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- 1. P.J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, The Cambridge History of India,* (Cambridge 1987), p. 77.
- 2. Willem Van Schendel, 'Economy of the Working Classes'. Sirajul Islam (ed.), *History of Bangladesh 1704-1971*, Vol. II, (Economic History), (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh 1992), pp. 542-99.
- 3. W.H. Morris-Jones, "Pakistan Post-Mortem and the Roots of Bangladesh", *Political Quarterly*, Vol. 18 (April-June), 1972, pp. 187-200.

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CONTENTS

IMPACT OF ETHNICITY ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION : A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE Najmul Abedin	1
DESECULARISATION AND RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM IN BANGLADESH Harun-or-Rashid	29
BHITARGARH: A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE Morshed Rayhan	41
UŅIŚVARA COPPER PLATE OF ŚRĪDHĀRAŅARĀTA Shariful Islam	61
THE BLACK SURFACE COATING OF ANCIENT POTTERY EXCAVATED FROM WARI-BATESHWAR AND MAHASTHAN, BANGLADESH Dilruba Sharmin, Takayuki Honda and Fumio Okada	73
IMPACT OF ARABIC ON BENGALI LANGUAGE AND CULTURE Afia Dil	101
TAHIRID-ABBASID RELATIONS (821-873) Md. Abul Kalam Azad	153
THE SPIRIT OF WATER IN OLD TALES OF JAPAN Kayoko Takagi	169

IMPACT OF ETHNICITY ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION : A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Najmul Abedin*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

In multiethnic societies ethnicity emerges as a major political force. In most cases its impact on the political dynamics and process is considerable. Ethnicity is an emotionally charged issue. Interactions and conflicts between ethnic groups influence and determine in varying degrees the nature and course of politics. It is rather interesting to note that in some parts of Asia and elsewhere various ethnic groups have worked out some kind of accommodation or peaceful coexistence, whereas in some other parts they have caused serious political conflict or violence, which in turn undermines or erodes considerably any attempt at national integration.

It is rather imperative the meaning or definition of ethnicity should be clearly and explicitly spelled out before we attempt to examine and elucidate the implications and ramifications of the impact of the dimensions of ethnicity on national integration: it usually refers to "a strong sense of identity with a distinctive population subgroup." In a broad sense of the term an "ethnic group consists of people united by ancestry, race, religion, language, [culture, tribalism, history] and/or national origin, which contribute to a sense of shared identity and shared attitudes, beliefs, and values." Similarly, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* observes that "ethnic group" is "a social group or category of population that, in a larger society, is set apart and bound together by common ties of race, language, nationality, or culture." Thus, "Ethnic groups", in a

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¹ Diane E. Papalia, et al., Human Development (Boston: McGraw-Hill), 2001), p. 19.

² The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Mactopaedia, Vol. 4 (London/Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2005), p. 582.

nutshell, "are groups whose cultural heritages differ. We usually reserve the term for different groups within their shared cultural heritages, which in turn may bring this group into the same society." All of these factors or features constitute, individually or collectively, the dimensions of ethnicity. It is distinguished or identified by one or more of these dimensions. They also determine the extent or degree of the intensity of ethnic awareness or attachment.

The members of an ethnic group "may find a common purpose and unity in their shared cultural heritages, which in turn may bring this group into conflict with other ethnic groups.... These conflicts arise "from these dimensions which under certain circumstances "supply the energy and motivation" for undermining or challenging national integration. If the members of ethnic groups are highly conscious of and have strong emotional or psychological attachment to some of these dimensions, the chances of accommodation or coexistence increasingly become difficult and problematic. They, in fact, threaten the cohesion of many countries, both old and new. Such a situation creates an environment which leads to spontaneous political conflict or violence with varying magnitude, thus makes national integration efforts difficult and complex. Hence, "ethnic diversity is one form of the social [and/or political] complexity found in most contemporary societies."

It is, however, important to note that there is a subtle difference between ethnicity and race though sometimes they may also be same in varying degrees or they may overlap and/or reinforce one another. Many ethnic conflicts are not racial conflicts; for example, to a great extent the reason(s) for the increasing tension or conflict between Bengalis and Biharies in the then East Pakistan was not race but rather linguistic, cultural, as well as some related factors or issues. Likewise, Kurdish separatism, or the conflict between the English speaking and the French speaking Canadians has not originated in race, but in cultural, linguistic, historical, and some other related differences. Similarly, nor was the violent and bloody (Baifra) civil war in Nigeria or the conflict between Tutsis and Hutus and the resultant genocide in Rwanda, the consequence of race. These "conflicts were between groups of the same [or more or less same] race,

³ Rodney Stark, Sociology (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1989), p. 293.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵ The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Op. cit., p. 582.

but with different cultures [and/or tribal identities]." But, for example, tension or conflict between the peoples of Indian decent and of the African descent in Trinidad, Surinam, and Guyana⁷ or between the Blacks (and other peoples of colour) and Whites in South Africa or USA are mainly racial as well as, to a lesser extent, some other ethnic factors or dimensions. There are also situations or circumstances where it becomes somewhat problematic or difficult to differentiate explicitly or draw a clear line of demarcation between ethnicity and race because sometimes they overlap or the line of demarcation becomes blurred in varying degrees. On certain occasions they supplement or reinforce one another. In fact, the salient or characteristic features of these two variables/factors/dimensions - race and ethnicity - are intertwined or more or less same or similar in many places. As a result, there are gray areas so far as differentiation or clarity is concerned. Such a situation is more prevalent in areas where there are peoples of mixed race and ethnicity. For a better understanding it is rather important to also separately define race in the following passage:

"A race is a human group with some observable common biological features. The most prominent of these is skin color, but racial groups also differ in some observable ways such as eyelid shape and the color and texture of hair. They also differ in subtle ways that are not visible, such as blood type. Although race is a biological concept, racial differences are important for intergroup relations solely to the extent that people attach cultural meaning to them."

Hence, on the one hand, a race factor, a critical dimension, may be reinforced by some other dimensions of ethnicity such as language, religion, and the like. And on the other hand, linguistic, religious and some other dimensions may also be strengthened by the race factor.

NATIONAL INTEGRATION VERSUS ETHNIC CONFLICT: BACKDROP

"Historically it [ethnicity] is the legacy of conquests that brought diverse peoples under rule of a dominant group; of rulers who in their own interests imported peoples for their labour or their technical and business skill; of industrialization, which intensified the age-old pattern of migration for economic reasons; or of political and religious persecutions that drove people from their native lands. [However] Until the 20th century ethnic diversity posed no great problem for empires. Its chief historic significance has been and

⁶ Stark, Op. cit., p. 293.

⁷ Selwyn D. Ryan, *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), esp. pp. 3-13.

⁸ Stark, *Op. cit.*, p. 293.

remains its relationship to the nation-state, whose primary goal is political unity, which tends to be identified with social unity. In theory, the nation-state and ethnic diversity are diametrically opposed..."

The post-World War II period witnessed a mushroom growth of "new states" in the developing world. But many of them are "not yet nations in being but only nations in hope." 10 Some of them are artificial entities in view of the fact that their boundaries were drawn arbitrarily by colonial powers (as well as precolonial rulers) without regard to cultural, linguistic, religious, racial, tribal and other considerations. As a result, they have failed to develop a sense of national identity and homogeneity. Therefore, in other words, one of their most important aims is to achieve national integration. In a broad sense of the term national integration refers to the process whereby a series of conscious and unconscious efforts are made in order to achieve a sense of nationhood. 11 But it is not an easy task. The national integration is a very lengthy and complicated "process whereby people transfer their commitment and loyalty from smaller tribes, villages or petty principalities to the larger central political system."12 The process of national integration or nation-building should not be confused with the state-building. Although they are very closely inter-linked, yet in the strict sense of the terms they should be viewed separately. While nationbuilding or national integration refers to cultural aspects of political development, the state-building primarily emphasizes regulative, extractive and constitutional aspects of such development. It is not very uncommon to find that within fixed geographical boundaries, centralized and penetrative bureaucracies and political authorities have emerged, but a sense of common cultural and national identity, homogeneity and a sense of allegiance to the central political authority have not yet developed, 13 although varying numbers of the separatist or minority groups may have legitimate reasons for resisting integration. However, as we will see later in detail, separatism could be a secessionist or

Ruport Emerson, From Empire to Nations: The Rise to Self-Assertion of Asian and African Peoples (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 94.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

⁹ The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Op. cit., p. 582.

See the following works for further illustration of these points: *Ibid.* Karl W. Deutsch, et al., eds., *Nation Building* (New York: Atherton Press, 1963). Clifford Geertz, ed., Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa (New York: Press, 1963).

¹² Gabrial A. Almond, et al., Comparative Politics: A Development Approach (New York: Little Brown, 1966), p. 36, also 10.

non-secessionist separatism. Some examples of separatism in the contemporary time and/or in the relatively recent past are: Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan (pre- as well as Post- 1971 period), India (south in the past, tribal groups in greater Assam region, and Kashmir), and Bangladesh (tribal groups in Chittagong Hill Tracts region) in Asia, and Rwanda, Nigeria, Sudan, Katanga, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cyprus, and Fiji in other parts of the world, just to mention a few. In many "old" states also there are similar examples of ethnic separatist groups: Corsican, Bretons, Alstians, Basques, Catalans, Quebecois, Flemings, Wallons, Croats, Macedonians, Jerassians, Chechnyans, Scots, Welsh, and Ulster Irish who belong or belonged to the states (mainly in Europe) that are much older than those who obtained statehood after World War II. It is also interesting to note that, for example,

¹⁴ For details of these examples in both developed and developing areas see W. H. Morris-Jones, "Note to Participants" in W.H. Morris-Jones, ed., Collection of Seminar Papers on the Politics of Separatism (London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies/ICS, University of London, 1976), pp. i-iii; Hugh Seton- Watson, "South Asian Separatist Movements" in ibid. (ICS), pp. 31-36. Louis Sabourin, The Socio-Cultural Bases of Quebecois Separatism: A Design for Collective Equality" in ibid. (ICS), pp. 49-56; Hugh Tinker, "Burma: Separatism As a Way of Life" in *ibid*. (ICS), pp. 57-69; Peter Lyon, "Separatism And Secession in the Malaysian Realm: 1948-65" in ibid. (ICS), pp. 69-78; Ruth McVey, "Language, Religion, National Identity in Southern Thailand" in ibid. (ICS), pp. 94-99; John W. Wright, The New York Times 2006 Almanac (New York: Penguin, 2006), part iii; Nations of the World, pp. 525-707; see the entries on the relevant countries; R. K. Badal, "The Rise and Fall of Separatism in Southern Sudan" in African Affairs (London), Oct. 1976, pp. 462-73; Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Six-Point Formula --- Our Right to Live (Pamphlet) (Dacca: Awami League Party Office, 1968), pp. 3-4; James W. Spain, "Pakistan's North West Frontier" in Middle East Journal, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1954; Richard Marshall, "Reflections on a Revolution in Pakistan" in Foreign Affairs, Vol. 37, No. 2, 1959; Alastair Lamb, Crisis in Kashmir: 1947-1966 (London/New York: W. N. Brown, 1966); Saved Serajul Islam, "The Insurgency Movement in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: Internal and External Dimensions" in Journal of Third World Studies, Vol. 20, No. 2, Fall 2003; Syed Serajul Islam, The Politics of Islamic Identity in Southeast Asia (Singapore: Thomson, 2005); Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., "Religion, Politics and DMK" in Donald E. Smith, ed., South Asian Politics and Religion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), esp. pp. 213-234. Baldev Raj Nayar, "Sikh Separatism in the Punjab" in ibid.(Smith), pp. 150-175. Robert L. Hardgrave, "The DMK and the Politics of Tamil Nationalism" in Pacific Affairs, Vol. 37, Winter 1964-65, pp. 396-411; Lloyd Rudolph, "The Life and Populist radicalism: The Dravidian Movement in Madras" in *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 20, May 1961, pp. 283-297; Hugh Gray, "The Demand for a Separate Telengana State in India" in Asian Survey, Vol. 11, May 1971, pp. 463-474; Hugh Gray, "The Failure of a Demand for a Separate Andhra State" in Asian Survey, vol. 14, April 1974, pp. 338-349; G.

the breakup of the former Soviet Union into a good number of states, of the former Yugoslavia into several states, and of Czechoslovakia into two states along ethnic lines after the collapse of the totalitarian communist regimes in Europe mainly because they had failed to build Soviet, Yugoslavian, and Czechoslovakian nationhood respectively.¹⁵

There are many factors that impede in varying degrees the development of a sense of national identity. These factors cause what are variously referred to as politics of separatism, politics of national identity or integration, centrifugal politics, etc. They result in violence, conflict, and agitational politics. They make the task of national integration very difficult. The politics of separatism, as indicated above, may be of two types: (i) secessionist separatism, and (ii) non-secessionist/autonomist separatism. The former, which poses a very serious challenge to the task of national integration, encourages dissident group(s) or region(s) to break away from the state to which it belongs, whereas the latter, which does not take such a strong view or position, prevents the development of a homogenous political culture. Thus, while a secessionist separatism drives at alteration or change of such a boundary, a non-secessionist separatism aims at the redistribution of "authoritative decision-making powers" between the center and the region(s) or at the reorganization of their political and constitutional status or at the redistribution of resources between various groups or regions without disturbing the international boundary of the sovereign state concerned. 16 It (the latter) sustains and strengthens sub-national identity. It makes complete national integration almost impossible. Those states, which have powerful sub-national groups within their boundaries, might never

Parthasarthy et al., "Separatist Movement in Andhra Pradesh: Shadow and Substance" in Economic and Political Weekly, March 1973; Crawford Young, "The Politics of Separatism: Katanga, 1960-63" in Gwendolen M. Carter, ed., Politics in Africa (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Brace & World, 1966); Robert Norton, Race and Politics in Fiji (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1978). For Fiji also see Newsweek, May 25 & June 1, 1987; Biblab Dasgupta and W. H. Morris-Jones, Patterns and Trends in Indian Politics: An Ecological Analysis of Aggregate Data on Society and Elections (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1975), esp. pp. 19-25; Najmul Abedin, "The Afghan Crisis: Political, Strategic and Socio-Economic Aspects (1978-1981)" in Asian Affairs (Dacca), Vol. 3, No. 2, 1981, pp. 342-372; Frank L. Wilson, European Politics Today (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994), pp. 408-410; Milton J. Esman, ed., Ethnic Conflict in the Western World (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 12.

¹⁵ Wilson, *Op. cit.*, pp. 408-410.

