be asked to all respondents, but the order and the additional questions can differ.\textsuperscript{103} For an interview in oral history to be as useful as possible, it is preferable if the questions are clear, concise and open-ended. For constructing questions it is important to avoid yes or no questions. Instead use questions beginning with \textit{how}, \textit{what or why} instead of \textit{do or did},\textsuperscript{104} which have been under consideration while constructing these interview guides. The first interview guide was for people in Banaras, the second for interviewing the organizations in Banaras, which were involved in the construction of the Rani Lakshmi Bai monument in Assi, Banaras. The third was for interviews performed in Jhansi. The interview guides can be found in appendix two, three and four.

All interviews were recorded, and later transcribed. All interviewed people in Banaras and Jhansi were informed why the interviews were recorded and that the recording will be deleted as well as that all the respondents will be anonymous in the report. Instead, the respondents will be named by their gender and age. The organisations were asked if the name of the organisation could be used in the report, which they approved.

\textsuperscript{101} Thomson, P., (2009) p. 118 ff
\textsuperscript{103} Bryman, A., (2012) p. 470
\textsuperscript{104} Hunt, Majorie., (2003) \textit{The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interview Guide}, p.16
An text analysis of newspaper articles from the local newspaper *Aaj*, as well as the national newspapers *The Hindu* and *The Times of India*, will be performed to examine the institutional information about the Rani. Several educational textbooks will be analysed to get a view of how the educational system(s) describe the Rani. These sources were interpreted to examine how the Rani is described, and in which context she is and have been used. In the criticism of sources, there are four criteria to be taken into consideration, which are *time*, *genuineness*, *tendency* and *reliability*. The *time* criterion takes the human memory in consideration. This means that a witness is less reliable when time has passed since the event. As discussed earlier, in the oral history interview study the ability to remember is a factor that has been taken into consideration. *Reliability* means that it is better to considerate a primary source, the one that actually witnessed the event, than to hear the second version of the event, a secondary source. Here the use of history of a character is the object of study, and the respondents are the way primary sources. Their perception of the Rani is a main source, but the information they have learned can be both primary and secondary sources. In the gap between the primary source and a secondary source there can be added or deleted information. When an event is passed on to people, the reliability decreases. The criterion *genuineness* means if the source is accurate or false if it is a falsification or not. The authenticity of any source can be questioned, because any source can be a falsification. In this study, the falsification of a source is important, because it shows how the Rani has been used and described in different ways and contexts. *Tendency* means the source has to be compared with other similar sources to see if it has been angling for any interest, if the source is exaggerated or if uncomfortable information has been taken away. One way to control this is to use more than one source.

1.8 Material

The main empirical material was oral history, in combination with other sources. The material was collected from two levels of society; the people and the institutional level, for example, newspaper articles and educational books.

In Banaras twenty semi-structured interviews were carried through with people from different age, gender and educational level. To get an acceptable representation and by that a more generalising result twenty interviews was considered a safe and manageable number. These people were divided into five age groups: twenty to twenty-nine, thirty to thirty-nine, forty to

---

forty-nine, fifty to fifty-nine and sixty to seventy-seven, with four respondents in every age group. There were eight men and twelve women. There were informants with both higher education, which here implies above upper-secondary school and lower education, which here implies below upper secondary education. Twelve of the informants had education above upper secondary school, and eight had up to upper secondary school education. In these groups there are people with no education at all or university studies and above, as well as from different social classes. People from different age groups, gender and educational have been interviewed to have their point of view about Rani. Thereby it is possible to notify about how the Rani is described by people from different generations and different backgrounds. A list of the interviewed people can be found in appendix five.

The sampling of participants was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is when the researcher does not search for participants at random. Instead, it is a more strategically performed sampling in order to ensure that there is a variation in the result. People or organizations are chosen because they are relevant to the research questions. However, in this study it was not important that the respondents should be experts about the Rani, expect from the case of organizations. The sampling to answer to this purpose should represent the society as a whole. However, the Indian population consists of many religions, casts, educational levels. This means that it is difficult to create that kind of representation at the available time and within the frames of this study level that this study represents. For example, the sampling does not contain any Muslims or any other representation of the religious minorities in India. The Rani is not considered a religious entity and therefore it was not necessary to have a strict representation of any specific religious group. The purpose was to sample common people’s point view about the Rani, not an expert point of view, even if there are some historians in the sampling.

In Jhansi, four interviews were carried through. The time in Jhansi was two days, which resulted in four interviews. The purpose was to interview one person from every age group, as in Banaras. However, due to the lack of time and practical reasons four people from the same family were interviewed; one son, the mother and father and one uncle. All interviews in Jhansi were made with the help of a translator. The purpose of going to Jhansi was that there has been a strong tradition of folktales and poetry about the Rani in that area. This could have

---

given informative material that, might be different from the material from Banaras. However, the amount of material is too less to be able to draw any conclusions.

The sample size was both a result of the factors data saturation and time. How many people that were needed for a good outcome was not certain from the beginning. More interviews were planned, for example, five people in every age group instead of the final four. However, after some interviews were done it was considered not to be necessary because of data saturation. But if there had been more time, more informants from every age group had been interesting. For a more generalizable result, further interviews would have to be done, but the result will still be able to give indicators of the use of history of the Rani.\textsuperscript{108}

The sampling of organizations interview was of purposive kind. There were four major actors in the building of the project. However, the possibility was only given to interview two of these organizations. The organizations that were available for interviews were Maharani Lakshmibai Janmastan Smarak Samiti (MLJSS) and the tourism department information office in Banaras. However, the Jagriti Foundation was considered to be a part of the MLJSS, so the organisation was chosen not to interview, because of a shortage of time. The Mahant of Sankat Mochan temple Vishwambhar Nath Mishra was not available.

The newspaper articles are from three newspapers, the local newspaper\textit{ Aaj} (Today), and the two national newspapers \textit{The Hindu} and \textit{The Times of India}. The newspaper\textit{ Aaj}’s previous editions are at the archive Nagari Pracharini Sabha in Banaras. The\textit{ Aaj} is written in Hindi, and therefore translation was necessary which meant that there was a limitation of how many newspapers that could be processed. To be able to notice any change or regularity in the writings about the Rani newspapers were examined for the decades 1920-2000. The purpose was to review two years of every decade at specific dates: three days around the Rani’s birthday November, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and around the Independence Day August, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth. However, during the 1920s only one year could be examined, during the 1940s, three years, and year 1947, the year of the Indian independence no articles at all. The other decades, two years were examined. To work in an Indian archive is not comparable to work in a Swedish archive. The organizations are not comparable in their structure and organization of material. To have material given out is a little bit more difficult, so to have a material given to you is not obvious, and therefore there are some losses in the

\textsuperscript{108} See discussion about sampling size and saturation, Bryman, A., (2012) p. 425
material. Three translators read the newspapers and were instructed to look for anything regarding the Rani. All articles that mentioned the Rani were copied and after that translated.

Articles about the Rani in the national newspapers *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* were found in respective Internet archive. *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* publish their newspaper in English. In *The Hindu* Internet archive, there were published articles from year 2006 onward. *The Hindu* is printed in seventeen centres in India. In *The Times of India* Internet archive, there were articles published since year 2010. *The Times of India* is a national newspaper with the centres all over the India, for example, Varanasi. The purpose of using national newspapers was twofold. First, national newspapers are read in Banaras where the primary source of this master thesis, the people of Banaras, lives. Secondly, the purpose was to extend the research outside Banaras, to be able to recognize if the Rani is a national symbol.

The educational textbooks were complimentary sources. The sampling of educational textbooks can be considered incomplete, but will give an input on how the Rani is presented to the students. The sampling contains nine educational textbooks from two different syllabuses, ICSE — council for the Indian School Certificate Examination, and CBSE — Central Board of Secondary Education. The textbooks from ICSE are over represented in this study, because of the opportunities to get in touch with the schools that use ICSE were more. I tried to get more examples of CBSE textbooks but failed. The representatively for all the educational systems in Banaras will, therefore, be less. All textbooks were written in English and used in English medium schools.
2. Presentation of Results – The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai

Here, the result will be presented. The first chapter presents the people of Banaras and Jhansi knowledge and relationship to the Rani as well as the information about the Rani at the institutional level through educational textbooks and newspapers. In the second chapter, the different historical uses of the Rani will be presented. In the third chapter, the Rani Lakshmi Bai monument and the celebration of the Rani will be presented.

Thirteen of the twenty respondents expressed clearly that the Rani is important for Banaras. There was a sense of proudness of the fact that the Rani was born in Banaras, and she has a special place in the heart of the citizens of Banaras. Most of them did express that the Rani is important for the whole India.109 As an example the Rani was seen as a good example for Banaras, because Banaras is a traditional city and for a long time conditions for women were not so good.110 One person expressed that the Rani is not important for Banaras, but maybe the monument will make her more important, at least it can be good for tourism.111

2.1 Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai

In this chapter, it will be examined which parts of the Rani’s history, the people of Banaras and Jhansi know and from where they have learnt about this. The information that the respondents has given will be compared with the information about the revolt and Rani’s life in the background chapter 1.3.3 to see a more objective version of the respondents’ answers.

2.1.1 The People of Banaras Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai

The people’s knowledge in this chapter has divided into three parts: Knowledge about the Rani’s childhood, knowledge about the Rani from the time of her marriage and the annexation of Jhansi and the war with the British.

Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai’s childhood

The ability to retell knowledge about the Rani’s childhood varied from person to person in every age group. Fourteen out of twenty respondents could retell something about the Rani’s early life. The Rani’s birthplace is said to be in the neighbourhood of Assi in the city of Banaras. This was something that eleven out of twenty respondents from every age group

109 Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 61 March 2014; Woman 65 April 2014; Woman 57 March 2014; Woman 50 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 40; Woman 20 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014; Man 20 March 2014
110 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
111 Interview, Man 29 March 2014
knew. Four respondents knew that the Rani’s family had Maharashtra origin.\textsuperscript{112} Before the marriage the Rani’s name was Manikarnika, she was called Manu, a detail that was recalled in three age groups sixty, thirty and twenty.\textsuperscript{113} Two respondents did know the name of her father, Moropan.\textsuperscript{114} Only one respondent specified that the Rani was motherless since her early childhood.\textsuperscript{115}

Respondents from the age group fifty could tell a little more about the Rani’s childhood than the other age groups. The respondents from all age groups were fascinated by this brave girl, described as a tomboy who from the beginning of her life did not fit in the female gender role. It has been told that from an early age she played with boys, used sword, arrows and bow and other kinds of weapons as well as she was good in horse-riding. This information was also told by the age group forty and thirty, but in shorter terms.\textsuperscript{116} The mythification of the Rani was present, which gets clear when the anecdote about the elephant was told: ‘do you think that you are able to ride on that elephant, and she replied I want to ride on ten elephants’\textsuperscript{117}

**Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai from the time of her marriage**

When the Rani reached her teenage, her father arranged her marriage and her husband was Gangadhar Rao, the Raja of Jhansi. This was told by two to three respondents in every age group. Some of them specified that the Rani was much younger than her husband who was at least three times of her age.\textsuperscript{118}

The Rani and the Raja of Jhansi first had a son who died. Then they adopted a son on the Raja’s deathbed. Half of the respondents, with representation of all age groups, told that the heir of the Rani was uncertain. However, there was confusion among the respondents about the Rani’s childlessness. Some thought that it was the Raja’s previous wife’s child that had

\textsuperscript{112} Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 61 March 2014; Woman 57 March 2014; Woman 50 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 32 March 2014; Man 37 March 2014; Man 20 March 2014; Woman 20 March 2014
\textsuperscript{113} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014; Woman 33 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{114} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014
\textsuperscript{115} Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{116} Interview, Woman 57 March 2014; Woman 50 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Woman 33 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014
\textsuperscript{117} Interview, Woman 57 March 2014
\textsuperscript{118} Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014; Woman 33 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Woman 56 March 2014
died or that she did not give birth to a child at all. However, most of them could clearly say that they adopted a son on the Raja's deathbed.\textsuperscript{119}

The king died, and the Rani took charge of the kingdom of Jhansi. In the retelling of respondents a new aspect was presented, from the age group forty, thirty and twenty. Two women from the age group forty described how the Rani sat in the courtyard and helped people with their problems.\textsuperscript{120} One woman from age group thirty and one woman from age group twenty described how much bad Raja Gangadhar Rao was, and the Rani tried to make him a better person. The Rani noticed the bad condition in Jhansi and attempted to make the situation better.\textsuperscript{121} Woman 33 told that the Rani showed sympathy to her people. In the night time she visited the people in Jhansi to know about their problems, especially women's problems.\textsuperscript{122} This knowledge is not given in educational textbooks, see chapter 2.1.4.