¹⁶ Setan-Watson, *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-2; Wright, *Op. cit.*, p. 5; Lyon, *Op. cit.*, pp. 74-75.

complete the process of national integration in the strict sense of the term. However, with the passage of time, a non-secessionist separatism may gradually or suddenly transform itself into a secessionist separatism (e.g., former East Pakistan) and a secessionist separatism into non-secessionist separatism (e.g., DMK in India).

The aim of this paper is to examine the multidimensional implications and ramifications of various aspects of a wide range of dimensions of ethnicity for both secessionist and non-secessionist politics of separatism/conflict/violence vis-à-vis national integration.

DIMENSIONS/FORCES OF ETHNICITY

The author intends to focus on the dimensions discussed below from comparative, global, historical, and contemporary perspectives. Depending on the intensity and the significance or importance of the dimensions, some of them are discussed separately or individually, whereas others are discussed together or collectively in the section called (i) bi-and multi-culturalism, and (ii) related or supplementary dimensions.

Religion

Religion, which is "the most profound and most inductive to fanaticism in human society" often constitutes "an emotional element with political and economic overtone." Many separatist movements have partially or wholly resulted from the fact that the faith of the controlling authority at the center or that of the majority of the people of the country has been different from that of the dissident group or region. The Karen Christians in Buddhist Myanmar/Burma, the Ambrose Christian in Muslim Indonesia, the Armenian Christians in the Muslim countries of the Middle East, the Christian southerners in Muslim Sudan (recently seceded from Sudan), the Christians and the Buddhist in Penang and other parts of Muslim Malaysia, the Buddhist Tibet in professedly atheistic China, the Catholics of North Ireland in the U.K. as well as of Quebec in Canada where the Protestants are in majority, Muslims, Sikhs, and animist and some Christian Nagas in India where Hindus constitute majority, Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians in Muslim majority Bangladesh, and the Muslims in

¹⁷ Seton-Watson, Op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁸ Fred R. von der Mehden, *Politics of the Developing Nations* (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 32.

the Christian Philippines, and in Buddhist Thailand and Myanmar/Burma are examples of religious minorities in those countries where religion has strengthened, in vary degrees, ethnic separatism in most of them and, thus, caused violence, conflict, non-cooperation and indifference. ¹⁹ In the long past, for example, protestant revolt against Counter-Reformation was mainly responsible for Dutch independence from Spain. In fact, "when differences in religion between communities within one state or empire coincide with the visible differences of wealth, or class, or language, they...form the foundation of [i.e., provide a strong motivation for] a separatist movement" that causes serious political conflict or violence A social-political environment like this in turn erodes or weakens nation integration. However, as we will see below, there are exceptions.

Language

Linguistic differences often poses serious problem for national integration. The people who speak same language often develop a strong separatist or parochial or corporate sentiment. As a result, a multi-lingual area or population usually divides itself into various linguistic regions or groups which develop what sociologist often refer to as "we" and "they' attitudes or perceptions. Their social political and economic interactions are likely to be influenced, to a considerable extent, by such attitudes or perceptions. The autonomist (later secessionist) movement in the then East Pakistan had its origin in the language movement in the late 1940's and the early 1950's. Bengali language was the mother tongue of almost all the East Pakistanis i.e., more than fifty percent of the total population of the then Pakistan (i.e., both eastern and western wings). But in 1948 Jinnah, the "father of Pakistan" declared in Dhaka that "Urdu and Urdu alone shall be the state language of Pakistan." As a natural consequence of such unfair and arrogant statement or declaration, the reaction in the eastern wing of the then Pakistan was very bitter and hostile. They wanted that their

²¹ Govt. of Pakistan, Census of Pakistan, 1961, Vol. 1 (Karachi: Govt. Printing Press, 1962), pp. I, 3-7.

¹⁹ Wright, *Op. cit.*, pp. 6-7. Lyon, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72. Badal, *Op. cit.*, pp. 86-87. McVery, *Op. cit.*, pp. 95- 99. Islam, *Op. cit.* (2005), pp. 17-146. "Mini-Nations in Making" in *The Economist*, Dec. 9, 1978.

²⁰ Seton-Watson, op. cit., p.3.

Badruddin Omar, *Bhasha Andolon O Purba Pakistaner Thathkalin Rajniti* (Bengali. English Translation: *Language Movement and then Then Politics of East Pakistan*), Vol. 1 (Dacca: Jatiya Grantha Prokashana, 1970 & 1995), p. 94, also p. 97.

mother tongue, i.e., Bengali language should be given at least equal status with Urdu. The subsequent years witnessed a vigorous political movement for linguistic equality. As a result, the Bengali language was ultimately given equal status with Urdu at least on paper. In reality, however, Urdu was given much more prominence by and received greater attention from the central government.²³ This grievance of the Bengalis, therefore, continued which, at a later stage, was reinforced by and coincided with many other serious and critical issues and grievances (discussed later). They became intertwined. Combination of all these dimensions caused serious political conflict and violence and eventually liberation war that ultimately led to the secession of the eastern wing and its emergence as sovereign independent state of Bangladesh in 1971.

The state/provincial boundaries in some parts of India (e.g., division of state of Bombay into Maharastra and Gujrat, and also some southern states) were reorganized in the 1950's and the 60's along linguistic line because of the emergence of a strong linguistic non-secessionist separatism within the fold of Indian nationhood.²⁴ In Southern Thailand one of the causes of separatism is linguistic difference (Malay and Thai languages)²⁵ that further reinforces religious (Islam and Buddhism) difference. Similarly, the "Gallic tongue and Roman Catholic faith...of French Canadians distinctively separate them from the English speaking Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority" in Canada.²⁶ In the early 19th century one of the causes of the division of the Kingdom of Bohemia was the rivalry between two linguistic groups: the Czechs and the Germans.²⁷

Bi and Multiculturalism

"Cultures and cultural identities emerge, change, and are maintained through social interactions and political struggle." If a state is inhabited by people of diverse cultural origin and background, separatism and ethnic conflicts become a way of political life. For example, in Myanmar/Burma "resistance forces

²³ Karl von Vorys, *Political Development in Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 76, 80, 90-91.

²⁴ W. H. Morris-Jones, *The Government and Politics of India* (London: Hutchinson, 1964), pp. 97-103.

²⁵ McVey, *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-3.

²⁶ Paul Fox, "Separatism in Quebec" in Paul Fox, ed., *Politics: Canada* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 45.

²⁷ Seton-Watson, Op. cit., p. 3.

²⁸ Sarah Song, "Majority Norms, Multiculturalism, and Gender Equality" in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 99, No. 4 (Nov. 2005), p. 474.

fighting the government...there are three major separatist challenges to the central government: those of the Shans, the Kachins, and the Karens."²⁹ There are also other groups such as Chin, Palaung, Naga, Akha, Lahu, Lisaw, Kadu, Wa, and Rohingyas.³⁰ They are highly conscious of and sensitive to their separate cultural identities.

Pakistan of the pre-1971 period may also again be cited as a good example. The "language, climate, economic and social life and attitudes of mind" of the people of the eastern wing (i.e., Bengalis) were widely different from those of the western wing (i.e., Punjabis, Pathans/Pashtuns, Sindhis and Baluchis.³¹ "West Pakistan looks out upon the Middle East, whereas East Pakistan looks to [South and] South East Asia."³² The Bengalis "are neither Aryans nor Arabs...Nature has given their mind and body a distinctive stamp."³³ There were multi-dimensional differences between the cultures of the two wings. Late Professor Emirates Ralph Braibanti of Duke University, USA aptly observes that the "Punjabis by temperament and history are probably the least similar to Bengalis."³⁴ He continued to say that "no region" in South Asian sub-continent, "certainly none" in the north

"could be more opposite to the Punjab in externals and in spirit than East Bengal...The Bengalis are by ethnic origin more closely related to [south and] Southeast Asia than to Persia and Afghanistan, the twin fountainheads of Punjabi and Pathan culture. More importantly, Bengalis have a remarkably homogenous culture, rich in art, music, dance, language, poetry and philosophy, epitomized in [Nobel laureate] Rabindranath Tagore. A highly developed aesthetic sensitivity makes them more akin to the culture of [South and] Southeast Asia than to the practical earthiness of the Aryan Punjabi. Their

²⁹ Tinker, *Op. cit.* (1976/ Burma), p. 57.

³⁰ Ibid., M. G. Smith, Burna: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity (London: Zed, 1991). Lucian W. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation Building: Burma's Search for Identity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962). D. J. Steinberg, The Future of Burma: Crisis and Choice in Myanmar (Lanham: University of America, 1990). J. Silverstein, Burmese Politics: The Dilema of National Unity (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980). Seraj, op. cit.

³¹ W. H. Morris-Jones, "Experience of Independence: India and Pakistan" in *Political Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 1958, p. 235. For similar comments also see Naville Maxwell in *The Sunday Times* (London), Feb. 23, 1969.

³² Marshall, *Op. cit.*, p. 252.

³³ S. A. Kamal, "Social Questions in Bengali Fictions" in S. S. Husain, ed., *Dacca University Seminars on Contemporary Writing in East Pakistan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1966), pp. 46-47

³⁴ For details see Khalid bin Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 188.

temperament molded by riverine, topical lands in which they live, combines a quick, volatile sensitive independence with a keen love of political activity and intellectual disputation....so pervasive is the quality of Bengali culture that it has developed a very strong corporate sense. Bengalis, more aware of their Bengali culture than are Punjabis of their own heritage, are more likely to cling together and support each other simply because they are Bengalis."³⁵

Professor Emeritus Braibanti also pointed out that although "their intellectual proclivity naturally impelled the Bengalis to learn English, the profundity and homogeneity of their culture enabled them to reject successfully the influence of British social mores. Moreover, they actively resisted rather than acquiesced in British rule." On the other hand, he concluded, in the Punjab which "came under sustained" and "concentrated British influence," there was a "great respect for the British" and "Western social practices." In 1971 the *Time* magazine also observed that "the only bonds between the diverse and distinct wings [i.e., East and West Pakistan]...were the Islamic faith and Pakistan International Airlines [PIA]. Sharing neither borders nor culture...Pakistan is an improbable wedding of the Middle East and [South and] Southeast Asia." Time magazine continued to indicate that the "tall, light skinned, Pathans, Balochis, [Punjabis,] and Sindhis of West Pakistan are descendants of the Aryans who swept into the subcontinent in the second millennium B.C. East Pakistan's slight dark Bengalis are more closely related to the Dravidian people." Time magazine further observed that the "Westerners...eat wheat and meat, [and] speak Urdu...The Easterners eat rice and fish and speak Bengali."37 Biculturalism and a number of other factors, discussed later in this article, contributed enormously to political conflict and violence in pre-1971 Pakistan, made the task of building a sense of Pakistani nationhood almost impossible, and ultimately resulted in the breakup of that country. Even in the post-1971 Pakistan Punjabi, Sindhi, Pathan/Pashtun, Baluchi, and tribal cultures, and serious conflicts between them have seriously threatened the unity and cohesion of that country, and strengthened increasing separatism.

India, which is one of the best examples of multiculturalism, is one of the most diverse countries from linguistic, religious and cultural perspectives. But it has shown a remarkable political maturity and ability to accommodate and contain

³⁵ Ralph Braibanti, Research on the Bureaucracy of Pakistan (Durham: Duke University Press, 1966), pp. 46-47.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-48.

³⁷ Time Magazine, Aug. 2, 1971, p. 30.

in varying degrees a good number of conflicting interests and demands especially in the south as well as, to a certain extent, in the northeast, and has thus been successful in national integration in most parts of the country, though still there are a few problem areas. This "difference [between India and Pakistan] is a tribute to the assimilative capacities of the Indian party and electoral systems compared to Pakistan's". 38 However, the secessionist separatist movement in Kashmir is a serious threat to the integration efforts. The movement there has rather ceased to be a local movement. On the contrary, it has increasingly become a part of a regional or extra-territorial movement and has links with the movements in the Middle East. Outside influence and involvement, especially of Pakistan, is considerable.

The political conflict in Canada may also be traced in bi-culturalism. Dr. Marcel Chaput, one of the most staunch advocates of independence of Quebec claimed that French Canada has "unique traits in America" and a completely distinct culture.³⁹ The secessionist movement in Canada is an attempt to preserve "as separate and distinct French identity."40 In the past, Scots, the Wales, and the Irish pursued three completely different nationalist movements in one of the most politically mature countries in the world, namely U.K. Each of them still claims to have separate culture of its own, although religion is the most dominant factor in Irish movement which has been militant and belligerent.⁴¹ However, these movements were contained in varying degrees. However in Northern Ireland the emotion is still strong though movement has weakened.

Related/Supplementary/complementary Dimensions of Ethnicity

Related or supplementary Dimensions are: (i) artificial boundaries/artificial states/truncated states, 42 (ii) deprivation/exploitation/domination/oppression,

³⁸ Wright, *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

³⁹ Marcel Chaput, "The Secession of Quebec from Canada" in Fox, ed., *Op. cit.*, p. 41. ⁴⁰ Fox in *Ibid.*, p. 45.

^{41 &}quot;mini-Nations...", Op. cit. (Economist), pp. 35-37.

⁴² I owe such terms as "artificial state" and "artificial boundary/border" to Professor Fred R. von der Mehden (Op. cit., pp. 35-38). But I have used these terms in a considerably different sense. Their meanings or connotations in my article are different to a great extent from those in Professor Mehden's book. Professor Philip M. Hauser has used the term "Truncated Social Order" in his chapter entitled "Some Cultural and Personal Characteristics of the Less Developed Areas" in Jason L. Finkle, et al., eds., Political Development and Social Change (New York: John Wiley), pp. 54-55. This term is completely different from the term truncated state which I have used in this article.

(iii) union of developed and less developed areas, (iv) immigration, and the like which strengthen in varying degrees the dimensions or forces of ethnicity. They have rather indirect bearing on ethnicity. They cause, accentuate, reinforce or strengthen ethnic conflicts and rivalries. They constitute one of the important sources of bi-and multi-culturalism and most importantly, they increasingly make various ethnic groups aware and conscious of their ethnic differences and diversity. No doubt, social, cultural, linguistic, religious and similar diversities provide fertile ground for political differences, ⁴³ but most of the related or supplementary dimensions like artificial boundaries or states, and deprivation/exploitation/oppression on the basis of such diversities provide strong motivation and incentive to act and to resort to strategies that are agitational, confrontational, violent, aggressive or belligerent. The extent of deprivation etc., in fact, determines the extent of the strength and vigour of such conflicts. ⁴⁴ They are, in fact, the triggering or precipitation factors/dimensions. They are discussed below:

Artificial Boundaries

Boundaries were arbitrarily drawn by the colonial powers (and occasionally by the pre-colonial rulers) in order to determine the frontiers of their respective possessions or territories. Artificial boundaries are more pronounced especially in Africa. In the late 19th and the early 20th centuries the boundaries of various colonial states had been determined by political reasons and under conditions that had been different from those which obtained in the post-colonial (i.e., mainly in the post-World War II) period.⁴⁵ During that period such boundaries had created what may be referred to as artificial or truncated states. They have further complicated, accentuated and strengthened bi- and multi-culturalism.