The annexation of Jhansi and the war with the British

After the death of the Raja of Jhansi, the British annexed the state with the help of the \emph{Doctrine of Lapse}. The majority of the respondents of all age groups were able to tell that the British did not accept the Rani's adopted son and annexed the state.\textsuperscript{123} However, there were few that could explain this matter with the concept of the \emph{Doctrine of Lapse}. Woman 58 and Woman 20 could explain that the British extended the empire by taking some states with the \emph{Doctrine of Lapse} that meant that if any kingdom had no biological heir the British annexed the state.\textsuperscript{124} Woman 20 told that when the war of 1857 was about to begin the Rani negotiated with British officers and asked if they could end the \emph{Doctrine of Lapse}. If the British accepted her son as ruler, she would not fight them, but they refused to accept the proposal given by the Rani.\textsuperscript{125} This scenario was endorsed in short, by the majority of the respondents.\textsuperscript{126} When the Rani was forced to leave the Jhansi fort, she said: ˜I will never give up my Jhansi.˜ This is a phrase told by several respondents from the age group fifty and sixty.\textsuperscript{127}

All respondents said that the Rani fought against the British in year 1857 after the annexation of Jhansi. Many of the respondents from different age groups described the Rani as a freedom

\textsuperscript{119} Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 65 April 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Woman 56 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Woman 43
\textsuperscript{120} Interview, Man 43 March 2014; Woman 43
\textsuperscript{121} Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{122} Interview, Man 30 March 2014
\textsuperscript{123} Interview, Woman 58 March 2014; Woman 56 March 2014
\textsuperscript{124} Interview, Woman 57 March 2014
\textsuperscript{125} Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
\textsuperscript{126} Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{127} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Woman 56 March 2014
However, the fight was not only against the British but also against other states like Orchha. Several respondents described her as a brave and a good soldier, with a devoted army. There are also descriptions of how she fought in men’s clothes. Several respondents told how it was described that the Rani was on the battlefield with her child tied around her waist and she kept fighting like that until she was killed.

Few of the respondents told that the rebels wanted the Rani to help them to fight against the British. The Rani did ask for help from Tatya Tope, but he did not succeed. Several respondents told how the Rani jumped from the fort with her horse when the British entered the fort. The Rani continued the fight against the British in Gwalior. For some time, she was successful, but in the end the Rani died. The famous description by the British General Rose was used by several respondents: she was the only man in the revolt.

The majority of the respondents agreed on that the Rani made a significant contribution to the struggle for the independence, and she sacrificed herself for a free India. She did not succeed, but she made an effort. This was the first war, the beginning of the freedom fight in India, and it created a milestone.

2.1.2. The People of Jhansi Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai

Two of the respondents could tell about the Rani’s childhood and early life. The youngest respondent knew that the Rani was born in Banaras. Another respondent knew that she learned horse-riding as a child. Two of the respondents told that she got married to Gangadhar Rao when she was around twelve years old. She was his second wife. The Rani

128 Interview, all Banaras respondent March-April 2014
129 Interview, Man 20 March 2014
130 Interview, Woman 50 March 2014; Women 56 March 2014; Women 58 March 2014, Man 77 March 2014
131 Interview, Woman 57 March 2014
132 Interview, Woman 50 March 2014; Women 56 March 2014; Women 58 March 2014, Woman 57; Man 77 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Woman 33 2014
133 Interview, Man 46 March 2014
134 Interview, Woman 33 March 2014, Woman 65 April 2014
135 Interview, Woman 33 March 2014, Man 43 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Woman 29 2014; Man 20 March 2014
136 Interview, Woman 65 April 2014
137 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014; Man 77 March 2014
138 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Man 20 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014
139 Interview, Man 20 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014
140 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Man 20 March 2014; Woman 57 Jhansi April 2014
had a son, but he died after two months. Therefore, the Rani adopted a son. After her son’s death, her husband became sick and died.\textsuperscript{141}

Three of the respondents could tell the parts of the annexation and following war against the British. After the death of the Raja, the Rani took charge of Jhansi. In year 1857 she fought against the British and for the right to freedom, it was the first fight for freedom.\textsuperscript{142} At that time, there were people that worked for the queen who supported the British. They helped the British to get into the fort. The door to the fort was opened by an Indian so that the British could come inside.\textsuperscript{143}

The Rani decided that she will not give Jhansi to the British and gathered her soldiers, many of them were women. The Rani asked for help, but no one helped her and she fought alone. She had to jump from the fort, and her horse was injured. The Rani went on to Gwalior where she later was killed by the British.\textsuperscript{144} The king of Gwalior supported the British, so the Rani realised that she was alone. Therefore, the Rani killed herself when the British attacked. Another version is that she got injured and died.\textsuperscript{145}

\textbf{2.1.3 The People of Banaras Source of Knowledge}

Here, the respondent’s source of knowledge about the Rani will be examined. They were asked questions about from where they have learned, read and heard about the Rani. The sources will be presented one by one.

\textbf{Education}

All respondents except one have attended school at least until middle school. In the school, they have all learned about the Rani. Among most of the respondents it was a subject in both History and Hindi at primary level and upper secondary level, class five, six or seven were the most common answers.\textsuperscript{146}

Two of the participants from age group sixty have concerns about what today’s children are learning about the Rani in school. Man 77 said that many children are not taught about the Rani in the history subject. Many children might not know that she was born in Banaras. He had strong reservations about the Congress government and the education department because

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{141} Interview, Man 57 Jhansi April 2014; Man 21 Jhansi April 2014
\item \textsuperscript{142} Interview, Man 21 Jhansi April 2014; Man 45 Jhansi April 2014
\item \textsuperscript{143} Interview, Man 57 Jhansi; Man 57 Jhansi April 2014
\item \textsuperscript{144} Interview, Man 57 Jhansi April 2014
\item \textsuperscript{145} Interview, Man 45 Jhansi April 2014
\item \textsuperscript{146} Interviews, all Banaras respondents March- April 2014
\end{itemize}
they have neglected the freedom fighters. With the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP)\textsuperscript{147} he felt more hopeful.\textsuperscript{148} Woman 65 has the opinion that the Rani is gradually vanishing from the textbooks.\textsuperscript{149} On the other hand, Woman 56 told that the new Uttar Pradesh board have introduced the ‘glory of our nation’ with inspiring people like the Rani, Akbar and Gandhi.\textsuperscript{150}

In educational textbooks a poem by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, about the Rani has been presented since 1930s. This poem was recited by seven of the respondents, which sang or repeated some lines from the poem. In age group, fifty and twenty none of the respondents mentioned it. This poem was considered popular and loved by those who mentioned it.\textsuperscript{151} Man 77 recited some lines from the poem; \textsuperscript{152} I have heard from the Bundelk\textsuperscript{153} singers; this is the story of the queen of Jhansi. The queen of Jhansi fought very well in a manly way.\textsuperscript{154} This poem was the first encounter with the Rani for Woman 40.

From the very beginning when I was young, I read a poem by a very famous poet. The word Mardani means masculine and here the poet connected Rani, the queen with masculine nature. That was the beginning that I personally got connected with the queen.\textsuperscript{154}

Folktales and oral stories

Thirteen out of the twenty respondents heard about the Rani from oral stories in their childhood and even later. In age group sixty, all of the respondents had heard about the Rani from folktales. The respondent who did not attend school were told about the Rani from her

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{147} Baharatiya Janta Party (BJP), the party of the Indian people. Several ‘Hindu’ political movements have been a part of the Indian politics since the late nineteenth century. These movements have taken the fight for various questions such as prevention of slaughtering cow, and to promote the development and spread of a standardised Hindu language written in Devanagari scripture rather than in Urdu or Persian-Arabic scripture. This Hindu revivalism or militant Hindu nationalism today exists in several political organizations and movements. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu ‘Cultural’ organization whose members practice martial arts, and which promotes an exclusive Hindu definition of the Indian nation. The political party that developed out from RSS, the Jan Sangh has today become a quite extreme anti-Muslim supporters of Hindu Nationalism. The BJP is a broadly based descendant of Jan Sangh. (Brass, Paul, R., (2006) The Politics of India Since Independence, p.15) The BJP has grown in popularity because they reach out to a broader vote group than the upper casts. The BJP has adopted a relatively elastic ideology where the strict Hindu nationalism is toned down and the election campaign evolves more around basic necessities as electricity, infrastructure and water. (Chakrabarty, Bidyut (2008) Indian politics and Society Since Independence: Events, Processes and Ideology p.80-81)
\item \textsuperscript{148} Interview, Man 77 March 2014
\item \textsuperscript{149} Interview, Women 65 April 2014
\item \textsuperscript{150} Interview, Woman 56 March 2014
\item \textsuperscript{151} Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 65 April 2014; Woman 61 March 2014; Man 30 March 2014; Woman 33 March 2014; Woman 40 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014
\item \textsuperscript{152} Referees to the area Bundelkhand in northern India.
\item \textsuperscript{153} Interview, Man 77 March 2014
\item \textsuperscript{154} Interview, Woman 40 March 2014
\end{itemize}
husband. In this age group, they talked about the Rani and other freedom fighters everywhere in their childhood. However, Woman 65, whose grandfather was active in the freedom fight, specified that they talked more about Jawaharlal Nehru, who was active at that time. Man 77 told that they spoke about the Rani in his family and among friends in his childhood and the Rani was held in high regard. In the age group sixty and fifty, they had no television when they were young. Therefore, oral stories were the source to get to know about former rulers and important people. It was foremost their parents who told these oral stories.

In age group forty, three of four respondents talked about the Rani in their childhood in the family. Two of the respondents were born in Jhansi and heard about the Rani from the people in the area. In Man 43’s youth, the Rani often came up as a topic in his family. When the family was in Assi to take a bath in the Ganga, his father used to show the place where she was born. Woman 32’s mother took the girls within her family to the birthplace and told the story of the Rani. In age group twenty, three of four have been told about the Rani by their mothers. Man 20’s mother was from Jhansi and told him about her. Woman 20’s mother is a widow and had told about the Rani as an inspirational source. Woman 27’s parents told about the Rani when she asked them about her.

Other sources

Among other sources, there was Television series Jhansi ki Rani, which have been watched by seven of twenty respondents. None of the respondents in the age group sixty mentioned this TV series. Three out of four in the age group fifty had watched that TV series. Man 50

155 Interview, Woman ~60 March 2014; Woman 61 March 2014; Woman 65 April 2014; Man 77 March 2014; Woman 57 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014; Woman 32 March 2014; Woman 20 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014; Man 20
156 Interview, Woman ~60 March 2014
157 Interview, Man 77 March 2014
158 Interview, Woman 57 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014
159 Interview, Man 46 March 2014; Woman 42 March 2014
160 Interview, Man 42 March 2014
161 Interview, Woman 32 March 2014
162 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
163 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
164 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
165 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
166 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
167 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
168 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
169 Interview, Man 20 March 2014
170 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
171 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
172 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
173 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
174 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
175 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
176 The television series Jhansi ki Rani aired between 2009 and 2011 and took grave liberties with the Rani’s story, adding new twists of family intrigue, love and jealousy. (Harleen Singh (2014) p. 167)
admits that he likes the series, and it was informative. Two from age group forty and thirty had watched it. In age group twenty only one respondent mentioned this TV series.\footnote{Interview, Man 50 March 2014; Woman 56 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Man 42 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 33 March 2014; Man 36 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014; Woman 20 March 2014} 

In the age group twenty, two women had learned from their interest. Woman 20 learned about the Rani when she taught at a coaching institute.\footnote{Interview, Woman 20 March 2014} Woman 27 learned from books and internet.\footnote{Interview, Woman 27 March 2014} 

2.1.4 The People of Jhansi Source of Knowledge 
All four informants from Jhansi have studied about her in school. They have all learned from parents, grandparents and people around them.\footnote{Interview, Man 21 Jhansi April 2014; Woman 40 Jhansi April 2014; Man 45 Jhansi April 2014; Man 56 Jhansi April 2014} One respondent had an interest in the Rani and read books about her.\footnote{Interview, Man 56 Jhansi April 2014} One respondent thinks that they have more knowledge about Rani now, because of the TV series.\footnote{Interview, Man 45 Jhansi April 2014} 

2.1.5 The Rani Lakshmi Bai in Educational Textbooks 
Educational textbooks are included in the institutional view. The oldest educational textbook, was \textit{Glimpses of History}, ICSE, from 1992. The second oldest was, \textit{Indian National Movement World Development and Civics}, ICSE, printed in 1994. Both these textbooks had the same amount of text and explained the revolt of 1857-58 where the Rani was mentioned several times. In the political causes of the Policy of Annexation, \textit{the Doctrine of Lapse}, the Rani was considered as one of the victims.\footnote{Pinto, Xavier Í Myall E.G., (1992) \textit{Glimpses of History}, p. 153 ; Benson, SS., (1994) \textit{Indian National Movement World Development and Civics}, p. 2} In the \textit{Glimpses of History}, a specific cause to the revolt is disrespect to Nana Sahib and the Rani. When the British did not accept the Rani adopted son as a ruler, she became a bitter enemy of the British. In the description of the events of the revolt the Rani was presented under the title ñEvents in Central Indiaø, which is Jhansi and Gwalior. The two great soldiers and leaders the Rani and Tatya Tope led their troops against the British.\footnote{Pinto, X Í Myall, E.G., (1992) p. 154} In \textit{The National Movement World Development and Civics} it is described how the revolt broke out in Jhansi the year 1857 and how the Rani offered brave resistance. Jhansi was captured by the British when a traitor opened the gates of the fort. The Rani slipped out in the night and met up with other rebel leaders.\footnote{Bensson, SS., (1994), p.11} In both texts, it is written
that in Gwalior, she dressed like a man and fought the British from horseback, and she died as a brave soldier.\footnote{Pinto, X – Myall, E.G., (1992) p. 160 ; Bensson, S.S., (1994), p.11} In the National Movement World Development and Civics the famous quote of General Rose “the best and bravest military leaders of the rebels” is used.\footnote{Bensson, S.S., (1994) p. 11} The Rani was described as an excellent and patriot leader, but the textbook explained that all revolutionaries’ leadership was too local for a successful revolt.\footnote{Pinto, X – Myall, E.G., (1992) p. 161-162 ; Bensson, S.S., (1994) p.12} The textbooks mentioned the Rani under the title “the rise of nationalism”. Popular songs in praise of Tatya Tope and the Rani’s heroic deeds kept them alive in people’s memory. The Rani became India’s Jeanne d’Arc.\footnote{Benson, S.S., (1994) p. 14} In a Glimpses of History, the Rani was described in the same manner. Here she was one of those leaders that gave birth to the spirit of the nationalist movement in India. It served as a source of inspiration in the struggle for freedom.\footnote{Pinto, X – Myall, E.G., (1992) p. 163}

In a CBSE textbook Mirror of the World, published in 2011 and used in a Muslim school. Here, the young Rani joined the revolt when the British refused to acknowledge her right to adopt an heir after the death of the king of Jhansi. In a knowledge box with the title “Beacon of Light: Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi”, the first lines of the poem by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan is recited. The textbook tells that the Rani’s courage, deeds of valour and heroic battle is a theme in many folklore and ballad. The Rani fought the British undoubtedly during the revolt leading the forces from the front and showed great courage and skills.\footnote{Hajela, Alka (ed)., (2011) The Mirror of the World, p.58}

In Total History and Civics, published 2002, ICSE, the Rani was mentioned for the first time in the context of the Doctrine of Lapse. As well as in the ICSE textbooks from 1992 and 1994 there was information about the treatment given to Nana Sahib and the Rani. The same information was given about the events in Jhansi and Gwalior. The Rani resisted the British, but a traitor opened the gates of the fort. The Rani escaped the fort during the night. The Rani and Tatya Tope captured the fort of Gwalior. The Rani died fighting on June 17, 1858 in Gwalior.\footnote{Sequeira, Dolly Ellen., (2014) Total History and Civics, 10 ICSE, p. 10} The same information is also given in Modern Indian History Contemporary World and Civics, ICSE, class ten, first published in 1994 and updated in 2005.\footnote{Tayal, B.B – Jacob, Mrs S., (2005) Modern Indian History Contemporary World and Civics, p. 40 ff} As the other textbooks that were first released in the early 90s, there is an explanation for the rebellion failure. The revolt failed because of lack of co-ordination between the leaders and the activities the Rani and other leaders were too local. This textbook also took up as the other
books from early 90s, how the deeds of the Rani were in the used to raise the nationalism in India.\textsuperscript{183}

The ICSE textbook for class 10, \textit{Transition Ŵ History & Civics} published in 2010 and 2014, and \textit{India certificate History and Civics} first published in 1993 and reprinted 2014. Both textbooks describe how the Rani was asked by rebel troops to lead them, which she did with great courage.\textsuperscript{184} In \textit{Transition Ŵ History & Civics} it was written that the possibility of success vanished when the Rai died.\textsuperscript{185} \textit{Transition History and Civics for class 5}, first published in 2008, ICSE, describes the first war of independence very shortly and just but mentions the Rani as one of the many leaders of the revolt.\textsuperscript{186} \textit{Journey Through Time Ŵ History and Civics for ICSE Middle School}, for class 8 and was published in 2013. The textbook describes how the rebels took control over the Jhansi fort and convinced the widowed Rani to become their leader. Later, it is written that when the fort was stormed, the Rani tied her son around her back and escaped by making her horse jump over the fort walls. She fled to Gwalior where she was later killed in a fight.\textsuperscript{187}

These textbooks are from the early 1990s until today. The amount of information given about the Rani varies from year to year. However, the Rani was rewritten in all these educational textbooks. But here, as in the historiographies the Rani was rewritten along with other freedom fighters. Here most information seems to be factual, according to the background of this study. But there are influences of myth, or information that is not proven. Another notification is that the gap, of several years between the annexation of Jhansi and the revolt, or the massacre is not mentioned. Here as well as in the respondent's answers the Rani's fight against the British was described as a direct consequence of the Doctrine of Lapse.

\textbf{2.1.6 Newspaper articles about Rani Lakshmi Bai}

Newspapers are part of the institutional view of how the Rani has been pictured. In this chapter newspaper article of informative purpose has been taken into consideration. The articles were from the year 2007 onward.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{183} Tayal, B.B Ŵ Jacob, Mrs S., (2005) p. 49-51 \\
\textsuperscript{184} Bhattacharya, Sheila Ŵ Bose, Monica., (2014) \textit{Transitions Ŵ History & Civics}, p. 64; Kaeley, Bhandari V.K, (2013) Indian certificate History and Civics, part II (for class X), p. 17 ff \textsuperscript{185} Bhattacharya, Sheila Ŵ Bose, Monica., (2014) p. 64 \\
\textsuperscript{186} Roy, Datta., (2012) \textit{Transition History and Civics for class 5}, p. 64 \\
\textsuperscript{187} Sharma, Moneesha and others., (2013) \textit{Journey Through Time Ŵ History and Civics for ICSE Middle School}, p. 72-73
\end{flushright}
During year 2007, there were several informative articles about the Rani. In The Hindu there was an article with basic information about the Jhansi fort and the Rani, her childhood, and the fight against the British. The author ends the description of Rani’s last battle with: Because of her courage and wisdom and her sacrifices, she became an icon of the Indian nationalist movement. The gap between the annexation (1853) and the revolt (1857) was mentioned. However, what the Rani did between these years, how she struggled to get support from the British or the massacre, was not mentioned at all. At least the article was based on fact and had no apparent mythification. One novel author who discussed several facts about this period was Jaishree Misra. Misra did research for her fiction novel about the Rani and came to the conclusion that there was a significant time gap between the annexation of Jhansi and the queen’s fight with the British. The author went to Jhansi, but there she realised that the local memory of the Rani was gone. There was a pride associated with her, but hardly any answers to specific questions. In another article, Misra wonders about the massacre, which is not mentioned in Indian history. In India, historical facts have taken the shape of ballads and songs as they were safer than the historical events.

In the newspapers from year 2007 to 2011, there were also reports about how organizations arranged exhibitions or theatre with the aim to create awareness about the first war of independence, including the Rani. There were reports from several parts of India that arrangements were made to celebrate the 150th year of the first war of independence. For example in Mysore, one Rath Yatra was performed that was held to infuse the spirit of patriotism among students.

189 Suryanarayana, G., The Hindu 20070323, Fortified in legend
193 A festival, where for example deities are transported and carried around.
2.2 The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai

In this chapter, it is shown how the Rani has been described and given different roles. First the respondents from Banaras and Jhansi’s view will be presented and after that how she has been portrayed in newspaper articles. Here the symbolic role will be described. The building of the monument is also a use of history and will be presented in chapter 2.3.

2.2.1 The People of Banaras Perceived Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai

Among the respondents from Banaras the Rani was described in three different roles; the freedom fighter, a role model and as a political symbol.

Rani Lakshmi Bai as a Freedom Fighter

All the respondents in Banaras described her as a freedom fighter, or at least that she fought against the British.\(^{195}\) Man 77 described her as a brave freedom fighter, a patriot that fought for the protection of the country, not only of Jhansi. She fought for India to be free from British influence. On the Independence Day in year 1947, Man 77 celebrated the freedom from the British in Banaras. He wanted to see India as a free state and felt a lot of love for those who had fought the British. The Rani became an ideal, a role model for the freedom struggle in India and the love for India, not just a country, as a nation. This is confirmed by others in age group sixty.\(^{196}\)

However, Man 43 did not describe the Rani as a role model. The Rani was a national heroine that contributed to the freedom of India.\(^{197}\) The Rani was also described as a symbol of India and a brave Indian woman.\(^{198}\) One of the respondents, Man 29, did not give her that importance. According to him, the Rani did not succeed in giving India freedom. Therefore, she is not important.\(^{199}\)

Rani Lakshmi Bai as a role model

Eighteen out of the twenty respondents described the Rani in several ways according to their views about her personality and deeds. Their descriptions can be divided into three main categories: gender discussion, symbol of women empowerment and as a source of inspiration.

\(^{195}\) Interview, Banaras respondents March Ė April 2014
\(^{196}\) Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 61 March 2014
\(^{197}\) Interview, Man 43 March 2014
\(^{198}\) Interview, Woman 40 March 2014; Woman 20 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014
\(^{199}\) Interview, Man 29 March 2014
One can notice that there is a discussion of gender roles in the context of the use of history of the Rani. Woman 20 and Man 77 quoted an Englishman that said "she was the only man in the revolt." Man 77 also said that she was more like a man than a woman.\textsuperscript{200} Especially two respondents, Man 50 and Man 37 said that she was just like boys not only in her appearance but also in her actions.\textsuperscript{201} Woman 27 also gave that information.\textsuperscript{202} The Rani did also use to wear men's clothes according to Woman 57 and Woman 61.\textsuperscript{203} Man 46 thinks that the Rani is a good role model even if she behaved like a boy.\textsuperscript{204}

The second context where the Rani has been used was in the field of feminism or women empowerment which has been discussed by the majority of respondents from every age group. The Rani is used in the women's struggle in every field of life. Today in the struggle for women's right, women feel brave and strong. Their sources of inspiration are those women who have been as brave as the Rani and Indira Gandhi.\textsuperscript{205}

According to age group sixty, she was not only a freedom fighter. The Rani did not only fight the British but also challenged the situation in the family and society. What the Rani had performed was more significant and challenging than if she had been a man.\textsuperscript{206} Man 46 also talked about the conditions for women during that time, which was bad. Further, he said that women were supposed to stay in the house and bring up children, a norm which the Rani did not follow.\textsuperscript{207}

Woman 58 talked about women's problematic situation in India. Women have not been given much importance in the past and were subordinated men. However, now women have given more place in society and considered more important than before. In India fifty years back, women were supposed to stay at their home to do domestic work, this was the role given to them by the society. The situation has gradually become better. Today, women can do most professions, but teaching is the most common work among women. This is because of the Rani. Being a queen she lived inside the fort, but she also had more capacity to go outside the

\textsuperscript{200} Interview, Man 77 March 2014; Woman 20 March 2014
\textsuperscript{201} Interview, Man 50 March 2014; Man 37 March 2014
\textsuperscript{202} Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{203} Interview, Women 61 March 2014; Woman 57 March 2014
\textsuperscript{204} Interview, Man 46 March 2014
\textsuperscript{205} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014; Interview Woman 61 March 2014
\textsuperscript{206} Interview, Age group 60 March-April 2014
\textsuperscript{207} Interview, Man 46 March 2014
fort, which had also motivated other women to break the norm and come out from their homes.\textsuperscript{208}

Woman 40 told that the best thing with the Rani is her dual character. As one can see on a statue or in a picture, she had her son tied around her waist during the time she fought the British. Carrying her baby means that she did not see herself only as a fighter, but also as a mother nurturing her baby. This means that women today can also do both things — work and nurturing. The Rani has always been popular, but now she is relevant. Today brutal things happen to women in India, like rape and abortion of girl foetus. These things mean that the girl is not safe from womb to tomb.\textsuperscript{209}

The third context was the Rani as inspirational role model. Seventeen out of twenty respondents mentioned her as a role model. The Rani was seen as a role model for both women and men. They felt inspired by her and used her character in different challenging situations in life. In whole India when they talk about any Indian brave and courageous girl they say that this is \textit{Jhansi ki Rani}.\textsuperscript{210} Woman 58, a principal with a Ph.D. in psychology explained as follows:

\begin{quote}
I come from the field of psychology, so I think that a good identification is an important part of a girl's life, in everyone's life. We have put the model of Rani Lakshmi Bai here so when the students come here they can identify themselves with her. They should fight, or they may fight against social rules.\textsuperscript{211}
\end{quote}

According to Woman 56, she is a symbol of self-respect and the righteousness to stand for what is right. Woman 56 feels inspired from the Rani because she thinks that if the Rani could do extraordinary things, then they can also go against the norm.\textsuperscript{212} The Rani was seen as an ideal woman by several respondents, and she was the ideal woman in her role as a good mother, a good daughter, a good wife and a good queen.\textsuperscript{213}

Lakshmi Bai was a good soldier, and she was on the battlefield with her child on her back. Now we now that woman can do this, but in her lifetime 1834-58 it was impossible to think that any woman can ride a horse. Today

\textsuperscript{208} Interview, Woman 58 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014
\textsuperscript{209} Interview, Woman 40 March 2014
\textsuperscript{210} Interview, Woman 56 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014
\textsuperscript{211} Interview, Woman 58 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 40 March 2014
\textsuperscript{212} Interview, Woman 56 March 2014
\textsuperscript{213} Interview, Man 20 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014; Woman 20 March 2014
we think that if Rani of Jhansi could do this, we can too. Women can do everything if they are given the opportunity and support from their family.\textsuperscript{214}

Women 65 considered that the Rani’s character was encouraging for women in their daily lives to manage stressful situations. A couple of days before this interview, Woman 65 had experience of a situation where she thought about the Rani to feel stronger. Because of a conflict with a neighbour who wanted to build on her ground, policemen came to her house. First, they did not announce themselves and demanded her to open the door. When she opened the door, they walked into her house uninvited and required her to show the papers of her house. They began to argue with her, but at that moment she was not afraid of anything because she thought about the Rani’s strength.\textsuperscript{215}