In the South Asian subcontinent the Pathan, Mughal, and British rulers brought various regions or areas with widely varying cultures, languages as well as

However, I acknowledge the fact that his term has helped me to coin the term truncated state.

⁴³ For somewhat similar views see Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in the Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

⁴⁴ For somewhat similar views see Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethno-Conflicts* (Washington DC: United State Institute of Peace, 1993), pp. 55, 123-138.

⁴⁵ T. R. Batten, *Problems of African Development*, Part II (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 157.

religions under the control or domination of a single central authority with the result that there have been considerable ethnic diversities in most South Asian countries. For example, historically speaking, North West Frontier Province/ NWFP (since April 2010 called Khyber Pakhtunkhwa⁴⁶) and Balucistan were rather parts of Afghanistan and Iran respectively. There has also been demand for renaming NWFP "Afghania". 47 Various types of separatist movements and armed groups have increasingly emerged in these two provinces. Even in Sindh the demand for a "Sindhu Desh" has also become increasingly vigourous since the early 1970s. There is a militant group called Sindhu Desh Liberation Army (SDLA). They are also inspired by the Baluchi rebels. 48 They all are hostile against and opposed to Punjab's domination of Pakistani politics and government. They, in fact, pose a serious problem or threat to national integration. "Some fear Pakistan could splinter apart." Although lately some steps have been taken to appease an important section of the Pathans/Pashtuns perhaps with some limited success, it seems that the arrangement is rather fragile. Chances are that it is likely to be short lived. Even the boundaries of pre-1971 Pakistan were artificial because the eastern and the western wings of that country were separated by more than a thousand miles of Indian territory. As noted above, except religion all the dimensions of ethnicity were different, and it was viewed as "an improbable wedding" of the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia. We have also noted that in India various state (provincial) boundaries were redrawn in order to accommodate or appease in varying degrees the linguistic and/or ethnic separatism.

Especially in Africa the impact of artificial boundaries was enormous. They often divided or bisected tribal, cultural, religious, linguistic and other groups, and made them part of two or more separate countries. For example, late Kwame Nkrumah, former President and Prime Minister of Ghana, and one of the most prominent political leaders in Africa, was born in a tribe which had

^{46 &}quot;NWFP Officially renamed as Khyber Pakhtun" in *Dawn* (Karachi), April 15, 2010. Karen Brulliard, "tensions Over renamed Pakistan Province Overshadow Government Reforms" in *The Washington post*, April 17, 2010.

www.reuters.com/article/2007/08/01/us=pakistan-province-idUSISL-2657120070801. Retrieved on May 1, 2012.

⁴⁸ Pakistan Today (Karachi), Feb. 26, 2012. Friday Times (Lahore), March 9-15 (a weekly), 2012, Vol. xxiv, No. 4.

⁴⁹ A report /column by Paul Wiseman in USA Today (Washington DC), Aug. 1, 2008.

been divided by British and French colonial authorities.⁵⁰ Such boundaries in many parts of the world were the result of military successes or failures of various colonial powers which fought with one another for territorial gains. Moreover, there

"were numerous cases where European political requirements, such as the desire to have frontiers convenient for the collection of custom duties, led to the deliberate partition of an African state. Neighbouring Africans with virtual identical cultural tradition now found themselves subject to different laws, learning different languages and different doctrines in school, using new transport routes which carried them toward different ports and capital cities...Distant places without schools or roads often preserved old relationship with their neighbours across the frontier, sometimes to the confusion of colonial officials. Yet even in such places the new colonial frontiers would in the long run shape the political future."51

In West Africa boundary lines ran "inland from the coast, cutting across the traditional ethnic, tribal, and religious bonds that run parallel to the coast."52 After World War I situation in Cameroon and Togoland, two former German colonies, became further complicated in view of the fact that they were again split up into British and French mandates with the result that tribes were again redivided. Hence, there were indistinct ethnic or geographic divisions between many colonies. For example, Gambia was described as an anomaly which "defied all principles of boundary-making. There are no geographical or other lines of demarcation, whether economic, cultural or racial, separating it from the country surrounding it". 53 Portuguese Guinea, Rio De Oro, Rio Muni, and French Somaliland had similar situation. As a consequence of such colonial policies, in many new states nowadays it is found that fractured or bisected tribes or religious or linguistic groups have loyalties to communities which "cut across new boundaries."54 Post-colonial new states have inherited from the preindependence period these problems and circumstances that further complicated ethnic/tribal conflicts and rivalries in Africa.

The matter was made worse by the fact that many colonial governments pursued "divide and rule" policy in order to strengthen their hold over colonized territories. And such a policy later resulted in a major force for disunity. The

⁵⁰ Mehden, *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁵¹ Quoted in Peter Worsley, *The Third World* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967), p. 66. 52 Mehden, *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁵³ Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Belgian, Portuguese, Spanish and French colonial authorities maintained and encouraged to a considerable extent, and the British, to a relatively lesser extent, the existing divisions and provided the basis for national disunity. They took steps to dampen national consciousness and created fragmented states with the result that they lessened the possibility of future national identity, unity and integration.⁵⁵

During the colonial period the artificiality, heterogeneity and truncatedness of these states were "often hidden by the tight control of colonial administration, which kept down intergroup outbreak and gave protection and a feeling of security to ethnic and other minorities. However, when independence removed these controls and safeguards, the divisions became all too apparent."⁵⁶ Prior to their colonization most of the new states in Africa and some in Asia did not exist as national entities. To most of these communities the very idea of nation or nationalism was rather unknown or foreign. Such colonial states, that were expected to become nations almost overnight, were mainly a conglomeration of various tribal groups. And more importantly, Imperial ambition rather than such considerations as racial, linguistic, cultural or tribal homogeneity, determined the boundaries of these states.⁵⁷ But these boundaries were not usually "welladopted to African need."58 Diverse peoples were combined within an administrative area. For example, Nigeria and Kenya are states "which were...originally mere 'geographical expressions'" and their political boundaries were "drawn on the map" by alien powers.⁵⁹ Under such circumstances it is quite natural that "some groups would not become properly nationalized." 60

For example, unlike India most of the new states in Africa were administered by colonial powers, relatively speaking, for a short period of time. The colonial rule in the interior of Sub-Saharan Africa began at the end of the 19th century, and in most areas of that continent it came to an end by the 1960's. As a result, the unifying influence of colonial administration on such diverse people lasted for less than a century with the result that they did not get adequate time

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 39.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 35-36. Also see Ferrel Heady, Public Administration LA Comparative Perspective (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 60.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Worsley, *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.66.

⁶⁰ Mehden, *Op. cit.*, p.36.

necessary to develop a sense of national identity or unity which is indispensable for national integration. Consequently regionalism, tribalism and local parochialism or friction could not be removed or erased. For example, the nationalism of once proudly independent nation of Buganda, in fact, delayed the independence of Uganda. It was only in 1894 that Buganda had become a protectorate and never been completely incorporated into colonial Uganda.⁶¹ Nigeria, which may also be cited as a good example, was united during World War I. Sir Hugh Clifford, the then Governor of Nigeria, observed in 1920 "Nigerian nation was inconceivable," and that "this collection of self-contained and mutually independent Native States, separated from one another, as many of them are, by differences of history and traditions and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers," were not indeed "capable of being welded into a single homogeneous nation."62 He, therefore, strongly felt that "Nigerian nationalism was an absurdity" and that the "'natural' national unit was the traditional 'tribe' or 'emirate'."63 Obafemi Awolowa, one of the most prominent Nigerian political leaders in the mid-20th century, also observed sometime before independence that "Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere political expression."64 Hence, it was not surprising that in Nigeria strong regional and centrifugal feeling and socio-cultural separatism emerged increasingly in the Muslim North, in the predominantly Yoruba-West, and in the Ibo-Majority East in the post-independence period. In fact, Nigeria had been "an unintended development dictated by administrative convenience, not a conscious encouragement to wider political identification."65

In many areas the late emergence of national parties, of national leadership, of national ideology and so forth was also responsible for continuity of regionalism, parochialism, and racial, tribal, religious, and linguistic separatism in both pre- and post-independence periods causing failure in national integration. The westernized nationalist elites found it difficult to establish effective link and communication channel with traditional rural communities

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶² Quoted in James C. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University Press of California, 1965), p. 194.

⁶³ Worslet, *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Mehden, *Op. cit.*, p. 36. Also see Richard L. Sklar, "Nigerian Politics: The Ordeal of Chief Awolowo, 1960-65" in Gwendolen M. Carter, ed., *Politics in Africa* (New York:Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), p. 120.

⁶⁵ Worsley, *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

and traditional elites.⁶⁶ The lateness of nationalist development and such communication gap, which was also partially resulted from the former, stood in the way of or slowed down the development of a sense of national identity, i.e., nationalism.

Deprivation/Exploitation/Domination/Oppression

If a region or group feels, rightly or wrongly, that it is exploited or dominated or oppressed by other regions or groups or by the central government, it becomes more and more conscious of ethnic differences, and increasingly resorts to violence and agitational politics. For example, the then East Pakistanis, i.e., Bengalis in the pre-1971 period strongly felt that they did not have equal share in the authoritative decision making process at the center, and that there were both political and economic exploitation, domination and oppression, etc., of the eastern wing by the western wing. Although the former earned much more foreign exchange than the latter, much less was spent for the development of the former. Even the first President of the post-1971 Pakistan acknowledged the fact that "the ruling elite included virtually no Bengalis...East Pakistan was in fact governed by the neo-colonial capitalist of West Pakistan who exploited the country with callous thoroughness...Hence, a deep and lasting hatred was engendered, which finally exploded in violence and blood-shed." ⁶⁷ The last straw or the final triggering or precipitating event was the brutal and savage military crackdown and genocide in the then East Pakistan in 1971⁶⁸ which led

⁶⁶ Mehden, *Op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

⁶⁷ Govt. of Pakistan, President Bhutto's Address to the National Assembly (Islamabad: Government Printing Press, 1972), p. 19. Also see p. 29. Planning Department, Govt. of East Pakistan, Economic Disparities Between East and West Pakistan (Dacca: Govt. Printing Press, 1963). Finance Commission, Report of the Five Members of the Finance Commission (Dacca: Govt. Printing Press, 1962). A Group of Scholars in Vienna, "Why Bangladesh" in Bangladesh Documents, Vol. 1 (Madras: BNK Press/Government of India Publication, 1971 or), pp. 15-22. Sayeed, Op. cit., pp. 191-203. Kabiruddin Ahmed, Unhappy East Pakistan (Pamphlet)(London: Kabiruddin Ahmed, 1962), pp. 1-34.

^{68 &}quot;A Massacre in Pakistan" (Editorial), *The Guardian* (London), March 31, 1971. "The Slaughter in East Pakistan" in *The New York Times*, May 6, 1971. Anthony Mascarenhas, "Genocide" in *The Sunday Times* (London), June 13, 1971. Murray Sayle, "A Regime of Thugs and Bigots" in *The Sunday Times* (London), July 11, 1971. "Pakistan Condemned" in *The New York Times*, July 14, 1971. Najmul Abedin, "Bangladesh Liberation War and the Indian Parliament" in Mahfuzul H. Chowdhury, ed., *Thirty Years of Bangladesh Politics* (Dhaka: University Press Ltd., 2002), pp. 1-34.

to a vigorous and full scale liberation war with the help of India resulting in a victory in 266 days and the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign independent state.⁶⁹

Union of Developed and Less Developed Areas

If, relatively speaking, a larger or developed area is tied or federated with a smaller or less developed area, the union may breed dissatisfaction with every possibility of subsequent accentuation and strengthening of the ethnic forces/dimensions of ethnicity. For example, Eritrea, an ethnically very different area, which had a "Western-style democratic constitution" was "federated with a much larger autocracy [Ethiopia]" in the post-World War II period. The authorities in Addis Ababa were well aware of the fact that if Eritrea continued to enjoy democratic freedom and process, it would eventually "pose a serious threat to political base and framework of the whole Imperial set up."⁷¹ They, therefore, destroyed local autonomy and democratic institution in Eritrea. But the people of distinctly separate ethnic background "who have enjoyed political rights and freedom appear to remember them even if subsequent rulers do their best to make them forget."⁷² As a consequence, ethnic difference between Eritreans and Ethiopians became increasingly pronounced, and latter faced with a full scale military operation launched by the former. That part of the world witnessed for a prolonged period of time the politics of secession and violence. 73 Eventually Eritrea emerged as a separate sovereign independent country.

Pakistan of the pre-1971 period may again be cited as an example: Bengal, which had been colonized by the British in the mid-1750's "was in many ways the most important province in India" during the early years of the colonial

⁶⁹ M. N. Quadir, Independence of Bangladesh in 266 Days: History and Documentary Evidence (Dhaka: Mukto Publishers, 2004).

Godfrey Morrison, Eritrea and the Southern Sudan: Aspects of Some Wider African Problems (London: Minority Rights Group, Report No. 5, May 1976), p. 5. Also see David Hamilton, ethiopia's Embattled Revolutionaries (London: The Institute for the Study of Conflict, No. 82, April 1977). Eritrea in Struggle (New York: Newsletter of the Association of Eritrean Studies in North America), esp. see Vol. II, No. 4, January 1978, pp. 14-19.

⁷¹ Morrison, *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁷³ Sudanow (Khartoum, Sudan), a weekly Magazine, Feb. 1978, pp. 14-19. Also see *Ibid.*, Dec. 1977, pp. 22-26.

⁷⁴ Donald N. Wilbur, *Pakistan: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 219.

period. At that time it provided intellectual and political leadership to the subcontinent.⁷⁵ The great Indian statesman and political leader Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), whom Mahatma Gandhi called his "mentor and guide," once said "what Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow."