Man 46 told that once he and his wife were at the railway station and people were furious with the driver and fought him. His wife saw that and began to beat the people who fought with the driver. So people said, look there is Rani of Jhansi.\textsuperscript{216} Woman 30 thinks about her when she gets angry. She believed that there would be no violence against women in the society and women could fight for their rights with the Rani’s help.\textsuperscript{217} Woman 27 said that when somebody says something bad to a woman, she replied them “how can you say like that to me. Then I will become Jhansi ki Rani.”\textsuperscript{218} Woman 20 told that when they try to act boldly, people always call them Rani of Jhansi:

Are you trying to act like Jhansi ki Rani? Or do you think yourself as Jhansi ki Rani? When I tell my mom that I want to bring some change in the society, she will say do you think about yourself as Jhansi ki Rani.\textsuperscript{219}

Woman 20’s mother thought that they should feel the inspiration from the Rani to do something great. The Rani was also mentioned as a role model for getting through difficult times by two of the respondents.\textsuperscript{220} Woman 20 said:

My mother has really treated Jhansi ki Rani as a role model. When I lost my father five years ago, we asked my mother how she will manage, because since sometimes we were in economic crises. She said if Jhansi ki Rani

\textsuperscript{214} Interview, Woman 56 March 2014
\textsuperscript{215} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014
\textsuperscript{216} Interview, Man 46 March 2014
\textsuperscript{217} Interview, Man 30 March 2014; Woman 32 March 2014
\textsuperscript{218} Interview, Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{219} Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
\textsuperscript{220} Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
could fight against the British, fight against men, why can’t I manage my own house, it’s not a big deal she can manage everything. She also told that she had one son, that was not her own, and I have three of you. So for every woman in India she is a role model, whether she is literate or illiterate. Jhansi ki Rani is a famous character we always use her in our daily life.\textsuperscript{221}

Man 77 expressed a different opinion than the other respondents. He said that the Rani was also a spiritual and religious symbol of Shakti. Shakti means female power.\textsuperscript{222}

Five respondents, from all age groups, want their daughters to be strong, courageous and brave as the Rani once was.\textsuperscript{223} Woman 65 told that she was training her daughter to be as the Rani.\textsuperscript{224} Woman 40 wants her daughter as well as her son to be bold and not to hesitate in different situations.\textsuperscript{225}

**Political use of Rani Lakshmi Bai**

One respondent from age group 40 said that the Rani is used in a political movement. The Rani’s name got so much highlighted that it has become a good slogan for politicians. All politicians use her name, but mostly by BJP and the connected Hindu nationalist organisation Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).\textsuperscript{226,227}

2.2.2 The People of Jhansi Perceived Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai

All four participants from Jhansi described her as a freedom fighter, as the strongest woman in Indian history. She did what no men can do today, during a time when it was very difficult for anyone to perform anything.\textsuperscript{228} The Rani is a role model for all politicians.\textsuperscript{229} According to Man 21, they use her name in any women matter. She is an inspiration for the study, sports and work. People get confidence from her. They feel that the Rani was alone, but she fought

\textsuperscript{221} Interview, Woman 20 March 2014; Man 20 March 2014
\textsuperscript{222} Interview, Man 77 March 2014
\textsuperscript{223} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014; Woman 50 March 2014; Woman 56 March 2014; Woman 40 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014; Woman 27 March 2014
\textsuperscript{224} Interview, Woman 65 April 2014
\textsuperscript{225} Interview, Woman 40 March 2014
\textsuperscript{226} The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu Cultural organization whose members practice martial arts, and which promotes an exclusive Hindu definition of the Indian nation. (Brass, Paul, R., (2006) The Politics of India Since Independence, p.15) This Hindu nationalist organization was founded in 1925. The RSS advocates resurgence in the national consciousness based on ancient Hindu ideals. The RSS is not a political party, but supports several parties and groups. (Dalal, Roshen.,(2010) Hinduism – An Alphabetical Guide see Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh)
\textsuperscript{227} Interview, Woman 40 March 2014
\textsuperscript{228} Interview, all Jhansi respondents April 2014
\textsuperscript{229} Interview, Man 57 Jhansi April 2014
against the British so today we can do anything. Woman 40 said that people still give her examples. A woman should fight like the Rani and should not fear men. She wanted to live like the Rani, and if something happens to her, she will manage everything because she chose to live like the Rani.

Three of them talked about that the Rani made Jhansi famous, and this attracts both western and Indian tourists. They come to visit the fort and to learn about the Rani. Jhansi is an attractive place for tourists, and sometimes groups of students come to learn about her. Several people have studied about her and books have been written. Many people depend on her in their businesses for example book writers, light and sound shows and guides etcetera.

2.2.3 The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai in Newspapers

In the Banaras based newspaper Aaj, there are two articles that describe the role of the Rani. Both articles were written the day after the Independence Day celebration on August 14th. One was from year 1958 and mentioned the roles of poets in Indian history. In the nineteenth century, the Rani and other revolutionaries have given inspiration to literature that describes love for the motherland. The poem by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan is widely known and loved in the society. On 15 august, 1972 the struggle for independence was remembered. Influential personalities were remembered, and one of them was the Rani. It was said that when remembering the struggle against the British rule, it is impossible to forget the name of the Rani. In the year 1857 the fighting Rani said that óas long as I am alive, I will not give up Jhansi.óShe showed great courage in the war of Jhansi.

In a wider Indian geographical context, the Rani has been described according to several roles, for example, a role model for women and leadership. In Chennai, December 2006 at the Women's College a Human Rights day program was arranged. Students were advised to take inspiration from women who were trendsetters in their time as the Rani. In a story, from The Hindu 2013, with children as target readers, Mathangi Subramanian writes a story about bullying. How can Leela stop the popular kids in school to bully her friend? Leela found courage from the history of the Rani. Even if the Rani's fight was tough she did not get

230 Interview, Man 21 Jhansi April 2014  
231 Interview Woman 40 Jhansi April 2014  
232 Interview, Man 45 Jhansi April 2014; Man 57 Jhansi April 2014; Man 21 Jhansi April 2014  
233 Aaj, 19580815, title missing, Nagari Pracharini Sabha archive (NPSA), Varanasi  
234 Aaj, 19720815, title missing, NPSA, Varanasi  
afraid, and did what was right. When the Rani died that day, she died for justice. Leela thought about the Rani, how she had rushed into battle and risked her life. Leela thought that sometimes you have to act even if it scares you. Leela confronted the bullies. At that moment, she felt powerful and brave just like the Rani.237

On Women’s day, March, 8 2011 celebrities and others gave their view of feminism. Sonam Kapoor, the actress, talked about feminism. The idea of feminism that a woman is valued equally to her male counterpart is a seed that has been sown for a long time. There have been historical women as the Rani that was considered as feminists. In many parts of the world, including India, women are still not treated as equal to men.238 In another article from Women’s day year 2011 published in The Times of India due to attacks on women in Delhi, chief minister Sheila Dikshit urged women to take inspiration from all-time heroines like the Rani.239 In The Hindu in March 2013 we can read that since the oldest times women have been given a secondary role which has caused immense loss of their self-esteem and dignity. India has seen a lot of advances in its position of power. Men and women have to capture this opportunity. There are historical women who have demonstrated unique leadership capabilities, for example, the Rani and Indira Gandhi. Women empowerment is vital for India’s development.240

The Rani’s character has been used in a more political context. Atiq Khan writes in The Hindu, May 2012 that the Akhilesh Yadav’s Government in Uttar Pradesh (U.P) has brought the Rani out of school textbooks and television series and named a pension scheme for women living in poverty, in the name of the Rani.241 Later at the opinion page in a letter to the editor in The Hindu with the title: ÌWhat’s in a name? An entire vote bank?Ì authored by Badri Narayan, (professor at G.B Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad), he discussed how the politics of identity is active in U.P, camouflaged as government-sponsored development schemes. Narayan wrote that it seemed that the only politics that works in U. P is the politics of identity. During the time Akhilesh Yadav’s government has been working it is shown that

---

237 Subramanian, Mathangi., The Hindu, 20130409, ÌLike a queenÌ http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-youngworld/like-a-queen/article4597596.ece
238 The Times of India., 20110308, ÌAnyone can be a feministÌ http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/lifestyle/relationships/man-woman/Anyone-can-be-a-feminist/articleshow/7638707.cms
240 The Hindu., 20130305, ÌWomen’s empowermentÌ http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-youngworld/womens-empowerment/article4477909.ece
the politics of identity is still alive. It is evident in the way names of heroes and icons have recurred in the political discourses. In several cities and towns, attempt at inserting the mainstream nationalist history that glorified the Rani, who have been put on a pedestal by the BJP and the RSS. The new government, Samajwadi party is now making attempts to rescue the name of the Rani by launching *the Rani Lakshmi Bai* pension scheme for women below the poverty line.242

It is clear in the article *Tolerance under threat* from year 2008 in *The Hindu* that today's novel authors cannot construct a historical character in the way they want. The article comments on the reactions against the writer Jaishree Misra for her fiction novel *The Rani*. Two Congress Party representatives in U.P persuade Mayawati government, to ban this historical novel, for allegedly depicting the legendary freedom fighter the Rani in a bad light. They claimed that it had severely hurt the people of the state. It is written that it seems like; each group of the Indian diverse politic is competing about the right to be more offended by different writings like this. The allegedly offensive passage in the novel is a short intimacy between the Rani and a British Major which, according to the author of this article could not upset anyone's sensibilities.243

### 2.3 The Monument and Celebration of Rani Lakshmi Bai

This chapter is about the people of Banaras opinion and thoughts about the reasons behind the monument construction as well as what is written in the newspapers about the construction. The organisation’s opinion about the construction of the monument will also be presented. Thereafter the celebrations of the Rani in Banaras and Jhansi will be presented, as well as in some extended geographical context through the newspapers.

#### 2.3.1 The People of Banaras Opinion about the Rani Lakshmi Bai Monument

The majority of the respondents from all age groups had an opinion about the monument. This statue is something important, because it is a historical place and memory of a freedom fighter of this country. Though, they did not know the reasons for the building, they often had an opinion or an idea. There are only two respondents that did not know of the monument. The majority gets emotional when they talk about the building about the memorial. There are many opinions on the construction of the monument and the fact is that the statue has not been

---

built earlier. It was considered good that the monument has been constructed, but several respondents do not think that the location is suitable.\(^\text{244}\)

Especially the people who live or work in the neighbourhood of Assi have known or heard that this was the birthplace of the Rani for a long time. The neighbourhood of Assi was described as an area that before was less congested with houses, businesses and hotels than today. The respondents are uncertain about the year, but the government installed a stone with her name. That stone has been there for a long time. Later the government proposed to dedicate a large area for the monument and the park in her memory. However, the people who lived in the area did not want to give up their land to the government. The memorial park that has been built now is smaller than the original plan. Now, as the monument has been built, several respondents said that they feel surer that this was the Rani’s birthplace.\(^\text{245}\)

**Politics and political negligence**

One of the believed reasons why this project began so late was political ignorance or political negligence.\(^\text{246}\) Man 77 explained that after the independence the Congress Party came into regime, and they neglected the freedom fighters, including the Rani. With the political change in India, with more influence of BJP they began to pay respect to freedom fighters. He said that the Congress Party was a government of selfish people that did not care about the nation or about the people who fought for the freedom.\(^\text{247}\) Another respondent, Man 46, meant that regardless of party, they are corrupt and inefficient.\(^\text{248}\) There are statues of all great leaders in Banaras, excluding the Rani until now. The Rani has been neglected; woman 65 stated.\(^\text{249}\)

**From women ignorance to women empowerment**

The most common possible reason was the ignorance of women, and that women’s situation is changing for the better. Today, people become more aware of deeds for the country by a woman from Banaras. Woman 58 said ÒWhat have not been done before, we cannot redo. When you awake, morning comes.Ó\(^\text{250}\) The Rani has become more relevant because now people talk about the conditions of women, and it is considered necessary. India has been a

\(^\text{244}\) Interview, Man 37 March 2014; Man 50 March 2014; Woman 57 March 2014; Woman 32 March 2014
\(^\text{245}\) Interview, Woman 37 March 2014; Woman 50 March 2014; Man 29 March 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Woman 58 March 2014; Man 50 March 2014
\(^\text{246}\) Interview, Man 77; Woman 65 April 2014; Man 43 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014
\(^\text{247}\) Interview, Man 77 March 2014
\(^\text{248}\) Interview, Man 43 March 2014; Man 46 March 2014
\(^\text{249}\) Interview, Woman 65 April 2014
\(^\text{250}\) Interview, Woman 58 March 2014
country dominated by men and women have been ignored, but now women take a greater place in every field of society. The concept of women empowerment has become widely used to strengthen women. This is a hot topic in the debate, and that is the reason this monument has been built. The Rani symbolises a woman who is not less than men. The building of the monument is a symbol of women empowerment, according to Woman 20. When women see the statue of the Rani, they get inspired and feel that they are equally important in the society as men. Woman 58 was a principal of a girl's college where a statue of the Rani has been built in the year 2006. The motivation behind this was that every student can correlate with the Rani and get the courage from her. When the students see the statue, they can feel motivation and strength.

Tourism

Another possible reason was tourism. The tourism department might have increased their interest in national heroes like the Rani. Two respondents, Man 43 and Man 46 said that it was the tourism department of U.P that constructed the monument. Man 30 blamed the archaeological survey of India or the ministry of tourism for the delay in construction. They should have built it earlier and made it an important spot of Banaras. He has never seen in any guidebook mentioning the birthplace of the Rani.

2.3.2 Organisations' Role in the Construction of the Monument in Banaras

Two of the organizations that worked on this monument were available during the time of the study. One was the U.P Tourism information of Banaras and the other Maharani Lakshmi Bai Janmastan Smarak Samiti (MLJSS). MLJSS was established in the year 1970 to acknowledge Rani's birthplace. Before that no one knew that this is her birthplace. The U.P Tourism department took part in this project because of tourism. It has been a plan for the last seventeen years, but was not possible before because of a land dispute. U.P tourism department had been to court to get the land. The school and other people who lived in the area claimed that land, a common phenomenon in India. When the land became available, the project began. The U.P tourism department did not work directly with the local organisations. After the project was finished, they handed over the monument to the local organisation and

---

251 Interview, Woman 27 March 2014; Woman 40 March 2014; Woman 61 March 2014
252 Interview, Woman 20 March 2014
253 Interview, Woman 56 March 2014
254 Interview, Woman 58 March 2014
255 Interview, Man 42 March 2014; Man 46 April 2014, Woman 32 March 2014
256 Interview, Man 30 March 2014; Woman 40 March 2014
257 Interview, the organization Maharani Lakshmi Bai Jannistan Smarak Samiti, MLJSS, March 2014
arranged people to work there. MLJSS told that the monument area is still not enough for her birthplace. The early plan acquires an even larger area than now, but there are now other properties there. They hope to expand it in the future.

An archaeological study has been done with the help of the government. The proof of that, this was the Rani’s birthplace was the discovery of a stone related to the place and that the building that previously existed belonged to the Rani’s grandfather. However, the U.P tourism department said that they do not have any proof that this is her actual birthplace. Any proof was not in their interest. They have constructed different places of this kind. The money to found this place comes from the government. They wanted to build this monument because of her importance in whole India. MLJSS contributed through talking to the government and to politicians (the respondent was a politician in the BJP). For example, they strike. This is important because she was a female freedom fighter who was born in Banaras, a daughter of Kashi, which became the queen of Jhansi. He said that people were very happy because of the construction of the monument.

To make advertising of this monument the U.P tourism department officer said that he would write about this place in the guidebook. They have plans but were at the beginning of the work of publishing and advertising the monument. In the U.P Tourism guidebook Discover the Colourful Mystique of a Holy land Uttar Pradesh. A to Z, many cities of U.P are presented, including Varanasi and Jhansi. The guidebook described that Banaras have been associated with many great personalities, but the Rani was not mentioned. There is information about the Rani in the context of the city of Jhansi. In July 2014, there was still no mentioning of the Rani in the context of the city Varanasi on the website for U. P tourism information.

258 Interview, Uttar Pradesh Tourism Information Varanasi office, March 2014
259 Interview, organization MLJSS March 2014
260 Interview, organization MLJSS March 2014
261 Interview, Uttar Pradesh Tourism Information Varanasi office, March 2014
262 Interview, organization MLJSS March 2014
263 Interview, Uttar Pradesh Tourism Information Varanasi office, March 2014
264 Interview, Uttar Pradesh Tourism Information Varanasi office, March 2014
265 Uttar Pradesh Tourism, A to Z, p. 148
266 Uttar Pradesh Tourism, A to Z, p. 75
267 Uttar Pradesh Tourism Information., http://www.up-tourism.com/destination/varanasi/varanasi.htm
269 http://www.uptourism.com/destination/varanasi/intro2.htm 20140718
2.3.3 Newspaper Articles about Rani of Lakshmi Bai Monuments

The first found article in the Banaras based newspaper *Aaj* was from 1952, November 18. It was written that the Rani’s birthplace was going to be preserved by the Government of U.P. A rock inscription was going to be built in her memoir.\(^{267}\) This article shows that the birthplace has been known since the early 1950s, as well as there has been some kind of plan to preserve this place. However, the next found article on this topic was from the year 2013. In *The Times of India*, March 2013 it was possible to read about the construction plans for the pathway leading to the memorial that it will soon have street lights. This is to facilitate tourists and visitors who come searching for the monument after sunset.\(^{268}\) But in November 2013 there was an article with the title *Maharani Lakshmi Bai’s birthplace lies in neglect.* The birthplace became a memorial in year 2012 and is described as neglected. There is no gatekeeper, and the department has not provided this place with necessities for its daily maintenance. A local family looks after the memorial without financial support from the government. The memorial was completed in November 2012 and was not yet handed over to Varanasi Municipal Corporation. In March 2013, U.P tourism minister Om Prakash Singh visited the birthplace and ordered to place a sign board, street lights on the pathways near the memorial. However, several months after the order, the street lights and sign boards were not yet provided. A budget of Rs 52.24 Lakh\(^{269}\) was disbursed on the memorial, and the construction began in year 2010. The memorial comprises a gold colour statue of the Rani, accompanied by pictorial representation of significant events from her life on the side walls. The inscription of lines from the poetry *Jhanski ki Rani* written by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan on the side walls will evoke feelings of respect and patriotism.\(^{270}\)

In December 2013, the Maharani Lakshmi Bai memorial was dedicated to the public in the presence of U.P tourism minister Singh. The Maharani Lakshmi Bai Janmastan Smarak Samite, Jagrit Foundation and the Mahant of Sankat Mochan temple Vishwambhar Nath Mishra have struggled for a facelift of the freedom fighter’s birthplace since 1972.\(^{271}\)

---

\(^{267}\) Aaj., 19521118, Missing title, NPSA, Varanasi


\(^{269}\) 1 Lakh = 100 000


In a larger geographical context, the Rani has been remembered and honoured with monuments years before Banaras. In the year 1957, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh laid the first foundation stone of a memorial to the Rani on August 16, a hundred years and two months after she died in Gwalior. A 25-feet (7.6 meter) high statue of the Rani on horseback was built. In February 2008, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the 1857 war of independence a statue of the Rani was installed on the Rani Jhansi road, New Delhi. While unveiling the statue, Mayor Arti Mehra said: Rani Laxmi Bai was a great source of inspiration for freedom fighters during the freedom movement against the British. Her courage, sense of self-respect and bravery will continue to inspire generations to come.

2.3.4 The People of Banaras and Jhansi about the Celebration of Rani Lakshmi Bai

Eight of the twenty Banaras respondents talked about the celebration of the Rani’s birthday. Respondents from different age groups had noticed the celebration. The majority of those who knew more about it either lived or work in the surroundings of her birthplace. Every year on her birthday a procession takes place. It seems to be the school next to the birthplace that arranges it, according to the respondents. During the procession, music is played and they walk through the lanes in the area with a horse. This takes three to four hours. Politicians and the general public gather to celebrate the Rani. The celebration program is announced in the newspaper.

Two of four of the Jhansi respondents talked about the celebration of the Rani. The Rani’s birthday is celebrated near the Jhansi fort with ceremony and a parade. It is a big celebration that gathers many people. People send messages to each other. It is celebrated as a grand event.

2.3.5 Newspaper Articles about the Celebration of Rani Lakshmi Bai

In Aaj November 19, 1982 the Rani’s 147th birthday celebration in Assi was announced, arranged by the Society of Maharani Lakshmi Bai birthplace. The day after the Rani’s birthday celebration, it was reported that local people, freedom fighters and organisation
members gathered at her birthplace with an oil picture, and a speech was made. In November 20, 2008 on the occasion of the birthday of the Rani and Indira Gandhi images of them were shaped in the sand on the riverbank of Ganga. This was the 173rd birthday of the Rani and the 91st birthday of Indira Gandhi. In November 2013, the birthday celebration of the Rani was announced to be held in Assi. People offered flowers to the queen. A colourful picture made by children was taken out on the occasion. Students took part in cultural and sports events, as well as a dance drama about the queen.

In other cities of India, the earliest available newspaper material regarding celebration and remembrance of the Rani was in The Hindu 2006. However, the articles were originally written in the year 1956-57 and described the preparation and celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the first war of independence. A torch was carried from Gwalior, where the Rani sacrificed her life, to Indore 500 km away, to honour those who died for the country. On January 3, 1957 an article was written in which the Government of Indiaâ€™s preparation for an anniversary program was mentioned. The highlights of the program were the formation of a memorial of the Rani and other who lost their lives during the uprising. August 17, 1957 the Vice President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan installed the 1857 Centenary Exhibition in New Delhi. He requested the people to draw inspiration from the courage and heroism of the freedom fighters and face their problems with the motto of service, sacrifice, dedication and social discipline. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan continued to say that the people had enjoyed freedom for the last ten years, and it was time to remember the freedom fighters. The magnificent achievements of heroes like the Rani and countless others are a history of great sacrifice and suffering. The impact of the events of 1857 on the people of the country gave them a sense of nationalism.

Anniversary of the Independence Day and the 1857 events were celebrated all over the India. On the 60th anniversary of Independence and 150th anniversary of the 1857 uprising was celebrated by activists of the Democratic Federation of India which set-up a street play. The

---

277 Aaj., 19821120, Birth Anniversary of Laksmibaiâ€”NPSA, Varanasi
278 Aaj., 20081120, Missing title, NPSA, Varanasi
play highlighted India’s rites of passages from Company rule to the 1857 uprising combined with the deed of the Rani and others. In the year 2007 on the Independence Day in Hyderabad 2 000 school children watched an ensemble of cultural items portraying the freedom struggle from 1857 till independence. The death of the Rani and the Doctrine of Lapse were portrayed. Children among the audience were enthused to see the Rani of Jhansi astride a stuffed horse, holding up a sword against the British soldiers, with a baby in one arm.284

On the 150th anniversary of the Rani’s death, BJP arranged functions in different cities of India, for example, in Shimoga, Karnataka. BJP secretary Bhanu Prakash delivered a speech there.285 In Bangalore, the Mahila Morcha of the BJP arranged a program on ‘The role of mothers in independent India’. The motivation was that the future of the present generation depends mainly on education and social awareness that only their mothers can give them. RSS emphasised that mothers should be role models for their children.286

---

3. Analysis and Discussion

The purpose of this master thesis was to examine the use of history of an Indian queen who fought in the first war of independence year 1857-58. This has been done by studying the people of Banaras and Jhansi knowledge and opinion about the Rani, as well as the institutional information about the Rani. In this chapter, the results will be analysed and discussed with the help of previous research and the theoretical approaches.

3.1 Knowledge about Rani Lakshmi Bai

First of all the respondents' knowledge about the Rani will be discussed. Do the people of Banaras and Jhansi know the historical facts about the Rani who is so beloved by them? Fourteen of the twenty Banaras respondents and three of the four respondents in Jhansi could tell some knowledge about the Rani. In general, the knowledge level was low among all respondents. In comparison to the background where the Rani's life is presented, the respondents were unable to give quality information. There was no significant difference in the historical knowledge about the Rani among the different age groups. Consequently, it can be assumed that there has not been any significant change in the history telling about the Rani during the last sixty years, with some minor exceptions. Accordingly, this indicates that the people have learned the same history about the Rani during the last sixty years.

All respondents from Banaras and Jhansi knew who the Rani was, no question about it. Indeed the affection and the respect for the Rani was a primary attribute among all the respondents. Thirteen of the twenty respondents clearly expressed that she was important for Banaras because the city was her birthplace, as well as necessary for the whole India. Only one person said that the Rani is not important at all. In comparison with the previous research of the historiographies, where the Rani was mostly mentioned as one among several freedom fighters, the respondents in Banaras and Jhansi gave her more importance. These facts indicate that the Rani has more importance in people's life and folktale, but the professional historians consider the Rani less important for the historical development. Therefore, the Rani is not more prominent in academic historiographies.

The respondents' knowledge about the Rani can be divided into three categories; first her childhood, second from the time of her marriage and life in Jhansi (including childlessness and adoption of a child) and third the annexation of Jhansi and the war against the British. In these three categories, the respondents have given almost the same information about the Rani. This can be a result of the dramaturgy in the history about the Rani. The Rani's life
clearly went against the norms for a girl, which makes the story easier to remember and fascinating to tell. The childlessness of the Rani and the adoption of a child in combination with the British annexation raised the sentiments of respondents. People are more emotionally attracted to her because of her bold stand against the British, and following her death in the fight against the British. It is told by the respondents how dramatically she chose death over life under British rule, and by this it can be indicated that this story attracts nationalistic feelings of people.

The Rani's childhood, her childlessness and motherhood concern female aspects. In the description of the Rani's childhood, she was described as a tomboy and learned knowledge and skills that were considered to be boy's matter. The Rani was not practicing to become a mother, which is a part of the socialisation perspective as discussed in the feminist theory. In her fight against the British, it is described by the respondents how efficiently the Rani varied her gender role. It is not described that her brave personality was natural, but more that she fought like a man and became something outside her personality. The Rani's actions were considered traditionally masculine, and these actions were rare to adopt by a woman in India during that time. Probably, her actions were justified because she became a widow, and she got the chance to go outside the norm as discussed by Tornbjer in the previous research. It is evident that the gender aspect is at least something exciting among the respondents, because many mentions her tomboy childhood and that she fought in men's clothes. There were also examples, how the Rani fits into the female norm. A description of how the Rani helped the people in the kingdom, which is indicated in the background material. However, it is hard to know in which extent she did this. These characteristics were according to the female gender norm. The Rani could perform the role of a woman and later become a warrior. This might be a crucial aspect of the acceptance of the Rani.