Even "the rural public opinion," as late Professor Hugh Tinker points out, "was most articulate in Bengal; the rural Bhadrolok [elite] and great Zamindars [landed "aristocrats"] were much more interested in the political questions than the vast majority in rural India." ⁷⁶ In Bengal even small and poor cultivators actively participated in rural politics.⁷⁷ Two-thirds of Bengal later (1947) became the eastern wing of Pakistan. However, sometimes it is argued that in Bengal more Hindus were better educated, and more advanced and articulate than the Muslims. No doubt, it was true in varying degrees. But at the same time it should also be noted that the Bengali Muslims were much more progressive and secular, socio-politically more conscious and advanced than the Muslims in those parts of India that later constituted West Pakistan (i.e.; present Pakistan). It was observed by Professor Frank Goodnow that "unlike his counterpart in West Pakistan, the East Pakistani cultivator took an interest in politics participating actively in local elections..."78 It was worth noting that, as late Professor emeritus Braibanti aptly observed the "spirit of Bengali independence [had] compelled the development of a vigorous local selfgovernment and the early demise of great land holding, while in the Punjab feudal conditions of serfdom prevailed and the Zamindars were not challenged" even long after the emergence of Pakistan as an independent country in 1947.⁷⁹ It was also found that, as he further pointed out, in comparison with administration in various provinces in the western wing, administration in the eastern wing was "much more egalitarian in demeanor, more democratic in outlook, more informal, closer to the people in mood and attitude and less haughty."80 He also added that it "is strong, but its style is leavened by the more egalitarian social structure of Bengal and the vigor of the Rural Works

⁷⁵ The Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. II (Danbury, CT: Grolier, Inc., New York: Encyclopedia Center, 1961), p. 512.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

Hugh Tinker, The Foundations of Local Self Government in India, Pakistan and Burma (London: Athnole Press, 1954), p. 78.

N.C. Roy, Village Self-Government in Bengal (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1932).
 Frank Goodnow, The Civil Service of Pakistan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 48.

⁷⁹ Braibanti, Op. cit. (Research), p. 47.

Programme."⁸¹ It is also worth noting that late Edward Shils, "Distinguished Service Professor" in the University of Chicago (and also in Cambridge, Leiden, LSE, etc.) aptly observed that the Bengali literature represents "a notable creative achievement"⁸² and which, as Khilid bin Sayeed, a non-Bengali scholar, originally from Uttar Pradesh and a former Professor at Queen's University, Canada, also pointed out, was "influenced by British and European ideas of liberalism and humanitarianism,"⁸³ considerably shaped and influenced the way of life, and social and political attitudes of Bengalis, and accelerated to a great extent the process of political development and modernization in Bengal both before and after the partition of India (and of Bengal) in 1947.⁸⁴

Because of all these factors, politically and intellectually Bengal was much more advanced than the provinces (or part thereof) that constituted the western wing of Pakistan. Professor Khalid bin Sayeed and Professor Richard B. Marshall respectively pointed out that "in terms of political development it is West Pakistan which is backward as compared to East Pakistan." and "political consciousness and communication are intense in East Pakistan." Hence, the attempts made by the West Pakistani political and military elites, who controlled the central government, to introduce paternal and authoritarian systems of administration and politics were strongly resented by the Bengalis who were "apt in competitive politics." Such a situation further accentuated and enormously contributed to ethnic sensitivity and ethnic identity of Bengali culture in pre-1971 Pakistan.

In a federation or union sometimes tension and conflict may also originate in the reluctance of the richer ethnic units to share their resources with the poorer ones. For example, the Federation of the West Indies was "dismantled" by two "better-off and powerful" countries (Jamaica and Trinidad-Tobago) because in the federation the "prospects of having to share their assets with other eight "relatively small and poor" islands led them to secede."

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁸² Edward Shils, The Intellectual Between Tradition and Modernity: The Indian Situation (The Hague: Mouton, 1961), p. 71.

⁸³ Sayeed, *Op. cit.*, p. 188.

⁸⁴ Abedin, *Op. cit.*, pp. 76-99.

⁸⁵ Sayeed, *Op. cit.*, p. 238.

⁸⁶ Marshall, *Op. cit.*, p. 253.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p. 253.

⁸⁸ Amitai Etzioni, *Political Unification: A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces* (New York: Holt Rinehart, 1965), p. 172.

Immigration

There is some correlation between immigration and the emergence of multiethnic societies. From time immemorial many countries in different parts of the world have witnessed immigration across borders and also from distant places. Especially in the past few decades "global migration reached extraordinarily high levels."89 In the post-World War II period immigration from the developing areas like Asia, Africa, Central America, and South America to the developed areas like Western Europe, North America, Australia, etc. has increased at a galloping and accelerated speed. In most cases immigrants belong to ethnic and/or racial groups that are different from those of the host countries. As a consequence, both from historical and contemporary perspectives, the large scale immigration has created new subcultures and subnational identities, and thus contributed to multiculturalism. Socio-cultural environment like this is a fertile ground for ethnic politics which, at least at the initial stage, is conducive to political hostility, conflict and violence of varying magnitude. Serious ethnic disturbance or violence in France in late 2005⁹⁰ or increasing and a wide range of ethnic demands in the USA and elsewhere --- e.g., demands for driver's license for illegal or undocumented immigrants, for official recognition of second languages (e.g., Spanish in the USA), for some religious or other rights, etc. --- may be cited as examples. However, at the same time it should be noted that over the years the immigrants and their children and grandchildren may slowly adopt, in varying degrees and proportion, the values and norms of their host countries, and may thus gradually become assimilated into the host culture partially or completely. But in the process they also change to a certain extent the host culture. But the process of adoption and assimilation has usually been uneven, and in many cases separateness and differences have existed and continued in varying degrees. The extent or degree of such separateness and differences, in fact, has determined the extent or degree of the intensity of politics of stress, tension, or conflict. The same situation obtained in South Asia also, where over a period of many centuries people with different cultures,

⁸⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity

⁽New York: Simon & Schuster, 204), p. 178.

The New York Times, Nov. 4, 2005. The Sunday New York Times, Nov. 6, 2005. Washington Post, Nov. 5, 2005. Newsweek, Nov. 14, 2005, p. 37. Ibid., Nov. 21, 2005, pp. 42-43. Time, Nov. 21, 2005. US News & World Report (Magazine), Nov. 14, 2005. Ibid., Nov. 21, 2005.

religions, languages, etc. immigrated from elsewhere. After 1947 the immigration of Urdu speaking Muslims mainly from Bihar and the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh to the eastern wing of pre-1971 Pakistan created bimulticulturalism to a certain extent resulting in political tension and conflict. Similarly, migration of Muslims from other parts of India to the western wing created somewhat similar situation. Even today we see riots between the refugees/ immigrants especially in Karachi. It is widely believed that the assassination of Liaquat Ali khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, resulted from the serious and bitter conflict between the Punjabi and UP cliques in the then Pakistani political process.

Harvard Professor Samuel P. Huntington in his book Who We Are observes that the "central issue...is not immigration but immigration with or without assimilation."91 When a country or a region has to deal with immigration without assimilation, ethnicity or race poses a serious challenge to national integration or identity. 92 However, as time passes some ethnic groups may surrender their distinctive cultural features and disappear into the dominant and main stream culture. For example, that was what happened in the USA in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. 93 But in the post-World War II period it seems that the trend has been in the opposite direction. Professor Huntington observes that "America was founded by British Settlers who brought with them a distinct culture including English language, Protestant values, individualism, religious commitment, and respect for law." He continued to say that the "waves of [ethnic] immigrants [Italians, Irish, Germans, and so on and so forth that later came to the United States gradually accepted these values and assimilated into American Anglo-Protestant culture." But, as he expresses his concern, "More recently, however, national identity has been eroded by the problems of assimilating massive numbers of primarily Hispanic immigrants, bilingualism, multiculturalism, the devaluation of citizenship, and the 'denationalization' of American elites."94 He further expanded his thoughts by saying that in the late 20th century and the beginning

⁹¹ Huntington, Op. cit., p. 178.

⁹² For various aspects of impact of immigration on national integration and also on politics of tension or conflict see *Ibid.*, chs. 7-9. Also see Helen B. Marrow, "New Destinations and Immigrant Incorporation" in *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 4, (Dec. 2005), pp. 781-799. Song, *Op. cit.*, p. 474.

⁹³ Stark, *Op. cit.*, pp. 293-294.

⁹⁴ Huntington, *Op. cit.* See the first flap of the jacket of the book. Also see xv-xvii.

of the 21st century "the salience and substance" of the more or less homogeneous American culture has been "challenged by a new wave of immigrants from Latin America and Asia, the popularity in intellectual and political circles of the doctrines of multiculturalism and diversity, the spread of Spanish as the second American language and Hispanization trends in American society, the assertion of group identities based on race, ethnicity, and gender, the impact of diasporas and their homeland governments, and the growing commitments of elites to cosmopolitan and transnational identities." He further argues that "in response to all these challenges American identity could evolve in a number of directions" two of which are the following: One could be a "bifurcated America, with two languages, Spanish and English, and two cultures, Anglo-Protestant and Hispanic." And other could be "an exclusivist America, once again defined by race and ethnicity and that excludes and/or subordinates those who are not white and European." There could also be some combination of these and other possibilities.

Concluding Observations

From the foregoing discussion we may conclude that there are a good number of dimensions of ethnicity that weaken the process of national integration. One or two dimensions usually do not cause serious problems. In most cases, a combination of several dimensions—of which one or two may be dominant or may have initiated the process first—create a strong motive for, and an environment conducive to, political conflict of serious nature. They are usually closely interrelated and interact with and mutually reinforce one another. Historians and social/ political scientists with analytical interest in ethnic conflicts and national integration usually examine, as late Professor Morris-Jones aptly points out that the "endless dialectic between integrative and disintegrative forces in the history of state [and nation] making and unmaking." They look at the causes and political process of separatism in states as well as in nations. He further adds that their aims are not only to see why "nations' may move into, and out of statehood," but also to see why "sets

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. xvi. Professor Huntington presents five possibilities, three of which are discussed in the text. The other two possibilities are" "a creedal America, lacking its historic cultural core, and united only by a common commitment to the principles of the American Creed" and "a revitalized America reaffirming its historic Anglo-Protestant culture, religious communities, and values and bolstered by confrontations with an unfriendly world." Ibid. p. xvi.

⁹⁶ Morris-Jones, *Op. cit.* (Note/1976), p. ii.

of people — what shall we call them? Regional [or ethnic] groupings? --- can move into, and out of nationhood..."97 They have noted that dimensions of ethnicity and the related and supporting issues sometimes may constitute the most powerful causes or sources of separatism, i.e., anti-nation building forces. As noted above, these dimensions, which interact with and reinforce one another, are diverse and multifarious, and sometimes paradoxical and puzzling and do not have uniform effects everywhere. In a particular case a dimension of ethnicity may be present but it may have little or no effect or impact because people take no notice of it or do not attach much importance to it. But in another place it may have enormous bearing on the politics of national integration. Religion or language or culture or history or socio-economic factor or a combination of them "is important in politics only when people decide it is and decide to act on that perception..."98 Different peoples often decide or react differently under more or less the same circumstances. Their decisions or reaction vary from place to place, from time to time, and from culture to culture. The examples are provided below.

In spite of the near identity of language, religion, culture and social institutions and values two neighbouring areas namely the USA and English-speaking Canada have remained politically separate for centuries. On the other hand, circumstances forced French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians, who were different from one another in many respects including religious, linguistic and cultural differences, to form a state. But after having gained considerable experience of harmonious coexistence, of cultural pluralism, of social diversity and of how to manage such political and social systems and also after having played the political game of give and take, and of accommodation, they became so polarized in the 1960's, 70's and 80's that many French Canadians seriously wanted to get out of the present political and national framework and to form a separate state. In a number of referenda the attempt to secede failed by a razor thin margin. As reported by the *Time* magazine in its cover story namely "Canada: A House Divided," Pierre Trudeau, former Prime Minister of Canada and a French Canadian, was very much against the secession of Quebec and strongly felt that "rupture" of Canada "would be a crime against the history of

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. ii.

Nelson Kasfir, "Seizing Half a Loaf: Isaya Mukirane and Self-Recruitment for Secession" in W.H. Morris-Jones, ed., *The Making of Politicians: Studies from Africa and Asia* (London: Athnole Press, 1976), p. 69.

mankind," whereas Rene Levesque, former Premier, i.e., Provincial Prime Minister of Quebec, who strongly supported secession, thought that it "is more and more sure that a new country will appear, democratically, on the map." Time also expressed "the fear that a nation could come apart," and asked "why separatism? Why now?" Although the separatist movement in Canada has lost momentum lately, it is still very much there and might again become a force and a critical factor in varying degrees in the Canadian political process.

The basis of partition of India in 1947 was the "two-nation" theory of Jinnah who claimed that the Hindus and the Muslims constituted two different nations in India, and, therefore, they should form two different states. But religious homogeneity or the so called concept of "Pakistani nationhood" failed to prevent the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, though more than 90 percent of the total population of Pakistan and more than 80 percent of that of East Pakistan were Muslims. It is very interesting and significant to note that in less than a quarter of a century various dimensions of Bengali ethnicity became more and more pronounced, dominant and visible, and thus contributed increasingly to the emergence of a vigorous Bengali nationalism within the folds of the imaginary "Pakistani nationhood." In fact, there was an accelerated development of a separate and distinct political personality namely "Bengali nationhood" that moved out of the artificial "Pakistani nationhood." It proved very clearly and explicitly the fragility and the underlying weakness of the "two-nation" theory of Jinnah. But there is a paradoxical situation also. In a great many respect people of both East Bengal/Bangladesh and West Bengal, which is one of the states/provinces in India, belong to the same ethnic group and they have a highly homogeneous and almost identical cultures (except religion), but they have remained separate and so far there has been no attempt or effort on their part to merge into one sovereign independent state. And it is also very unlikely that down the line they will form or (unlike Kurds/Kurdish) will try to form one state in the future. But Kurds, who were forced by various historical circumstances to be parts of several separate countries, mainly Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran, have been struggling and trying very hard for a prolonged period of time to secede from these countries and to create and be united in their dream land, namely Kurdistan. They even have the national flag, but do not have the nation state.

99 *Time* Magazine, Feb. 13, 1978.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1978.

Finally, it may be noted that throughout Middle East, i.e., Arab World most people speak the same language, belong to the same religious faith, share more or less same culture and same race, and most Arab countries have common borders in a continuous area or region. Yet there are so many Arabic speaking Muslim countries in that part of the world. They have not been able to form a large Arab nation or state. On the other hand, India which is a country of many nations, many languages and dialects, many religions, many cultures and subcultures, and population of more than a billion has been successful in creating a strong sense of Indian nationhood or nation state though there has been some separatist tendencies and movements of varying nature or intensity most of which have, however, been contained in varying degrees except in Kashmir.

In sum, it may be observed that, as late Professor Elie Kedourie of London School of Economics said, "races, languages, political traditions and loyalties are so inextricably intermixed that there can be no one clear and convincing reason why people who speak the same language, but whose history and circumstances otherwise widely diverse, should form one state or why people who speak two different languages and whom circumstances have thrown together should form one state [or Nation]". 101

¹⁰¹ Elie Kedourie, Nationalism (London: Hutchinson, 1960), p. 79. Some of these points are also illustrated in various essays in Santosh C. Saha, ed., Perspectives on Contemporary Ethnic Conflicts: Primal Violence or the Politics of Conviction (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006).

DESECULARISATION AND RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM IN BANGLADESH*

Harun-or-Rashid

Introduction

Forty years ago Bangladesh, a breakaway state in south Asia, came to be founded upon the ideal of secularism as one of the fundamental state principles by shunning the Pakistani path of use of religion in politics. The new republic under the leadership of its founding father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was believed to be free from communal politics once and for all. However, to utter surprise of many, very soon use of religion in public matters and rise of Islamism being the religion of the dominant majority community with resultant impact of communalisation marked a pronounced manifestation. How to explain this? What are the factors that may account for this development? What is the future of syncretism upon which the Bangladesh society is historically based? The present paper is an attempt to examine the process of desecularisation and the rise of political Islam in Bangladesh keeping in view the above questions. The discourse can be better understood in terms of three distinct eras of political rule. First, the Mujib era (1972-1975) that was characterized by the prohibition of use of religion in politics. Second, the military era (1976-1990) under General Zia and Ershad, which saw the reemergence of political Islam within the arena of mainstream politics. Third, the democratic era spanning over the rule of Begum Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina (1991 to date), a period marked by the emergence of a host of militant Islamist groups followed by attempts to curb influence of Islam as a political ideology.

1. The Mujib Era (1972-1975): A journey to secularism

Under the leadership of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a constitution was provided within a period of ten months from liberation for the newly born Bangladesh state, which is regarded as one of the

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30 Harun-or-Rashid

best of the world. Bangladesh becomes a Republic with all powers vested in the hands of the people (Article 7). The new Republic came to be based on four fundamental principles as national ideology, namely (Bangali) Nationalism, Socialism, Democracy and Secularism, developed in course of long struggle for national emancipation including the 1971 War of Liberation.

The Mujib government had declared its firm commitment to the principle of secularism. In view of the Pakistani experience regarding the use of religion Islam in politics, it was taken for granted that secularism would be one of the guiding principles of the new Republic. The 1972 Constitution not only declared secularism as one of the fundamental principles of state policy but also prescribed certain measures for its implementation. These included elimination of communalism in all its forms; no political recognition of any religion by the state; no use of religion for political purposes; and no discrimination or persecution on religious grounds (Article 12).

Perhaps the most important step of the Mujib government in regard to dissociating politics from religion was the constitutional prohibition of forming any religion –based communal organisation with 'a political purpose' (Article 38). This instrument was applied in the case of pro-political Islam pro-Pakistani parties like the Jamaat-i-Islami, Muslim League and other political Islam variants. These were the parties who in their opposition to the creation of Bangladesh had sided with the Pakistan occupation army having direct involvement in their genocidal killing through specially organised privates, such as, *Razakar*, *Al-Badr*, *Al-Shams* during the War of Liberation. They remained as outlawed entities throughout the Mujib rule. Amongst them, the most organised and politically potential Jamaat-i-Islami remained particularly stigmatised in the eyes of people for their heinous act of killing of dozens of very noted secular-minded intellectuals including Dhaka University Professors immediately before the surrender of Pakistan occupation army.

The adoption of *dharmaniropeskhata* substituting secularism in the Constitution as one of the fundamental state principles for a Muslim-majority country as Bangladesh is (87% were Muslim population then) was a bold step on the part of the first government. The Bangla term *dharmaniropeskhata*, literally meaning 'religious neutrality', is different from secularism as it is understood in the West. Due to widespread misperception of the term as religionlessness or

absence of religion and a generally growing fear among ordinary Muslims believed to have been fomented by clandestine pro-political Islam groups that the survival of their religion was at stake in the hands of the secularist government, Mujib went on assuring the public many a time, that his brand of secularism was akin to 'religious neutrality' or 'non-communalism' and ,hence, not a threat to Islam or any other religion. As he once explained:

Secularism does not mean the absence of religion. The 75 million people of Bengal [Bangladesh] will have the right to religion. We do not want to ban religion by law....Muslims will observe their religion....Hindus will observe their religion....Buddhists and Christians will observe their respective religions...Our only objection is that nobody will be allowed to use religion as a political weapon.¹

Thus Mujib's view of secularism was in terms of plurality of religions to be allowed to exist and operate in the society without any favour to or despise for any of them by the state. In other words, he understood religion 'as a faith' and not 'as an ideology'.

Mujib had to deal with a most difficult time. Reconstruction of a war ravaged country from scratch, restoration of law and order by recovering arms from civilian hands made available during 1971 in resistance to Pakistan occupation army, rehabilitation of ten million Bangali refugees returned from India, long drought (1972), flood and devastating cyclone (1973), adverse effects of price hike of oil on economy caused by Arab-Israel war (1973), cold war situation, continued hostility of Pakistan and its allies, non-cooperation from the Muslim countries and threats of leftist takeover are some of the challenges to mention. However, the most formidable challenge came from the radical lefts including the newly founded Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal [National Socialist Party], who considered the Bangladesh War of Liberation as an "unfinished revolution".

So, the Mujib government faced a kind of two-pronged situation in its relation with radical lefts and clandestine pro-political Islam forces. Against such background, Mujib made some initiatives to appease pro-Islam critics. The measures included, among other things, increase in budgetary allocation for *Madrassa* (Islamic religious schools) education, establishment of Islamic Foundation (1975) to work for the propagation of the values and ideals of Islam

Maniruzzaman, Talukder, Bangladesh Politics: Secular and Islamic Trends, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1994, p. 9.

32 Harun-or-Rashid

in society, amnesty for a good number of pro-Islam prisoners not found guilty of war crimes or crimes against humanity, doing away with trial of 195 top Pakistani prisoners of war being held in custody on charge of genocide (Simla Pact 1973), observance of special religious events at the state level and starting of some programmes on religion Islam in state-owned radio and television.² Indeed in private Mujib was a religious-minded person.

However, open challenges to Bangladesh's founding ideals of secularism and Bangali ethno- nationalism within just a few years from independence caught many observers by surprise.

2. Islamisation under military rule (1976-1990): Re-emergence of political Islam and a funeral of secularism

With the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the fall of his government in the bloody August 15 (1975) incident, a counter revolution occurred in Bangladesh politics taking the country back to the Pakistan era. The secular, democratic ideals of the War of Liberation were abandoned in favour of political Islam as a national ideology. This was effected principally by General Ziaur Rahman during his five-year rule to be followed by the next military regime headed by General Ershad. It must be remembered that Saudi Arabia's recognition of Bangladesh came just a day after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Coming into power in the wake of coups and counter coups, General Zia took several steps which considerably changed the secular nature of the Bangladesh state. The Constitution was manipulated by inserting "Bismillahir-Rahman ir-Rahim" (In the Name of Allah, the Beneficial, the Merciful) in the Preamble. Article 8(1), which originally incorporated 'secularism' as one of the fundamental principles of state policy, was replaced by "absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah." Article 12, which contained the mechanisms for implementation of the principle of secularism, was deleted. Further a new clause was added to Article 25, purported "to consolidate, preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic

Kabir, Bhuian Md. Monoar, Politics and Development of The Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, Dhaka: AH Publishing House, 2006, p. 30; Murshid, M. Tazeen, The Sacred and the Secular: Bengal Muslim Discourses 1871-1977, Dhaka: University Press Limited.

solidarity." Article 38, which prohibited formation of any organisation professedly based on religion with a political aim, was revoked, paving the way for the revival of pro-Islam parties hitherto remained outlawed. The principle of 'Bangalee nationalism', as based on language, territory and secular culture (Article 9), was obliterated from the Constitution. Instead General Zia came up with the idea of "Bangladeshi nationalism" to be based on political Islam, language, territory and anti-Indian feelings as a new national ideology.

Apart from the above changes to the constitution, the Zia regime adopted several other measures towards Islamisation. These included public displays of Quranic verses, decorations of roads and other public places with festoons saying *Eid-Mubarak* (*special greetings*) in celebration of two *Eids* (greatest religious festivals of Muslims), felicitations of people by the heads of the state and of the government on special religious occasions, compulsory broadcast of *Azan* (call to prayer) on radio and television in five times a day, a new Division of Religious Affairs under a full minister and establishment of an Islamic University (Ahamed 2006: 316). In Zia's personal style, an Islamic overture came to be reflected. He began to make his public speeches with '*Bismillahir-Rahman ir-Rahim*'. His pro-Islam foreign policy gave him fame among the Muslim countries. Bangladesh became an influential member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) under his leadership.³

In an attempt to give his military rule a civilian face, in 1978 General Zia founded a political party under the name of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which was a mix of diverse political elements ranging from rightist pro-Islam to disgruntled leftist forces. However, the political ideology of the party, 'Bangladeshi nationalism', claimed to provide a comprehensive identity for all the citizens of Bangladesh, failed to incorporate the minorities, particularly the ethnic minorities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region.

Indeed the increased use of religion Islam and its symbols created an exclusionary atmosphere for the minorities, both ethnic and religious, living in Bangladesh.

Ahamed, Emajuddin, 'Islamization in Bangladesh: Political Rhetoric or Substantive?', Bangladesh: Bureaucracy And Development, Dhaka: Mizan Publishers 2006, pp. 315-324; Rahman, Mohammad Sajjadur, "Islamism in Bangladesh", Journal of International Relations, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2010, pp. 72-83.

34 Harun-or-Rashid

Following the assassination of General Zia in an abortive coup in 1981, General Ershad came to power in the aftermath of Justice Abdus Sattar Interregnum (30 May 1981 - 24 March 1982). Like Zia, he followed the same ideology of 'Bangladeshi nationalism.' In an attempt to civilianise his regime, at one stage he also founded a party (1986) under the name of Jatiyo Party (JP) upon the same principle as of Zia's BNP. Throughout his reign he remained enthusiastic about continuing the process of Islamisation as initiated by his predecessor, General Zia. His personal style, frequent visits to shrines and mosques, liberal grants to Islamic institutions, pirs (holy men) and imams (religious leaders) adornment, Bangladesh's further close relations with the Muslim world, establishment of zakat fund (Islamic charity fund) headed by the President himself bore a testimony to his apparent devotion to Islam. However, in person Ershad seemed not to be a strong believer. During his long rule spanning over 9 years (1982-1990), the regime remained volatile suffering from legitimacy crisis. This might have prompted him to declare Islam as 'the State Religion' on June 7, 1988 (Eighth Amendment to the Constitution) purported to win popular support for the regime. This provoked an immediate reaction from the religious minorities leading to the formation of Hindu-Buddha- Christian Okkiya Parishad (United Council) to protect their rights and interests. Two years later Ershad regime was ousted from power through a mass democratic movement.

3. Islam under democratic governments (1991-2010): Moderation versus radical faces

With the fall of the Ershad regime, Bangladesh entered into the era of democratic politics after 1975. The BNP headed by Begum Khaleda Zia, the widow of General Zia, came to power through the democratic elections held in February 1991. Khaleda Zia was ready to make electoral alliance with the Jammat-i-Islami, a potentially vital pro-Islam party having around 8% support among voters, in order to secure necessary parliamentary seats to form the government. Equally understanding the importance of this pro-Islam party, the secular Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of the Father of the Nation, also attracted its support to their anti-government movement during 1995-96. Thus, for the first time in Bangladesh's political history, Jamaat-i-Islami, the party that was opposed to the creation of Bangladesh, got the rare opportunity to play a vital role in power politics, further gaining much needed political legitimacy for the party itself.

It needs to be mentioned that the Bangladeshi *mujahidins*, who went to Afghanistan in the 1980s, began to return home in the early 1990s, some of them playing a role in organizing pro-Islam militant organizations in later years. That militant Islamism was yet to become a threat to the security of Bangladesh.

The period 1991-1996 under the BNP government witnessed some incidents signaling that Bangladesh was becoming more and more intolerant toward secular ideals and multiculturalism. A female writer named Taslima Nasreen was declared a heretic by some clerics because of her work titled Lajja (Shame). Pressure was mounting on the government to arrest her. The writer had to leave the country seeking refuge abroad. Fatwas (religious ruling) were issued by the same quarters against the activities of NGOs engaged in poverty alleviation programs and the empowerment of rural women. Several prominent secular minded writers including poets and university professors were threatened with their lives and were declared heretic. A newly founded cleric pro-Islam organisation called Ahle-Hadith launched a violent campaign against a tiny minority sect of Ahmadiyya, who are regarded as non-Muslim by the Ulemas. There was remarkable expansion of Madrassa education (religious education) in this period with state support. The growing number of unskilled Bangladeshi workers in the Middle Eastern countries made Bangladesh's economy increasingly dependent on foreign remittances. At the same time, on Saudi funding various Islamic NGOs began to proliferate in Bangladesh starting their operation.

The coming into power after 21 years of Awami League, the party that stood for separation of religion from politics and the one that led the Bangali nationalist movement to independence, under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina through general elections (June 1996), was a significant event in Bangladesh politics. This halted the course of state patronage to pro-Islamist groups. Nevertheless Sheikh Hasina was also seen to use Islamic symbols during election campaigning. This was preceded by her frequent visits to Saudi Arabia intending to project herself to the Muslim voters as a good Muslim (in private she is indeed) as well as that her party was not a threat to Islam. This shows a general change in the minds and attitudes of common Muslim people towards religion Islam over the years. During her government (1996-2001) the militant Islamist operatives caused several deadly incidents in different parts of the country including threats upon her life.