In the Jhansi group of respondents, the information about the Rani was not more detailed. There was an assumption that it could be more informative to perform interviews in Jhansi because of the tradition of folktale and oral stories about the Rani. The respondents from Jhansi were few and cannot be generalised. However, partly this result can be confirmed by one newspaper article where a novel writer went to Jhansi to search for the folklore and did find only pride, not any knowledge. In Jhansi, all interviews had to be translated, and some information may have been lost.
One may not expect that the majority of people know more than the information in educational textbooks, but in India it has been a strong tradition of folktales and oral stories. Therefore, it was not an unreasonable assumption that the majority of these respondents could have more knowledge about the Rani. However, the respondents did not convey knowledge that differed from the educational textbooks. Hence, it can be assumed that the information in the folktale and educational textbooks resembled each other or that it has not been so much information about the Rani in the folktales. There are details about the Rani, which differs. For example, Rani helped the people in her kingdom while her husband was a less good person. This was told by age group forty, thirty and twenty. This information might be from oral stories, but the television series is also a probable source of knowledge.

The sampling of respondents includes highly educated, which means over upper secondary education, and low educated, which means under upper secondary education. Those respondents, who could tell more information about the Rani, had higher education. However, it cannot be concluded that only the highly educated people knew more about the Rani. It might be their trained ability to express their knowledge that enabled them to tell more information. It was not obvious that those who were professional history teachers knew more about the historical facts about the Rani’s life. That might be because of more personal interest in other parts of the Indian history, or it could be possible the Rani has no significant part in traditional historiographies. There was no difference in knowledge between the genders.

There are several sequences in the historical chronology about the Rani, which has not been mentioned by the respondents or the educational textbooks. None of the respondents indicate the most uncomfortable events in Jhansi. For example, the massacre of all English in the city or the several years of gap between the annexation and the conflict with the British. Neither the Rani’s efforts to get help from the British in her conflict with the neighbouring state Orchha have not been mentioned. First of all, these facts might be unknown to the common people. As it was shown in chapter 2.1.4 about the educational textbooks, it was not mentioned there either. There might be many reasons, but there is always a selection of information in educational textbooks. For example, the Rani is mentioned as one of the several leaders in the revolt, and there cannot be in deep information about everything. However, in the textbooks it is not even shown a flaw of the Rani or how problematic the situation could be among Indian states during that time. If the British had given her help, undoubtedly the Rani had not been considered as a heroine or a freedom fighter. This takes us
back to the theory of the didactic concept of the use of history and the question; for whom and by whom is the history? As it has been noticed in the previous research, foremost in the novel comparison by Singh, the Rani has been used in different ways depending on the author. The British authors pictured the Rani as an enemy and as an excuse for the colonisation. On the other hand, the Indian authors have used the Rani to create a common national cultural heritage in the extension to establish the nation India. In the result, it seems like that the Rani is still used as a factor in the making of the Indian nation. To achieve this goal the positive parts have to be uplifted, and questionable sequences have to be ignored. The use of history, when some chosen parts are highlighted and other ignored, constructs a perfect heroine. When the story of the Rani becomes polished, she becomes a more ‘pure’ heroine that fought for her son and her state. This is accordingly to the thought of that the Rani has become a component in creating and constructing an Indian nation.

When Smith defines the concept of nation the need of a shared history and common myths are mentioned. By placing the Rani in educational textbooks, she becomes a part of the shared history that is considered necessary at an institutional level or the government point of view that the people should learn. Further, when the members of the nation identify themselves with these myths and history it creates a national identity. The results of the study can be interpreted as that the Rani has become a part of a national identity when the respondents relate themselves to as well as the nation on an emotional level. This gets more obvious when the people point out that she fought for the freedom and that she died for a free India. Chandra has written that it was after the first war of independence that the freedom movement began to grow. The British takeover after the first war of independence created a deeper rift between the Indians and the British. Consequently, the Rani along with other leaders from the events of 1857-58 emerged as symbols of the freedom fighters.

There are parts of the respondents’ information about the Rani’s life that can be seen equally in the background in chapter 1.3.3, as traces of myth. In fact, the Rani has become so much important for most of the respondents that they considered her as a heroine. This endorses the statement made by Lebra-Chapman that the Rani has gone through all the stages of mythification and has become a part of the collective memory. This is not strange, as Eliade stated that the facts of a historical events and characters survive in the popular memory for at most three centuries. Three centuries has not passed yet, but there are several elements in the knowledge of the respondents that can be discussed as myth. The most obvious is the different versions of how the Rani flight from the fort, which were presented in the background. The
The most common version told by the respondents was that the Rani jumped from the fort, which is also written in one educational textbook. This is discussed in the background as myth. There are recurring lines or particular quotations about her, for example, *Do not take my Jhansi* ḍā will never give up my Jhansi ḍā This including the anecdote about elephants, the picture of her riding a horse with her adopted son around her waist or ḍāhe was the only man in the revolt ḍā This kind of information was given by respondents in all age groups from both Banaras and Jhansi. There might be possible that these statements are based on some historical facts, but they are so glamorised, that the information can be considered highly influenced by myth.

The major source, where all respondents, except one, have learned about the Rani was the school through educational textbooks and lessons. As it can be seen in the chapter 2.1.4 about the Rani in educational textbooks, these textbooks present the Rani but do not give so much knowledge about her. The Rani was studied in both Hindi and history subjects. The poem by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan was known by many of the respondents, and several of these could tell a particular line from the famous poem. The poem was only found in one textbook used in this study. Maybe it is more frequent in the Hindi subject.

In educational textbooks, there are always selections of which historical events and persons that are considered important for citizens of a country to know. The information in the educational books was rather basic, in comparison to what could have been written. The Rani is definitely one of the leaders of the revolt, but she was mentioned in passing along with the other leaders. The textbooks are mainly based on what have been considered as facts, (in comparison with the background information) with a touch of myth as it is visible from different versions about how the Rani escaped the fort. Another example is that the massacre and the gap between the annexation and the revolt were not mentioned. In the textbooks and the respondents’ answers the Rani’s fight against the British was a direct consequence of the annexation and the rejection of her adopted son as a ruler. However, in comparison with the background information the Rani’s joining of the revolt seems to be a result of many circumstances, not only the annexation. Similarly, according to some sources in the background there were many enemies of the Rani. The Rani asked for help from the British, but she did not have any response from the British. If the British had helped her then the history might be different. This could be a process of making the Rani into a national heroine. By showing a positive image while, covering the more questionable sequences of her history, as noticed in the nationalism and myth theories of Smith.
The tradition of folktales was common in every age group, so the oral stories and folktales have been a source of knowledge about the Rani for several respondents. According to some respondents, there are many other freedom fighters that were more talked-about. During the time of independence, it might have been more common to talk about freedom fighters that were alive. However, even if most respondents have heard the folktales and the traditional stories from the people, but still the respondents' knowledge does not differ much from the educational textbooks. There are differences, as mentioned before that the Rani cared for the people of Jhansi, which might come from the oral stories. The other possible source for that is the television series. Respondents from the age group fifty and younger talked more about the TV series *Jhansi ki Rani* as a source of knowledge. From the descriptions of Rani's life by the respondents, there is some information that is not in the background. For example, the king had a drinking problem, or the Rani used to go out to the people and solve their problems (though, this might be indicated in the background). A possible source of this knowledge can also be a TV series *Jhansi ki Rani*. Several informants considered the TV series as a source of good knowledge. This kind of knowledge is questionable, because TV series glamorises and dramatizes the events that take the viewer away from the historical facts. The traditional sources like school education and oral stories are constant sources among all age groups. But for age group fifty and younger, more sources have been added to the broadcast as well as social media.

Newspapers are also a source of information in this study, but only few respondents mentioned newspapers as a source of knowledge about the Rani's life. However, it was more common that the respondents had read articles about the birthday celebration of the Rani. In the newspaper section, there are articles that go outside the safe sphere of the information about the Rani. These articles about the Rani have more information than the educational textbooks, there is also a discussion about the missing facts, as discussed before. The authors of the articles had an informative purpose, which shows that there are several parts of the society that wants to build up a feeling of patriotism around the Rani.

Benedict Anderson argued that the printing of books and newspapers developed the imagination of a shared community of the people. The Rani has been pictured in print media, as well as television series and movies. This makes her an available ideal which with people can identify and relate themselves, an ideal that is closely linked to the Indian freedom fight. With the help of these channels, the message of the Rani can reach many people who will consider her as part of the standard Indian history. It has been seen in national newspapers
that the Rani has mentioned at several places in India from north in Himalaya Pradesh till south in Kerala. The national newspapers report about numerous events where the Rani is seen as an important historical character, and this view of her is then spread to others in India. In the extension this creates a common feeling about the Rani as an Indian historical character, a national heroine as well that she is a part of the common national history.

The information that the respondents has given, goes hand in hand with the educational textbooks. The respondents have heard about the Rani from different sources, but still the information they gave about the Rani does not go outside the educational textbooks. This means that the history told by the receiver of history and the information written by the sender has a lot of resemblances. The result shows that it can be seen that the historical fact about the Rani seems not to be important. The use of history of the Rani is more mythical than professional. Somehow, the history telling about the Rani, where facts and myths are closely mingled together has become the general story. According to Eck, myth is a crucial factor which can be seen in the context of the background information, the people's knowledge and in the educational textbooks. From the theory of myth, it can be considered that the creation of a historical character into a hero is common around the world, particularly in India. The historical facts about a person are not remembered for a long time. It is only one and a half century since the Rani lived. However, it is clear from the previous research and the results of this study that the Rani has gone a long way to become a mythical heroine. These myths are important for the feeling of the nation, according to Smith. In the previous research, the use of the Rani has been involved in several projects in forming an Indian nation. Through the educational textbooks and folklores the Rani has become a common myth for the people of India. Today, this myth has already been widespread through media, novels and TV series, which according to Anderson is important for this “imagined community”.

In the method of oral history, the question about the human ability to remember also need to be discussed as a factor in the reliability of the study. The major source for all respondents was school education. The respondents in the oldest age group were not able to tell details about the life of the Rani, which is natural because it has been a long time since these respondents went to school. The other age groups had a little bit more detailed information, but not enough. Similarly, the youngest group, which recently went to school, did not give many details either. Therefore, the lack of detailed information cannot be purely related to memory loss. To be able to learn from the people, what they know and think about the Rani oral history was necessary, but it is also noteworthy that the detailed fact was not there among
the respondents. One problem was that a lot of material had to be translated, and there was a feeling that some information has been lost. It might be difficult for the respondents to answer the questions about a historical person without any preparation. However, it was the intention that the responses of the respondents were supposed to be unprepared and spontaneous. It could also be a possibility that some questions were not good or clearly understood by the respondents. Sometimes, the follow-up questions almost became yes or no questions, just to keep the interview going and at least to have some information from the respondents. Language skills were many times a problem. As a researcher from a foreign country, there is always a lack of knowledge about the respondent’s pre-understandings about the subject. To overcome the cultural differences in language and pre-understanding, advices were taken from several persons as historians and other researchers. It was clear from the beginning that this choice of subject could be challenging, especially from a literary point of view.

3.2 The Use of History of Rani Lakshmi Bai

In the second part of this analysis the use of history of the Rani will be discussed. The Rani, according to the results of this study has been used as a freedom fighter, a role model especially for women and a political symbol. In the previous research, the Rani had several different roles, which exists among the common people and at the institutional level, and that is confirmed in this study.

All respondents talked about the Rani as a freedom fighter or as a woman who fought against the British. The Rani and the other leaders opposed the British in a quite unorganised way. The thought of India as a nation, that exists today was probably not in the mind of the Rani during that time. As Chandra has stated in his theory about India as a ‘nation-in-the-making’ the idea of India is quite new. Nations divided on the basis of language and ethnicity as in Europe was not a question in India at that time. The Indian nationalism gathered around the thought to get the British out of India. The idea of a freedom fight against the British comes later than the Rani. The concept that the Rani fought as a patriot Indian, was a feeling that has given to her historical character after her death. There could be many reasons for the Rani’s fight against the British, for example, for the sake of her state. Maybe, the Rani was cornered and left no other choice, but definitely not for the patriotic reasons. India, as known today did not exist at that time, there were several princely states ruled by their kings. The Rani fought against some of them herself, to protect her state.
The Rani has been given the role as a freedom fighter, as a symbol for the national movement. It was after the first war of independence that India came directly under British sovereignty and that a greater divide between the English and the Indians began to take place. Therefore, it is not strange that the Rani became a symbol of the struggle against the British that started to grow in the late nineteenth century. There are also some respondents who consider that the Rani’s fight was the earliest beginning of the freedom fight. They also mentioned that her fight was encouraging and a milestone that is according to the nationalist theory by Chandra. The Indian nationalism sprung out of the resistance against the British, this has been discussed before. It is worth mentioning again that the freedom movement began in the late nineteenth century was one of the reasons why the Rani had become so popular. This works well with the theory of Smith that we also have discussed before. Now, the Rani has become a part of a shared history. The role of the Rani as a freedom fighter was also present in the newspapers already in year 1958. In Aaj, she was described as an inspirational symbol of the struggle for independence in the years 1958 and 1972.