36 Harun-or-Rashid

In the 2001 elections, the BNP-Jamaat-i-Islami combine came to power in the name of 4-party alliance. When the government was formed under Begum Khaleda Zia, two top leaders of Jamaat-i-Islami, namely Matiur Rahman Nizami and Ali Ahsan Mohammad Muzahid⁴ were included in the Ministry, thus Jamaat formally becoming a partner of the government, a crucial event in country's politics. The period of BNP-Jamaat government (2001-2006) witnessed an unprecedented support for Islamisation by the state. Soon after the elections, a reign of terror was unleashed upon the Hindu minorities in different parts of the country for their alleged support towards the Awami League, leading many of them to flee to India for fear of persecution. Mostly supported by non-educated rural poor, the rise of a host of internationally linked pro-Islam terrorist organizations, such as, Jam'atul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-Islami (HUJI) became a matter of serious concern for this period.⁵ Islamism in Bangladesh acquired a new dimension through the emergence of a trans-national Islamist group called Hizb-ut-Tahrir in the late 1990s that stands for the creation of the Khilafat i.e. Islamic rule. Headed by a Dhaka University Professor, this organisation is essentially based on the supports of college and university background educated youth. In 2004 and 2005, these Islamist militants were believed to have caused two very serious incidents in the country giving a kind of red alert to impending danger. First, on 21 August 2004, a grenade attack was made on the public meeting of Sheikh Hasina, then leader of opposition, in the capital Dhaka with a clear target of her life, leaving 24 people dead on the spot and some hundreds wounded. Though slightly hurt, Sheikh Hasina escaped the attack miraculously. The second one occurred just a year later (21 August 2005) and that was a serialized blasting of as many as over 450 bombs in 63 out of 64 Bangladesh's administrative districts, mainly intended to assert the capabilities of the attackers. This kind of occurrence was almost unimaginable without some coverage from the government. It may be mentioned that, in April

Now in custody facing trial on charge of crimes against humanity perpetrated in 1971.

⁵ Riaz, Ali, God Willing: The Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004; Rashid, Harun-or-, 'Profiles of Violent/ Terrorist Organisations in Bangladesh', Moonis Ahmar (ed.), Violence and Terrorism in South Asia: Chronology and Profiles 1971-2004, Karachi: University of Karachi Press, 2005, pp. 744-46; Ali, AMM Shawakat, Faces of Terrorism in Bangladesh, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2006.

2004 during the rule of the BNP-Jamaat government ten trucks loaded with different types of weapons and ammunition believed to be colleted for smuggling out to ULFA guerrillas in Eastern India were recovered from a jetty of the Chittagong port.

As a result of increased international pressure as well as strong public opinion in the country, the government finally moved on to take action against the Islami militants. During the last caretaker government (2007-2008) most of the top leaders of JMB were executed following a court verdict.

In the last general elections held in December 2008, the Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina pledged in its manifesto to ban 'militancy' and 'use of religion and communalism' in politics and to safeguard 'security and rights of religious and ethnic minorities' of the country. The new government formed by Sheikh Hasina after grand election victory has already started taking actions in order to curb Islamist extremism in Bangladesh. In October 2009, Hizb-ut-Tahrir was banned for its alleged subversive activities. Most importantly, the four top leaders of Jamaat-i-Islami including its president and secretary general have been arrested for trial in special court on charge of 'crimes against humanity' perpetrated during 1971 in aid of Pakistan occupation army. Sheikh Hasina has also proposed to fight terrorism in South Asia on regional basis by sharing intelligence and other means.

Another landmark development during the time of the present government was the verdict (1 February 2010) of the Appellate Division of the Bangladesh Supreme Court declaring all proclamations, Martial Law Regulations and orders repugnant to the fundamental character and structure of the state being made during the period from 15 August 1975 to 9 April 1979 illegal and void. This historic judgment of the court has provided the government with the scope and opportunity to go on restoring the original fundamental principles of the state including its secular ideal as enshrined in the 1972 Constitution. As expected, prompted by the judgment, the government of Sheikh Hasina formed a 15-member special parliamentary committee including representatives from different parties (BNP, however, declining to cooperate) in the parliament for recommendations regarding implementation of the verdict.

⁶ Bangladesh Awami League, Election Manifesto 2008. p. 9.

Bangladesh Constitution (Fifth Amendment), Appellate Division Full Judgement, August 2010.

38 Harun-or-Rashid

On 3 July 2011, an amendment to the Constitution (Fifteenth Amendment) was effected which may be seen as a compromise formula involving religion and secular ideal. Under the amendment, the high ideals of Nationalism, Socialism, Democracy and Secularism have been revived in the Preamble and under separate Articles (8,9,10,12) in the Constitution. The preferential relations with Muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity as a fundamental state principle of foreign relations as adopted during the military rule has been deleted. Though "Bismillah-Ar-Rahman-Ar-Rahim" has been retained in the Preamble of the Constitution, it has made a room for other faiths by coining the term "In the name of the Creator, the Merciful." This is equally true in respect of the State Religion as Article 2A pertaining to this has been substituted as, "The State religion of the Republic is Islam, but the State shall ensure equal status and equal rights in the practice of the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and other religions." Article 12 of the original Constitution providing measures for implementing the principle of Secularism has been reinstalled together with Article 38 being dropped during the military rule of general Zia. Instead of prohibiting straightway the formation of or association with any communal organization having a professed 'political purpose' as provided in the original Constitution, Article 38 now marks a shift in the orientation stipulating not to form any association purported to destroy "the religious, social and communal harmony among the citizens", which is further a matter of interpretation. However, any kind of activities or formations intended "for the purposes of organizing terrorist acts or militant activities against the State or the citizens or any other country" have been categorically prohibited in this Article, something new commensurate with the anti-terrorist/militancy stance of the present government.

As a pragmatic political party, the ruling Awami League has taken 'a real politic approach' while amending the Constitution following the Court verdict. Needless to say that Bangladesh has gone through a process of enormous changes during the last forty years. A great deal of Islamisation has taken place mainly at the behest of the military rulers. Being fully aware of religious susceptibility of the people, the Awami League government under Sheikh Hasina has made a very cautious move by not dropping the element of religion from the Constitution. Rather it preferred giving a new face to the ideal of Secularism by contextualizing it to the changed scenario. Indeed the Constitution as it now stands after the Fifteenth Amendment reflects the ruling party's perception of secularism being understood in terms of religious plurality.

An overview

The quick rise of political Islam in Bangladesh may be attributed to the debates over secularism, ethnic vs. religious nationalism, gap between aspiration and performance, inherent tendency among the majority community (religious, ethnic) to gain domineering position at the state level, politics of alliance building among the power contenders, role of traditional *Ulema* (religious leaders), the increasing influence of *madrassa* (religious school) education, large poverty, high unemployment, low literacy rate, Bangladesh's increased dependence on the Middle Eastern countries for man power exports, the Afghan war, the demise of the former Soviet Union as an alternative global ideology, impact of internationalization of political Islam and a new sense of domination among the Bangladeshis by neighbouring India.

Among the population of Bangladesh, the Muslims constitute the largest majority (89.4%) followed by the Hindus (9.6%). The remainder are Buddhists (0.70%) and Christians (0.30%). Very few Bengal Muslim families had descended from outside. The dominant majority were sons of the soil converted over times mainly from low caste Hindus (Ahmed 1988). Further unlike other parts or places, Islam was spread in Bengal not by the sword but by the tolerant, humanitarian *Sufi* saints coming from outside India (Ahmed 2010; Robinson 2009; Eaton 1993). They had followers among Hindus, too. The great teachings of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and of humanism of Lord Buddha and his religion, Buddhism, course of enlightenment, and patronage to knowledge and learning associated with the 400 years of the Pala Buddhist rule in Bengal from mideighth century to around the middle of twelfth century had a profound moderating influence on the Bengal society and culture. Sri Chaittanya's (1483-1530) *Vaishnavism or Bakhti* cult also left an imprint of moderation on the mind of the people.

However, prompted by *Ulemas* and pro-peasants religious reformist movement leaders, a process of Islamisation both as a faith as well as a political ideology¹⁰

Barua, Dilip Kumar and Mitsuru Ando, Syncretism in Bangladeshi Buddhaism: The Role of Hindu Mythology and Ritual in Buddhist Popular Practices, Nagoya: JSPS, 2002.

Tarafdar, Momtazur Rahman, Husain Shahi Bengal 1494-1538: A Socio-Political Study, Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1965, pp. 169-78.

Nandy, Ashis, 'The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance', Rajeev Bhargava (ed.), Secularism and its Critics, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 321-544.

40 Harun-or-Rashid

took place in the nineteenth century Bengal, gradually contributing towards the construction of a separate Muslim community identity. The Faraidi movement (1820-1857) headed by Haji Shariatullah and Dudu Mian and the Wahabi movement (1827-1831) under Titumir are two great examples. Promoted by Jinnah's so-called 'Two Nation' theory of partition, the process was further accentuated by the Pakistan movement. Unlike Pakistan, though the struggle for Bangladesh was based on the ideals of secularism and ethno-nationalism, the country witnessed religion Islam revisiting the political milieu soon after independence for the reasons as already mentioned.

In any event, Bengal's (now Bangladesh) syncretistic culture¹² (Roy 1983) developed over ages encompassing the interfaith values of mutual love, tolerance, humanity and justice at the bottom remained fundamentally unchanged. Because of this inherent strength and character of Bengal/Bangladesh society and culture, there is hardly any prospect for 'Islamist Revolution', as Eliza Griswold of *New York Times*¹³ was once apprehending.

Thus, Islamic militancy that Bangladesh witnessed in the recent past was more of a sporadic phenomenon than of a regular feature. It can be held that the society and politics of Bangladesh would go along the course of moderation in accord with inherent tenet of its culture and tradition.

Khan, Muin-Ud-Din Ahmad, History of the Faraidi Movement, Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1965; Choudhury, Nurul H., Peasant Radicalism In Nineteenth Centuery Bengal, Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 2001, pp. 37-63

Roy, Asim, The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.

¹³ 23 January 2005

BHITARGARH : A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Morshed Rayhan*

Abstract

The archaeological site at *Bhitargarh* is an ancient fort-city having a well-secured fortification in Panchagarh region, Bangladesh. The site can throw ample light on the history of Bangladesh. In the absence of any previous systemic archaeological investigation in the area, the present work should be seen as a preliminary endeavor. The aim of this work is to understand the town planning of the fort-city as well as the nature of urbanization in this region. However, employment of sampling and other intensive survey techniques was beyond the scope of the present researcher in view of time and resource constraints. Therefore, it was decided to survey the area by undertaking intensive walking across the landscape with GPS using judgmental sampling. Surface survey was undertaken for about 400 person-hours spanning 7 seasons during 2003-2009.

1. Introduction

The archaeological site 'Bhitargarh' stands by the bank of the river Talma, a tributary of Karatoya. The site is a fortified area and stands about 15 km northeast from the district town at Panchagarh (Map 1). Panchagarh is the northernmost district town of Bangladesh (Map 2). The name 'Panchagarh' is derived from the names of five major places ending with the word 'Garh' viz. 'Bhitargarh', 'Debnagarh', 'Meergarh', 'Rajongarh' and 'Hossen Dighirgarh.' Generally, the word Garh is used to indicate high land. Literarily the word signifies citadel or fortified area. In Panchagarh, there are many places named with Garh as the suffix.

So far, no scientific or systematic archaeological exploration or excavation has been done in these areas. The present work reports the result of an exploration in 'Bhitargarh' region from 2003-2009, using about 400 person/hour. A map of the citadel area also has been made using GPS (Geographical Positioning System). Due to the lack of any previous systematic archaeological investigation

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in the area, the present work should be seen as a preliminary effort. So far, Buchanan Hamilton, A.K.M. Zakaria, Prof. Dr. Nazmul Islam, Prof. Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti, Prof. Dr. Sufi Mostafizur Rahman and some other sources have mentioned some information and myth of the site. All the sources mention that the site is a rich archaeological site of pre-Muslim to mediaeval period. However, so far no definite evidence was found to identify it as a pre-Muslim or mediaeval site.

2. Location and Geographical Description

The study area is situated between, 88°35'14" to 88°35'58" East and 26°20'58" to 26°24'12" North in the Old Himalayan Piedmont Plains. This unit underlies most of Dinajpur region. It occupies an old part of the *Teesta* alluvial fan at the foot of the Himalayas (Map 3). It comprises a braided river landscape, with complex patterns of broad ridges intermixed with numerous shallow former channels and basins. The sediments are more sandy than those occurring in other major floodplain units: the upland soils and most depression soils have textures between loamy sand and sandy clay loam, and all are underlain by sand. Almost the whole landscape, except for the highest ridge sites, becomes wet or shallowly flooded (by rainwater or the raised groundwater table) during the monsoon season. River channels crossing the unit are entrenched 5-7m the surrounding landscape and are subject to flash floods following heavy rainfall locally and in the adjoining Himalayas.

2.1 Drainage

2.1.1 Rivers

There are small and big rivers in Panchagarh district (Map 4). The *Karatoya* is the central river flowing over Panchagarh. In *Bhitargarh* region, the main stream is *Talma*, a tributary of *Karatoya* which starts off from the hilly forestry region of the Boikonthapur, India. It flows by the western side of the site and

Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti, Ancient Bangladesh, (University Press Ltd., Dhaka, 2001), p. 144; AKM Zakaria, Bangladesher Pratnashampad (in Bengali), (Dhaka 1984); Nazmul Haque, Panchagarh Jelar Itihas O Lokosanskriti (In Bengali), (Bangla Ekademi, Dhaka 1999), p. 145; Sufi Mostafizur Rahman et. el. 'Architecture'. Sufi Mostafizur Rahman, (ed.), Archaeological Heritage, (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka 2007) pp. 280-395.

Huhh Brammer, The Geography of the Soils of Bangladesh, (University Press Ltd., Dhaka 1996), p. 162.

meets *Karatoya* after traveling 12 km from its origin. A channel named *Shalmera* was connected to the river *Talma*, which drained water to the inner fortification and again joined the river *Talma* at the south-westernmost side of the mud rampart.

2.1.2 Tanks

In the region there are many large and small tanks. Among them the most important tank is known as *Maharajar Dighi*, measuring about 700m×350m which is very near the outer side of the innermost fortification (Photograph no. 1). Some other tanks which also seem to be of ancient time are *Dhobani Pukur*, *Jhar Pukuri*, *Ful Pukuri* etc. Along with these large tanks there are also few smaller tanks are scattered all over the site and so far 7 tanks have been reported.³ These tanks provide water for bathing, for pisciculture and also for irrigation. Water of some of the tanks may be used for the purpose of drinking, but with the installation of tube-wells, it is likely that the water of the tanks has ceased to be a major source of drinking water. Most of the tanks are very old and with the laps of time a large part of them has silted up. The local cultivators have brought bringing the silted up portions under cultivation.