The result of this study shows that the use of history of the Rani as a role model for women is common among both women and men, in Banaras as well as in Jhansi. Eighteen respondents from Banaras and four respondents from Jhansi talked about her as a role model. The Rani is a symbol of women empowerment and an inspirational source, foremost for women in distress. One can always question if these are just words that the Rani has given strength to women. But the respondents have given examples from their lives when they have felt stronger in difficult situations by thinking about the brave Rani. It is apparent that the Rani is used by women to feel stronger. Several women confess that they think about the Rani when they need confidence in daily life or when they have to refuse harassment outside their homes, Òthey become the Rani of JhansiÓ Several respondents, both men and women want their daughter to be bold like the Rani and not to hesitate in life.

Women empowerment is a popular concept in India and a common expression in this study. Women empowerment seems to be a more comfortable and less controversial expression than the concept of feminism might be perceived. In the feminist theory, it is clear that the western feminism has often been associated with the idea of making women to men. It could be the dual character of the Rani that makes it possible for the Rani to be as much popular as she is now. According to the respondents, the Rani managed to do a woman’s duty at the same time she went outside the norm to fight against the British. The gender discussion is a bit problematic, because when she performed her deeds in the war against the British, she was
described as a man. It is clear that several respondents almost consider her to transform into a man. According to the feminism that has been common in India, it is important that women and men can be allowed to be women and men with their different characteristics, but with the same value. This might be a reason the Rani had been described as a man when she performed what is considered as traditionally boyish things. It might be because of her ‘dual’ character that she is so beloved, even if she went outside the female norm. Accordingly, it can be imagined that the gender roles are still fixed in India that both the men and women have certain characteristics. But today women can have both a family and a profession. Some women respondents said that the Rani challenged women’s situation in the family and the society that has made it easier for a female to adopt a dual character today.

However, the actions of the Rani might not have been an obvious threat to the norm in her lifetime. In the previous research by Tornbjer it is discussed that women who already lived outside the female norm as widows or virgins, occasionally put on a male role and went out to war. After their deed, they were readapted to family life or died and became martyrs. In the life story of the Rani, which contains of both myth and facts, there are similarities to Gyllenstierna and Jeanne d’Arc. The Rani was already outside the norm partly for her supposed tomboy childhood. When she became a queen, she had both privileges as well as deed, which other women did not have. As a widow with an adopted son who was not allowed to rule in the future, then she found herself in a unique situation. However, the Rani died as a martyr but if she had lived, probably she had been readopted into the traditional norm. The theory shows that the Rani was not a threat to the female norm in the beginning. It is from the last fifty years till today that the Rani has become a ‘threat’ to the norm, and this seems to happen along with the women emancipation.

As discussed in the previous research, Singh has stated that the Rani as such has not brought any emancipation for women in political situations. It is important to differentiate between women empowerment and women emancipation. In women empowerment, she is a source of inspiration. In women emancipation, she has no influence at all. The Rani is although connected with Indira Gandhi, the former Prime Minister, because they are born on the same day. As noted in the previous research, Indira Gandhi acted in an election film for the Congress party with herself in the main role as the Rani. The feminist use of her seems not to be connected to get more political power in the society, but to get more confidence and handle difficult situation as well as manage both family and profession.
Through myths of heroes the desired qualities in a society are shown, Smith writes. Heroes provide models of conduct. In the result of this study both among the respondents and in the newspapers, there are several examples in the life story of the Rani, which contains of both myth and historical facts, as a role model for wishful qualities like leadership, responsible citizens and a good friend. This goes well with the myth theory by Smith that the national heroes become the role model of good conduct. In the Rani’s polished history, it can be seen that she was needed as a national hero. The Rani lived close to the common people and tried to protect them from the British, which was enough to make her a national heroine.

The material on the political use of the Rani is minor in this study. But still there was one woman who mentioned that she is a political symbol. All politicians can use her. However, today, the Rani seems to be more utilized by the Hindu nationalist parties like BJP and the organisation RSS. This is also confirmed by the newspapers that a pension scheme for poor women has been named after the Rani. This seems to be an attempt of saving her from those parties and organizations who wants to transform her into a glorified nationalistic hero, like BJP and RSS. BJP and RSS both celebrate the Rani’s Birthday and RSS also glorify her as an excellent mother. One respondent, Man 77, specifically mentions several times that it is positive for the respect of the freedom fighters that the BJP has gained more influence. The importance of the Rani as a political symbol was indicated in the article mentioned in chapter 2.2.3 where it has been written how the politicians protest against the fiction novel *The Rani* written by Jaishree Misra. They pressurise the government to ban this book. In the previous research about the historical character Gyllenstierna, it is seen that when she had been made a nationalistic symbol she became unpopular. It might be possible that the Rani will also lose her popularity if she is being connected to RSS and BJP, which exclude a none-Hindu part of the population, even if the Rani is not a religious symbol.

3.3 The Rani Lakshmi Bai Monument

In this chapter, it will be analysed and discussed why the monument of the Rani has been built after 150 years of her death and more than 60 years after Independence. What does this indicate about the use of history of the Rani? The birthday celebration will also be discussed in this chapter.

According to Frykman & Ehn, monuments are symbolic objects and confront people with an ideological message. The monument symbolizes a message and a value that people believe is important, because of the public placing of the monument. Now, when a monument of the
Rani has been built, it is an indication that the symbols or the ideological message which the Rani has been given is more important. One ideological message that has been given is patriotic. This could be read in *The Times of India* year 2013 February 2, in the article Maharani Lakshmi Bai birth place lies in neglect written by Chandra Swati. Here Swati had written that the famous poem by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan was placed on the monument to evoke feelings of patriotism. In the results, several possible answers have been given to the question why this monument has been built. One part of the result represents the official point of view and the other part represents the common people perceived values and changes of values in the society, which they had applied on the Rani and this monument.

In an article from 1952 in Banaras local newspaper *Aaj*, it was stated that the Rani’s birthplace was going to be preserved by the U.P government. Therefore, this place has been known as her birthplace for at least 60 years. However, it might not have been in the minds of the people in the Assi area. For some reason, it was not relevant or possible to build a monument during that time. A rock inscription at her birthplace was considered enough. However, during the same period there was a construction of a grand monument of the Rani, where she died, in the city Gwalior.

According to the organisations’ point of view, the U.P tourism department had a plan to build this monument for the last seventeen years. The organization MLJSS said that they had struggled with this matter since the 1970s. MLJSS also said that no one knew about her birthplace before the 1970s. But, it is evident from the newspaper article in the year 1952 that this statement is wrong. It might be the negligence of the people and the government that the birthplace was under the dust for twenty years and rediscovered in the 1970s. Both organisations stated the delay in the construction of the monument was because of claims on the land made by other people in the area. Several respondents claim that this area was not filled with houses in their childhood, but with the passage of time more houses were built. Therefore, one question is why was not the monument constructed in the 1960s or 1970s when more space was available? According to the respondent at the tourism department, the only interest they had in building of this monument was for the sake of tourism. The reason seems to be that the Rani is important for the whole India and therefore the monument can attract people from all over the country. It might be the case that thirty years ago this land was not exploited enough for commercial tourism, there was no economic interest in building this monument. The Rani has now got more tourism and economic value.
Several respondents from Banaras believe that this monument has built because of an increased interest in tourism. Although, the tourism department has built the memorial, they have not mentioned this monument on their website or in the tourism information booklets and neither arranged any official activities around the newly constructed monument. In Jhansi, the use of the Rani from a tourism point of view is explicitly mentioned. The Rani has made the city of Jhansi famous.

The MLJSS had another purpose with their struggle for this monument that she was a female freedom fighter and was born in Banaras – a daughter of Kashi. This can be of more political interest, as the interviewed person was a politician in the BJP, a party who wants to highlight the Hindu culture. (The BJP has been the leading party of the city of Banaras for several years and won the 2014 general elections in India.) One respondent stated that this freedom fighter has been neglected by the Congress Party and now under the administration of BJP they are paying more respect to such heroes. This indicates that the interest in building a Rani Lakshmi Bai monument has increased with a political change in India. The MLJSS considered her a foremost freedom fighter. It was not because of the influence of women empowerment that MLJSS had contributed to building this monument. Other respondents said that this was a problem regardless of any political affiliation that the Rani has been neglected.

As Kverndokk wrote, a monument connects space and time with the interpretations of the past. Therefore, this supposed birthplace has become a historical place which represents a message for the present and future. In Smith’s theory of nationalism, there is an aspect of the rediscovering of history. It means that parts of historical events or persons are rediscovered and made significant for the present time. Can this be one of the reasons why the monument has been built now? At least, this could be a factor that the Rani has been taken up as a national and nationalist historical character. Thus, in Banaras, she has been rediscovered or in combination with women empowerment accepted as a national symbol or maybe more than a symbol for the city itself. One argument for the rediscovering of the Rani in Banaras is that there are few found sources that show activity around her birthplace during many years. However, it was not possible to investigate all newspaper articles during 60 years’ time, but not even on the Rani’s birthday there was any notification during many years.

A reason that the organisations did not mention was the changed situation for women in the society. Several respondents, foremost women, said that this statue has built today because the Rani has become more relevant. Women are not as much ignored as they were before and
have taken more official positions in the society. The honouring of the Rani has been ignored because she was a woman, she was not considered necessary or relevant for a long time. Today, in India it is more common to talk about women empowerment. From previous research, it is clear that the Rani has been connected with feminism for several decades. Therefore, it was not strange that several respondents described the improvement in women’s situation as a possible reason for why this monument was constructed in present time.

In Banaras, the Rani’s birthday celebration is something famous in the area and announced in the newspaper, according to the respondents. This was also mentioned several times in the newspapers Aaj as well as the local pages in The Times of India. The birthday celebration is around the area where she was born. The earliest source of the birthday celebration of the Rani is from the year 1982. In Jhansi, the celebration of the Rani’s birthday seems greater, from what is possible to see from the few respondents from Jhansi.

In other cities of India, the Rani is more celebrated in the context of anniversaries or remembrances of the first war of independence where the Rani is mentioned as one of the leaders. There are different ways to give attention to these special days, exhibitions, street plays etcetera. The only found occasion where the Rani’s death day was remembered through an event arranged by BJP. According to Smith’s theory about nationalism, it is common that all nations have symbols that the people gather around and celebrate. The celebrations of the Rani show that she has become a gathering symbol. This creates a national feeling of belonging and by this the Rani becomes a part of a shared history as well as of the collective memory.

When a study is accomplished, there are always things that one should have done or wish one had the possibility to do. To complete a study in India means that the researcher cannot have control over everything. One has to rely on several factors, such as translators, guides, other routines in archives and other more general factors as traffic jams and long distances. On the other hand, people are very helpful, friendly and willing to talk. The material used in this study was the sources that were available during the possible time in Banaras. One more local newspaper could be considered, but that newspaper was also written in Hindi, which also needs a translator. Some more organisations involved in the building of the monument could be interviewed. Several attempts were made to interview some of these organisations but, the time could not be given from the organisation.
3.4 Conclusions

In a quotation by S.N Sinha, it was said that the Rani’s place in history is secure. The result of this study shows that the Rani’s place in history as well as in present day is indeed safe. This study has foremost taken the common people’s perspective on the use of history of the Rani, which had not been done before. The results have shown that the Rani during the post-colonial period has been used in several ways. The constant use of history of the Rani through all time is like a freedom fighter. The use of history of her as a role model for women evolved just after the use of her as a freedom fighter. The use of history of her as a role model is not new, but the results indicate that this particular use of history of her has become stronger. The political use of her has also been there since the pre-independence period. There are strong indicators that the political use also has become more active, especially from a nationalist point of view and maybe specifically in Banaras. The most recent use of her is in tourism, which is, in fact, an economical use of the Rani. However, among the people in Banaras and Jhansi the most distinct use of history of the Rani is as a role model for women and a symbol of women empowerment.

It is also obvious that the mythical use of history is more prevalent than the professional use of history, at least from the sources utilized in this study. This mythical use of history makes it possible for the Rani to secure her position as a national heroine. Out from the results, consequently the common people’s stories are closely related to the educational textbooks. It has been concluded that the Rani has become a factor in creating a national identity among the Indians, and this may have been done in a conscious way.

The society has brought a change to the Rani character during different times. The time duration of this study was from post-colonial period till present day. Through the results of this study, it is visible that some changes have occurred in the society and the minds of the people during this time. This gets visible through the roles that have been applied to the Rani character, which is called use of history. One of this is women’s situation in the Indian society. Through the use of history of the Rani as a symbol of women empowerment, it gets clear from the results that the situation for women has improved during the last fifty years. The Rani has become more popular and relevant along with the uplifting of women’s role. The other change in society, seen through the use of history of the Rani is political. This aspect in which the Rani is used as a political symbol shows the change in current political situation in India. Once Indira Gandhi has used her for the sake of political campaign. Now, she has been more utilized by the Hindu nationalist parties and organization like BJP and
RSS, which indicates a Hindu nationalistic wave in India. Again, it is important to mention that the Rani is not a specific religious entity who is bound to any specific religion. If the Hindu nationalistic parties and organisations have used the Rani it is because they have rediscovered her symbolic as important for their ideology.