2.2 Soils

The *Bhitargarh* region occupies a soil unit of the Old Himalayan Pediment Plain named Black Terai Soil (Map 5). The black soils occupy almost three-quarters of Panchagarh region, on both ridge and depression sites.⁴ The soils are rapidly permeable but they become wet or submerged in the rainy season and, except on ridge tops, remain wet or moist well into the dry season.

2.3 Climate

Bangladesh has a tropical monsoon climate. In Panchagarh high temperatures, heavy rainfall, often excessive humidity and fairly marked seasonal variations characterize the climate. Three main seasons are recognized: Dry season (summer), monsoon (rainy season), winter. Hot summer, massive rainfall and extreme cold characterized by the northern Himalaya. December and January, is winter. But usually cold starts from second half of October and continues till March. Lowest temperatures are recorded as 6-4 degree salacious. March-May

³ Haque, *Op cit.*, 1999, p. 148.

⁴ Brammer, *Op cit*, 1996, p. 162.

has the heights temperatures. June-September is the period of heavy rainfall. Annual rainfall is recorded as 2500 mm. 5 The relative humidity is highest 88% during the month of July and August and lowest 50% in the month of March.

2.4 Flora and Fauna

Bhitargarh region has a wide variety of flora and fauna.⁶

3. Findings

3.1. Fortification

There is a trace of citadel in *Bhitargarh* region. The total area is measured about 14 sq km. The fortification walls are arranged in three rings of walls, building a box fortification. Detailed information is mentioned in section 4.

3.2. Brick Architecture and Architectural Complex

In 2008 inside the inner fortification an Architectural Complex was discovered, where there were a lot of bricks arranged in a regular pattern consisting of about 900 sq meter of area.

3.3. Bricks

Bricks are found both in the second and inner fortification wall, bank of the pond Maharazar Dighi and scattered all over the site. The bricks are square and rectangular in shape and the sizes are around 19cm×19cm×4.5cm to 21cm×21cm×5.5cm, 22cm× 22cm×4cm, 22cm×22cm×4.5cm, 23cm×21cm×6.5 cm and 24cm×18cm×5.5cm. Another source mentions a size measuring 25.4cm×25.4cm×6.35cm (10"×10"×2.5").

3.4. Stone

Large Blocks of stone and boulders are found in the mud rampart. The stone blocks are cut in rectangular or domical form with small holes in the proximal end. Large sized boulders are noticed in the western mud rampart where the river Talma could erode.

3.5. Pottery

During a surface exploration pottery and shards of pottery have been found in some exposed section of a pond. The fabric is grayish and the texture is cementlike. Some sort of black slip has also been noticed. The potteries carry beautiful stamped design in surface and some sort of other beautifully engraved designs are also found. The ceramics are very hard in texture.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 19.

⁶ Ashraf Siddique (ed.), Bangladesh District Gazetteers, Dinajpur, 1975.

4. Establishment of the Fort-city Bhitargarh

From the beginning of civilization, with the origin of agriculture, trade and commerce developed and subsequently administrative organization was formed commencing human civilization in this territory. However, with the increase of population and established economy, it was felt necessary to protect the urban localities from enemies. In the entire urban-centers fort is seen as an important part. Obviously, majority of the forts and fortifications were raised in suitable geographic positions of strategic importance. Scholars emphasize that the strategy of site location relates to a number of ecological factors like water source, availability of arable land, pasture land, building material and raw material. Besides, there are cultural factors such as trade, political organization, warfare and religion, which also affect the selection of settlement location.

As a riverine country, in Bangladesh most of the forts have been built on the river bank. This satisfies security as well as communication. To strengthen the security system, moat, drains and large ponds were dug. The settlement at the site of *Bhitargarh* was built and developed by the bank of the river Talma and the settlers built a citadel area alongside the river. According to the nature of the fortification as well as the need of such huge security system, we can assume that this site was an urban center, which is also supported by the ancient Indian texts, archaeological evidences of the early historic, historic and mediaeval fort cities.

5. Scholar's opinion and the Archeological impression of Bhitargarh

There are ample literary data on town planning for such urban centers. During the second urbanization, we have the evidences of Sixteen *Mahajanapada*. As described in the *Pali* texts, the *Sodasa Mahajanapadas* had their own fortification. According to the *Jaina sutras*, a city consists of moats, ramparts, shops, markets, crossroads etc. The moats were broad at the top and cut deep down. The ramparts were solidly built and spread in bow-like curves. Panini in his *Astadhayi* refers to the *Prakara*- Rampart, *Parikha*- moat and *Dwara*- gate as important parts of the city built for defenses i.e., any city of importance lay within an enclosing wall, itself within a moat. According to Kautilya a settlement, having fortification is defined as city centre. *Kautilya* in his *Arthasastra* has described a number of forts to be raised on certain places in different locations namely *Sthaniya*, a *Dronamukha*, *Kharyatika*, *Sangrahana*

etc., where we find details about the forts. In its chapter dealing with *Durga-Vidhana* he also points out that, "the heaven of the king and his army is a strong fort". A source of the eleventh century AD, *Kayaat* mentions that a city consists of high fortification and is surrounded by trenches and there exist the rules and regulations issued by the guild of craftsmen and businessmen. The development in planning of forts became most essential part of military engineering hence the early mediaeval savants put more stress on the engineering of forts in the *Silpasastras*. The *Silpasastras* have greatly stressed upon the importance of forts. Thus, the construction of ramparts encircling a city was considered one of the important branches of the science of town planning in Ancient India.

Scholars observe different characteristics in the process of urbanization. Gordon Child mentions ten important elements essential for urbanization e.g., a) Density of Population, b) A group of people producing surplus food production for the people not related with food production, c) King, d) Architecture, e) Administration, f) Practice of writing, g) Knowledge of Science, h) Overseas Trade, i) Craft and j) Good relation among the inhabitants. According to Adams, population and density is the most essential part of urbanization whereas in the first stage a different technology is not so essential. Amolendu Ghos says that for the formation of a city administrative unit and development of business federation is the most essential part. According to Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti, in the final phase of urban growth, the most important single factor of stimulus was possibly trade. It may, however, be pointed out that all the urban centers did not develop in all the circumstances mentioned above, the possibility is that they developed in several contexts where either all the factors or some of the factors helped to build such urban centers.

From the archaeological point of view the characteristics of a city are different. It should be noted that the ancient cities are not present in their original form, but are in ruins. In the absence of detailed exploration or excavation, most of the characteristics of those ancient cities are not clearly understood.

⁷ Robert McC Adams, 'The Natural History of Urbanism'. Greogory L. Possehl (ed.), Ancint Cities of the Indus, (Delhi 1950), p. 6.

⁸ A. Ghosh, *The City of Early Historical India*, (Delhi 1973), pp. 20-21.

Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti, The Archaeology of Ancient Indian Cities, (Oxford University Press, Delhi 1998), p. 249.

6. Detailed Description about Bhitargarh

The site of *Bhitargarh* can be divided into habitation, citadel and trade centre. The outermost mud-rampart possesses a periphery of about 15.45 km (western wall of about 4.93 km, eastern wall of about 5.44 km, southern wall of about 3.6 km and the northern wall of about 1.84 km) (Photograph no. 2). The inner fortification (second rampart) made of brick, has a perimeter of about 8.57 km where the western wall is about 3 km long, the eastern wall is about 3.13 km, southern wall is about 1.41 km and the northern wall is about 1.03 km long (Photograph no. 3). Both the fortified enclosures are surrounded by trench. There is another innermost brick fortification measuring 643 m in the west, 686 m in the east, 471 m in the south and 386 m in the north. The width of the earthen rampart was wider than the burnt-brick one. A basal width of about 9.75 m can be noticed in the earthen rampart while the burnt-brick wall is 2.5 m wide. The burnt-brick wall was supported by broken bricks mixed with mud finally makes a width of 5.5 m. The moat encircling the earthen rampart is about 15 m wide, while the width of the moat encircling the brick-fortification is 8.5 m. The large pond 'Maharajar Dighi' out-side from the innermost fortification measures 600m×343m. All the three fortifications seem to build a box-like fortification as seen at Ahichhatra. 10 The size and the co-ordination represent the entire site as the largest and strategically important fort-city of the sub-continent (Map 6). The river Talma flows by the western side of the site and this river seem to have played an important role for the natural protection of the site. It was the natural embankment at the west and used to drain water to the adjacent trench of the entire mud rampart. The second brick fortification which also surrounds by a trench, where water used to enter the trench through a channel named Shalmera that was connected to the river Talma. This channel again drained water to the river Talma. The innermost brick fortification is almost rectangular but the south-west corner and the eastern wall has some zigzag projection. Adjacent to this fortification outside of it there is a large pond named 'Maharajar Dighi' which seems to be an important source of water for the majority of the habitants inside the second and innermost fortified area. Suchi Dayal¹¹ while describing the pre-medieval Shorapur settlements and tanks

¹⁰ R.S. Sharma, 'Urbanization in Early Historic India'. Indu Banga (ed.), *The City in Indian History*, (Delhi 1991), pp. 67-68.

Suchi Dayal, *The Historical Archaeology of Shorapur-Doab (Pre-Medieval Period)*, (Ph. D. Thesis, University of Poona 1997) cited in Shah Sufi Mostafizur Rahman,

mentions that tank water was for ritual and domestic purposes as well as for irrigation. Thus the large pond could have played an important role in domestic purposes such as drinking, bathing and laundry, and irrigation especially, in times of contingencies like droughts and famines. Even at present, the ancient tank is being used for everyday purposes.

Presence of brick in the bank of the pond, inner fortification, brick fortification and outer mud rampart keeps the evidence to make the all three fortification to be of same time bracket. Bricks, Stone blocks and boulders were set at the corner of the earthen rampart to preserve it from the scouring action of the river. It seems that stones were used to make stone-dam for river training. There is square curving in the stone blocks are seen in the proximal end of the blocks that seems to be used to bond the blocks each other using nails. The use of wooden sleepers in the body of the ramparts to protect it from erosion also has been noticed from Ujjayini and Rajghat.¹² Burnt-brick was extensively used for building fortification wall. The extensive use of burnt-bricks indicates affluent condition of the settlers. It reveals the plentiful availability of raw material i.e. clay for making bricks and fuel i.e. trees used for burning the bricks. The ethnographic evidence supports the practice of large cultivation and mixed farming in this deposit. It is also supported by the presence of footprint of cow and dog in the fired bricks that these two animals were domesticated for cultivation i.e. the inhabitants exploited such resource for agricultural production. Archaeological evidence and ethnographic data support large-scale agricultural production in this area. Besides, providing water for irrigation and domestic needs, the rivers might have played a crucial role in shaping trade and commerce in the area. From the above-mentioned discussion, we can assume that Bhitargarh enjoyed trade with the Himalayan regions. It should be noted that big stones are not available at Panchagarh though the presence of boulder conglomerate layer is seen in the geological stratum. Big stones along with big boulders are noticed in the area. The important point is that, to collect the big stones the settlers would depend upon the Himalayan region, which indicates the trade between Bhitargarh and Sub-Himalayan region through the Karatoya and the river Talma. In the geological strata of the Panchagarh region, a layer of

¹² Chakrabarti, *Op cit.*, p. 252.

^{&#}x27;The Early Historic and Early Medieval Archaeology of Bogra District, Bangladesh'. Gautam Sengupta & Sheena Panja (ed.), *Archaeology of Eastern India: New Perspective*, (Kolkata 2002), p. 203.

boulder conglomerates is seen 20-30 feet bellow the surface. From the use of boulders in the earthen rampart, it is clear that they had to depend on the boulder conglomerate layer. For collecting big-sized boulders they must have had used the technique of mining, as without having good knowledge of mining technology it is not possible to collect the boulders. At present stones are being collected from the boulder conglomerate layer using lot of technology by the stone businessmen. The position and the co-ordination of the fortification wall give the mark of good knowledge on geometry of the settlers as well as the presence of strong security system gives the indication of good knowledge of military engineering. One more point, to be noted that to build such a large fortification, large number of labors would have appointed. It is quite possible that a political system like a civic body existed for controlling and managing the settlement system.

The city lay within three rings of fortification. The city of Vaisali is also said to have possessed three ringed of walls.¹³ According to the presence of such large box fortification, one important question arises: why such a large security system was needed for the region? The possible answer might be that it was the capital city or an important centre of an independent kingdom having an upper town (the innermost brick fortification), a middle town (the second brick box fortification) and the lower town (the mud rampart, surrounding the entire settlement). On the other hand, the site could be used as a cantonment to protect a kingdom from foreign invention. As no structural evidences (except the ramparts and two mounds, one in the middle of the inner fortification and the other at the out side of the inner fortification), were found in the region, it seemed that the entire region was used as a cantonment for the troops to protect a kingdom beyond the citadel, which were being used only during war emergency. But in recent exploration (2008) a 50 sq.m. area with well distributed bricks were found beside the mound of the inner fortification that might be a basement of an architectural complex. Moreover, the pond Maharajar Dighi was used to supply water for the troop. Whether the place was an independent kingdom or a cantonment the entire town planning is amazing. The fortification walls were being used multiply configuring a stratified security system, which is the indication of a large security.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 256.

7. Science and Technology

7.1. Stone Dames

Stone was enormously used to build water dams to preserve the fortification from the scouring action of the river or water. Large stones were coming from the Himalayan region, which were cut into blocks and then small holes were curved on the proximal ends of the blocks (Photo no. 4). Then the blocks were joined together using pegs made of either metal or stone (Plate no. 1). Thus, the joined blocks were set in the bank of the river or adjacent trenches to protect the entire fortification wall from the erosion of water. Along with the stone blocks, boulders and bricks were also used for protection. This technology for building dam was quite advanced and reflects knowledge of water engineering.

7.2. Mining technology

In Panchagarh region, a layer of boulder conglomerate is seen in the geological strata of about 1.5-2 m thickness and about 15-20 m bellow the present day surface. At present it has been noticed that many labors are employed to collect the boulders from that layer for exporting stones from Panchagarh. The system has established a business network in this region. Moreover, the most common employed technology deals with the open pit mining. Hence, they pump out the underground water using motor generator with long pipeline. Some times automatic machines are engaged to collect the boulders. The use of boulders to build dam in defense wall, it is clear that the habitants of the fort-city invented the layer and some how they pumped out the underground water, which obviously the mark of knowledge on mining.