This study has raised more questions that need to be answered in the future about the use of history in general. It is fascinating how a historical person like the Rani can be used in several different contexts. In the future, it would be interesting to see if the Rani will always remain a beloved heroine or will be forgotten because of misuse of her historical character. One aspect that was missing from this study was the Muslim’s and other minorities point of view. Today, when the Hindu nationalist parties and organisations have increased the use of the Rani, it would be interesting to observe how the none-Hindu population relate themselves to the Rani. Can she remain a role model for them too or has her symbolic role become ruined by the Hindu nationalist movements? A broader study would also be preferred when it comes to the mythified history in the Indian society and what kind of consequences this kind of history has on the society.
References

Unprinted sources

**Nagarai Pracharini Sabha archive, Varanasi**

Newspaper articles from Aajs
19521118 Missing title
19589815 Missing title
19720815 Missing title
19821119 “Maharani Lakshmibai birth celebration”
19821120 “Birth Anniversary of Lakshmibai”
20081112 Missing title
(see all articles where the Rani has been searched in appendix 1)

**Interviews with common people**

Interviews with twenty common people Banaras March – April 2014 (see appendix 5)
Interviews with four common people Jhansi April 2014 (see appendix 5)

**Interviews with organizations**

Uttar Pradesh Tourist information, information officer, March 2014, Banaras
The Maharani Lakshmi Bai Janmastan Smarak Samiti, chairman, March 2014 Banaras

**Uttar Pradesh Tourism information**

http://www.up-tourism.com/destination/varanasi/varanasi.htm 20140718
http://www.up-tourism.com/destination/varanasi/about.htm 20140718
http://www.up-tourism.com/destination/varanasi/places_of_interest.htm 20140718
http://www.up-tourism.com/destination/varanasi/intro2.htm 20140718
Printed sources

**Educational textbooks**


Bhattacharya, Shelia Í Bose, Monica, (2010) *Transition Í History & Civics, ICSE* class 10, Madhuban, New Delhi

Datta, Roy, (2008) *History and Civics for class 5*, ICSE, Madhuban Educational books, New Delhi

Hajela, Alka (editor), (2011) *The Mirror of the World 8* (Based on CCE) History, Geography, Social and Political Life


Sharma, Moneesha and others, (2013) Journey through Time History and Civics for ICSE Middle School, class 8, Oxford University Press, New Delhi

Tayal, B.B Í Jacob, A Mrs, (2005) *Modern Indian History Contemporary World and Civics*, class 10, ICSE, Avichal Publishing Company, New Delhi

Online Sources and Online Newspaper articles

**The Times of India**


"Now, Maharani Lakshmi Bai memorial dedicated to publicô in Times of India, 20131242 http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-12-24/varanasi/45539607_1_tourism-minister-holy-dip-memorial 20140201


**The Hindu**


- "Do not ignore core cultural values, Vaiko tells students", in The Hindu, 20061218, http://www.hindu.com/edu/2006/12/18/stories/2006121800790700.htm 20140212
Journey to freedom comes alive in The Hindu, 20070814,  


Rath Yatra in memory of 1857 in The Hindu, 20070918,  

The real Rani in The Hindu, 20071220,  

Stage show on freedom struggle in The Hindu, 20070917,  

Rani Lakshmi Bai remembered in The Hindu, 20080106,  


Bibliography

Anagol, Padma, (2006) The Emergence of Feminism in India, 1850 – 1920, Ashgate, Hampshire


Chodorow, Nancy (1978), *Reproduction of Mothering - Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*, University of California, Berkley


Eck, Diana, L (1983) *Banaras ï City of Light*, Penguin books, New Delhi


Hannam, June, (2013) *Feminism*, Studentlitteratur, Lund


Lebra - Chapman, Joyce, (1986) *The Rani of Jhansi ï A Study in Female Heroism in India*, University of Hawaii press, Honolulu

Lebra - Chapman, Joyce, (2008), *Women Against the Raj ï The Rani of Jhansi Regiment*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore

Ljung, Margareta, òFeministisk teoriî in Moderna samhällsteorier ñ Tradition, riktnin, teoretiker, editor Per Månsson, Nordstedts, eighth edition


Ransome, Paul, (2010) Social Theory, Rawat publication, India


Singh, Harleen, (2014) The Rani of Jhansi i Gender, History and Fable in India, Cambridge University press, Delhi


Thurén, Torsten ī Leth, Göran, (2000) Källkritik för Internet, Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvaret, Stockholm

Uttar Pradesh Tourism, Discover the Colourful Mystique of a Holy land Uttar Pradesh. A to Z

Articles


Appendix 1
Nagarai Pracharini Sabha archive, Varanasi

Searched years

(The Rani has not been mentioned in any newspaper articles on these specific dates.)

1921: November 17,18,19,20
1933: November 17,18,19,20
1936: November 17,18,19,20
1944: November 17,18,19,20
1946: November 17,18,19,20
1947: August did not exist
1952: August 14, 15,16; November 17,18,19,20
1958: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1962: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1968: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1972: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1978: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1982: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1988: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1992: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
1998: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
2002: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
2008: August 14,15,16; November 18,19,20
Appendix 2

Interview guide for the people of Banaras

Name
Age
Education/vocation
Birthplace/ years of living in Banaras

1. Can you tell me about what you know about the life of Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi?

2. Where have you learned about her?
   - School
   - Literature
   - From people around

3. Do you remember stories about Rani Lakshmi Bai from your childhood/ youth/ the time of independence?

4. How has the story of her/ the picture of her changed during your life time?

5. When do you talk about the Rani or mention her name?

6. In which situations, happenings is she mentioned in society/ in newspapers?
   - Political
   - Feminism
   - Moral
   - Ideological, nationalism
   - Commercial, tourism

7. What does the Rani mean for the city of Banaras?

8. Why do you think that they have built a statue of her now, 170 years after her death and 60 years after independence?

9. What does the monument of the Rani mean to you?

10. How is the Rani a symbol of India?
Appendix 3

Interview guide for the people of Jhansi

Name

Age

Education/vocation

1. Can you tell me what you know about the Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi?

2. Can you tell me where you have learned about her?

3. How do you remember stories about Rani Lakshmi Bai from your childhood/ youth/ the time of independence?

4. How has the story of her/ the picture of her changed during your life?

5. Can you tell me what Rani Lakshmi Bai means for Jhansi and this area?

6. In which situations, happenings is she mentioned in society?
   - Political
   - Feminism
   - Moral
   - Ideological, nationalism
   - Commercial, tourism

7. In which situations do you talk about her?
   - Role model
   - Political symbol
Appendix 4

1. This organization has been involved in the making of/ founding of the Rani Lakshmi Bai monument in Assi, is that correct?

2. Can you tell me about this organization?

3. Can you tell me why this organization is involved in the building of the Rani Lakshmi Bai monument?

4. How have you been involved in this?

5. How is the Rani of Jhansi important for this organization?

6. Why is this monument built now and not before?

7. How is Rani Lakshmi Bai important for Banaras?

8. How did people react when this monument was built?

9. Do you have proof that this is her actual birthplace?
Appendix 5
Information about the Banaras respondents

Age group 20-29

1. Man 29 years old.
Date: 20140319
Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture
Age: 29
Gender: Male
Birthplace: Banaras
Education: Middle school and one year of upper-secondary education.
Profession: Assistant for students and tourists. Shop-owner.

2. Woman 20 years old
Date: 20140326
Place of interview: A girl’s college in Banaras.
Age: 20
Gender: Female
Birthplace: Banaras
Education: Upper secondary school, Student of Bachelor of Art – political science and English
Profession: Student

3. Man 20 years old
Date: 20140330
Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture. The interview was interpreted from Hindi to English
Age: 20
Birthplace: Banaras
Education: Upper secondary school, university student in Commerce.
Profession: Student
4. Woman 27 years old

Date: 20140331

Place of Interview: Banaras in the respondent’s home.

Birthplace: Bhadhoi (30 km from Banaras). Has lived in Banaras since 2002.

Education: Upper secondary school, Master in Public administration

Profession: Maternity leave and housewife

Age group 30-39

5. Man 30 years old

Date: 20140311

Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture

Gender: Male

Age: 30 years old

Birthplace: In the state of Jharkhand. Has lived in Banaras since 1998

Education: Upper secondary school, Master in tourism, Master in language

Profession: Hindi teacher

6. Woman 33 years old

Date: 20140312

Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture. The interview was interpreted from Hindi to English.

Gender: Female

Age: 33

Birthplace: Himachal. Has lived in Banaras since 2012

Education: Upper secondary school, B. final

Profession: Manager of the hostel, housewife. Before the marriage, she owned a shop in her hometown.
7. Man 37 years old
Date: 20140312
Place of interview: The interview was made in his home. This interview should have been made with interpreter.
Gender: Male
Age: 37
Birthplace: Banaras
Education: Upper secondary school, Master in the art.
Vocation: Painter of art

8. Woman 32 years old
Date: 20140320
Place of Interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture
Gender: Woman
Age: 32
Birthplace: Banaras
Education, Upper secondary school, Master in social work
Profession: Social worker

Age group 40-49

9. Man 43 years old
Date: 20140307
Place of Interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture
Gender: Male
Age: 43
Birthplace: Himachal, but has lived in Banaras on and off since childhood
Education: Upper secondary school, Master in Commerce and tourism
Profession: Manager of a hostel for students
10. Woman 42 years old.

Date: 20140314

Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture. The interview was interpreted from Hindi to English

Gender: female

Age: 42

Birthplace: Jhansi, has lived in Banaras since 1996

Education: eight years of middle school education

Profession: work as a cook at a hostel

11. Woman 40 years old

Date: 20140326

Place of interview: A girl’s college in Banaras

Gender: female

Age: 40

Birthplace: Banaras

Education: Upper secondary school, Ph.D in home science.

Profession: Teacher in home science

12. Man 46 years old

Date: 20140315

Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture. The interview was interpreted from Hindi to English

Gender: Male

Age: 46 years old

Birthplace: Close to Jhansi, has lived in Banaras since 1996.

Education: Upper secondary school

Profession: Rickshaw driver, driver of a mobile library in a social project.
**Age group 50-59**

13. Woman 57 years old

Date: 20140307

Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture. The interview was interpreted from Hindi to English

Gender: female

Age: 57 years old

Birthplace: Banaras, has lived in the neighborhood Assi since 1986

Education: Middle school (8 years)

Profession: Cook at a student hostel

14. Man 50 years old

Date: 20140312

Place of interview: In the respondent’s home in Banaras

Gender: Male

Age: 50

Birthplace: Banaras

Education: Upper secondary school, education for artistically stonemasonry

Profession: Artist, stonemasonry

15. Woman 58 years old

Date: 20140327

Place of interview: At a girl’s college in Banaras

Gender: female

Age: 58

Education: Ph.D in philosophy

Profession: Principal at a college

16. Woman 56 years old

Date: 20140327
Place of interview: At a girl's college in Banaras
Gender: female
Age: 56
Education: Ph.D in ancient history
Profession: History teacher at a college

**Age group 60 and up**

17. Man 77 years old

Date: 20140304
Place of interview: the hostel Amar Bhawan, Banaras
Gender: male
Age: 77
Birthplace: Bihar, lived in Banaras the whole life
Education: Ph.D in philosophy
Profession: Retired teacher in philosophy

18. Woman ~ 60 years old

Date: 20140307
Place of interview: Banaras, Ganga Mahal, Swedish study center for Indian culture. The interview was interpreted from Hindi to English
Gender: Woman
Age: ~ 60
Birthplace: Banaras
Education: No education
Profession: cook at a student's hostel

19. Woman 61 years old

Date: 20140307
Place of interview: At a girl's college in Banaras
Gender: female
Age: 61
Education: Ph.D in education
Birthplace: Born in Gorakhpur, lives since 1978 in Banaras
Profession: teacher, administrator

20. Woman 65 years old
Date: 20140420
Place of interview: The respondents home in Banaras
Gender: female
Education: MSC B. education
Profession: Previous principal

**Information about respondents from Jhansi**

1. Man 21 years old
Date: 20140407
Place of interview: In an empty hotel restaurant in Jhansi. Interview translated from Hindu to English
Gender: Male
Age: 21 years old
Birthplace: Jhansi
Education: Upper secondary school, graduate student Commerce
Profession: Student and event organizer

2. Man 45 years old
Date: 20140408
Place of Interview: The interview took place in the informant’s home in Jhansi. The interview was translated from Hindi to English.
Gender: male
Age: 45 years old
Birthplace: Jhansi
Education: Upper secondary education
Profession: Contractor and supply of English and local wine

3. Woman 40 years old
Date: 20140408
Place of Interview: The interview took place in the informant’s home in Jhansi. The interview was translated from Hindi to English.
Gender: female
Birthplace: Jhansi
Education: Upper secondary education
Profession: Housewife

4. Man 57 years old
Date: 20140409
Place of interview: The interview took place in the informant’s home in Jhansi. The interview was translated from Hindi to English.
Birthplace: Jhansi
Education: MSC B in Economy and finance
Profession: Senior Manager at a Bank
Appendix 6

All photographs were taken by Victoria Lundin

The Rani Lakshmi Bai monument in Banaras
Rani Lakshmi Bai statue in Jhansi
Rani Lakshmi Bai monument in Gwalior