7.3. Civil Engineering

Bricks were used enormously in making structures like the fortification walls and the bank of the pond. It is possible that there was some other structures made of bricks (the 50 sq. m area with well distributed bricks; might be a basement of an architectural complex) and two mounds, both are presently being used as graveyards where in the basement bricks are found *in situ* and scattered hither and thither. Clay was used as the bonding material. The brick shape varies from square to rectangular and the sizes are almost $21\text{cm} \times 21 \times 5.5$ cm and $24\text{cm} \times 18\text{cm} \times 5.5\text{cm}$. Another source mentions a size measuring $25.4\text{cm} \times 25.4\text{cm} \times 6.35\text{cm}$ ($10"\times 10"\times 2.5"$). According to the security system

¹⁴ Haque, *Op cit*, p. 142.

needed, trenches were excavated and the extracted soil was used to build the mud rampart. Trenches were also dug beside the brick fortification. The total system implies that the inhabitants were skill in military engineering. Again, according to the co-ordination of the fortification wall, it can be assumed that they had good knowledge on geometry and measurements. To carry water to the trenches adjacent to the brick built fortification, a channel named *Shalmera* was joined from the river *Talma* at the north-west, to the trenches and again it carried water to the river ending at south-west. The combination of the fortification wall and the settlement altogether gives an idea of well-accomplished town planning as well civil engineering.

8. Chronology

In absence of any systemic excavation it is difficult to date the site. On the basis of presence of brick in the bank of the pond, inner fortification, brick fortification and outer mud rampart keeps the evidences to make the all three fortification to be of same time bracket. Scholars have proposed a medieval or early medieval time 15 bracket for the site but there were no systemic exploration or excavation so far. A fortified site, *Nal Rajar Garh* in Indian portion near about 10 km away from *Bhitargarh* was excavated by Sudhin De in the year 1986-87. 16 In his report the researcher proposed that *Nal Rajar Garh* is a site of Gupta and Pala period on the basis of architectural feature. 17 But there are no C-14 dates or any other sort of specific dating. The nature of this site is very much similar to *Bhitargarh*. Again the coordination of the fortification is almost similar to the early historic cities of the sub continent. On the basis of the planning of the early historic cities, *Bhitargarh* region could go back to early history to early medieval time frame. For a detailed information we have to work more scientific research e.g., C-14 test or other specific dating method.

9. Conclusion

Due to the absence of any previous systemic archaeological investigation in the area, the present work should be seen as a preliminary endeavor. Considering the size of the *Bhitargarh* Citadel area, we can assume that the citadel area was

¹⁵ Chakrabarti, *Op cit*, 2001, p. 144; Rahman, *Op cit*, pp. 280-395; Zakaria, *Op cit*, Haque, *Op cit*, p. 145.

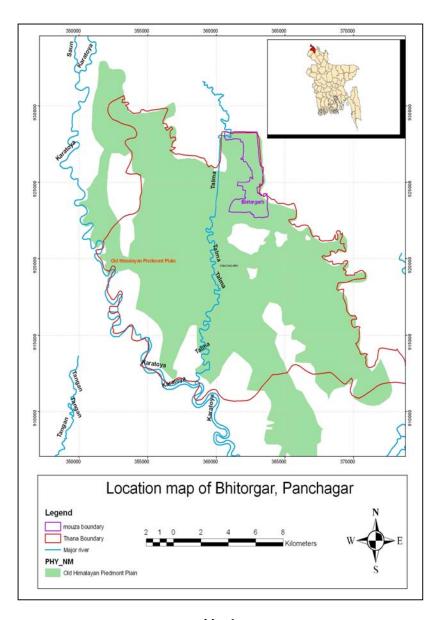
¹⁶ Sudhin De, 'A Fort Lost in the Jungles at Jalpaiguri'. Asok Datta (ed.), Studies in Archaeology, (Books and Books, New Delhi 1991), p. 244.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 244.

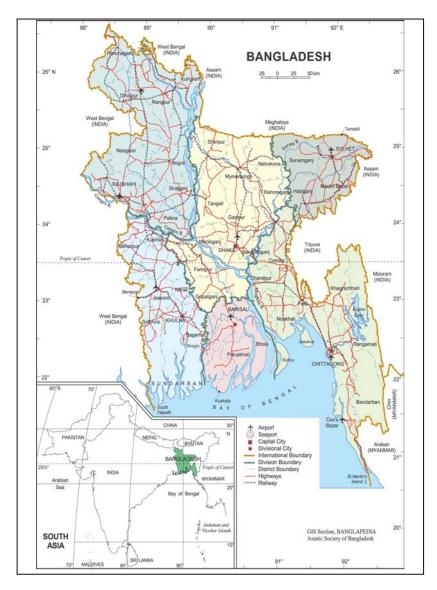
used as a cantonment in case of emergency as no permanent structures have yet been found except two mound, one inside the innermost fortification and the other outside of the second brick fortification. No extensive brick structures have ever been found from inside the fortified area. A plausible question may arise that how this fort could provide shelters to the huge number of army. Or how they would take refuge in the fort? As a response from the research we can assume that it is more likely that in the past there were wooden shelters or houses for the army which have been turned to perish or buried under the effect of local climatic conditions. In the Himalayan foothills or mid region the practice of dwelling in the wooden houses is well-known. There are brick structures laying buried under the surface, which can be exposed by an extensive horizontal excavation. On the other hand, this site could be seen as a capital city of some early historic state although no direct evidence is found.

Bhitargarh, is located in the bordering region of Bangladesh. Its massiveness, extend of area, strategic importance, dwelling facilities for the cantonment all these might have encouraged its potentiality to as a fort in time of warfare. As a matter of fact, this fort during the time of early history and even mediaeval period always had been in the position of a well protected military station. From all respect, this fort is the single example of its kind in eastern India.

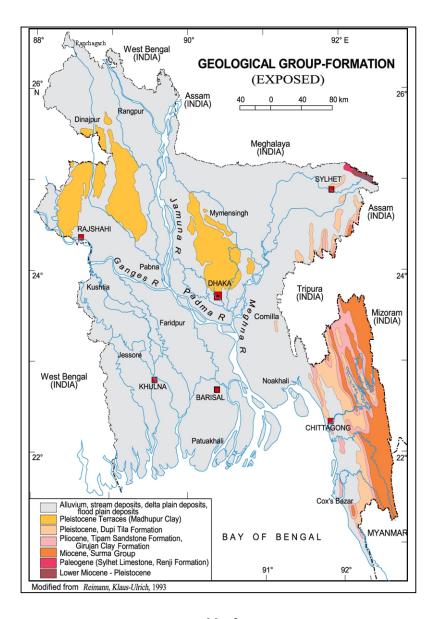
¹⁸ Dasgupta, P.C. Aranya Chhayar Durge, (Government of West Bengal, Calcutta 1969).



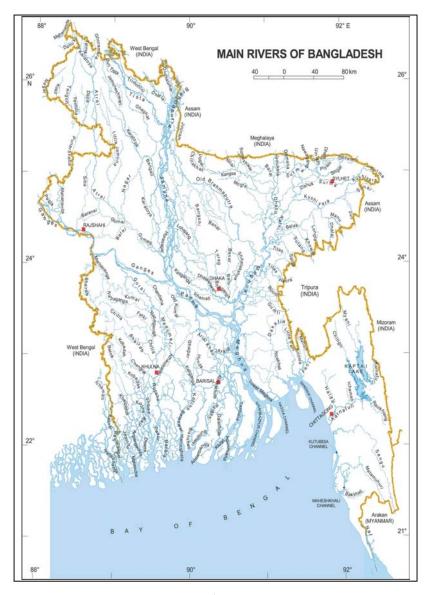
Map 1



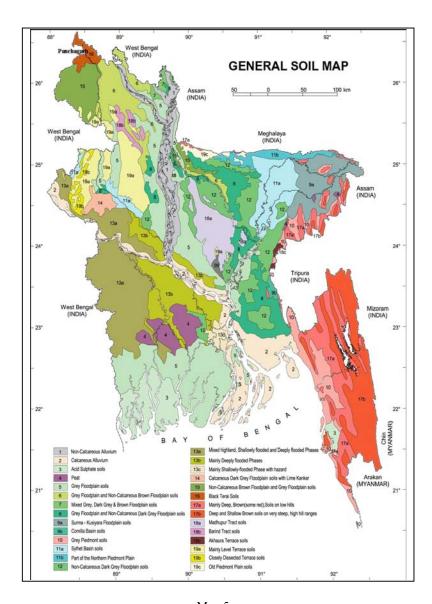
Map 2



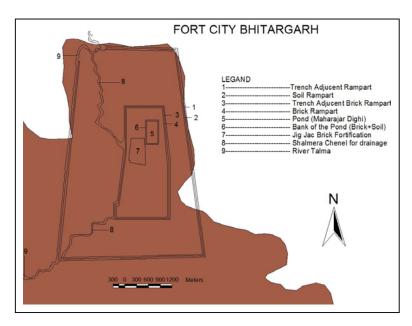
Map 3



Map 4



Map 5



Map 6

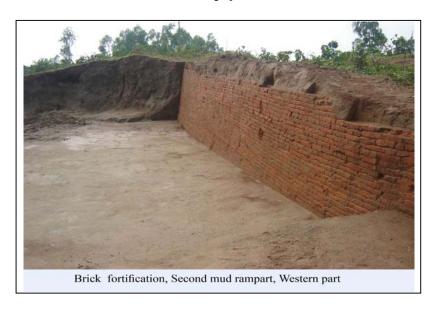


The big pond Maharazar dighi

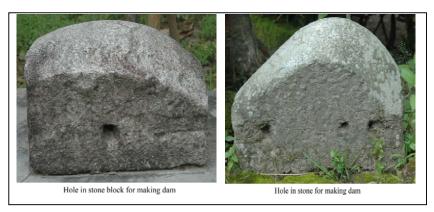
Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4

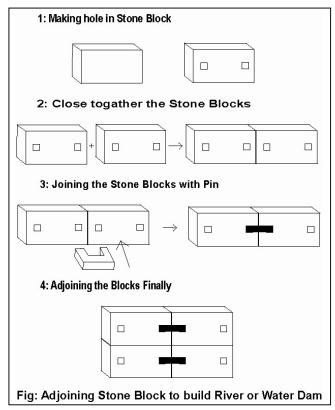


Plate 1

UDIŚVARA COPPER PLATE OF ŚRĪDHĀRAŅARĀTA

Shariful Islam*

In 1979, three copper plates were discovered from the village Udisvara at Dakşin Pahadpur Union under Murādnagar Police Station in Comilla District. These plates were found from two feet below the surface while digging a canal at the west of Sarkarbādi. Now these plates are preserved in Bangladesh National Museum. Among these three plates, the first plate does not bear any inscription. It bears only a royal seal. Probably the plate was prepared for land grant but ultimately charter was not incised on it. The second plate is badly corroded. Most of the sections of the plate are obliterated. There is hardly any scope to decipher the plate. But the third plate, which is the subject matter of this paper, is more or less readable. The museum accession number of the plate is 79. 65. The plate is not a very satisfactory state of preservation. Some sections have been badly affected by corrosion rendering the reading of a number of passages in the text of the plate partially or wholly doubtful. Some sections of the inscription are not possible to read due to corrosion. Fortunately, such passages belong mostly to the description of the plots of lands, their boundaries and the imprecatory verses.

The copper plate is rectangular in size. It is a single plate, measuring 10 inches in length and 8 inches in breadth. The plate is total 39 lines, inscribed on both the sides, the obverse containing 29 lines and the reverse 10 lines of writing. The scripts are northern class of Brahmi of the 7th century. The language of the plate is Sanskrit prose; but there are six verses, two of them being at the beginning and forming the *mangalacaraṇa*, while the remaining four assigning imprecation. The style of the composition is *Gaudiya*. The alphabet *na*, *ba*, *bha*,

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62 Shariful Islam

ta, ga and ma are often doubled in the connection of subscript. It is often found changed to anusvara at the end of a sentence or verse and, in a few cases, even when it is followed by a vowel.

A weighty brazen seal of Gajalakṣmi is affixed at the top of the plate. The seal is round with a length of four and a half inches, but there is an extrapolative knob at its outer end. The spherical space on the surface of the seal covering the patronage deity of the king and this part is three and a half inches in diameter. The upper part of the space in the interior circle has the image of the goddess Lakṣmi standing on a full- blossomed lotus and bordered above on both sides by two elephants holding water jars in their upraised trunks. Below the elephants, there are the figures of the two devotees pouring water on the feet of the deity. Two lines of legend appear under the Gajalakṣmi symbol. These are as follows:

Line-1: Śr łmat-Samata tesvara- p ād ānudhy ātasya

Line-2: Kumārāmātya=ādhikaraņena

The legend indicates that the seal belongs to the office of the Adhikaraṇa (District Magistrate) under a Kumāṛāmātya who was usually a provincial governor.

Text of the plate

Obverse	
Line:-1:	Svasti- vilasanti –yasya- śaśdvadditisuta-damanena - vikramodgārāh sa- jayati –Harireka=ārṇṇva -madhyodhṇta - medini-bhārah ll prajňāatisaya –viṣodhi-
Line:-2:	ta -guṇarāśau —dugdhasindhu —vadvidhoutā I yasya —Śrɨr=api - sa-Śrɨh- sa- Śrɨ -Śrɨdhāraṇa —jayati ll atha -matta —mātanga- sata-sukha- vigāhyamāna- vividha- tɨrṭhayā-
Line:-3:	naubhira- parimitābhirūparachita- kūlayā —parikṛtādābhimata- nimna-gāminya- kṣirodaya - sarvatobhadrakāddevaparvvatacchrimat- Samataṭesvarapādānudhyāta- kumārāmātya=ādhikaraṇa=cha- gūptinaṭa-
Line:-4:	na- jayanāṭana -peranāṭanaviṣayapatina=ādhikaraṇancha- vodhayanti viditamastu-ve- nirupama-guṇa- gaṇoughaśālini- jagadudaya –sthiti-nirodha-



Obverse

64 Shariful Islam



Reverse

Text of the plate

Obverse	•
Line:-5:	vividha- prapancha-dhāmani –vivudha-sattame –śatamakha - śatru- sātana -vyāsana –vilāsitāyatau- bhagavati- purūṣottame- paramayā- viniveśitāśaya –śradhayāh- śavdavi
Line:-6:	dyādi- vividha -samaya —parigama-janita- svakah —svaka- guṇa- viseṣ —Ghana-ghaṭita- budhiravikala- sakti-tritaya- sampadudgato- yathāruchipravarttita- ṣāḍguṇya —gochara
Line:-7:	schāpa —chakra- nipiḍita- iva- gatah- kalāsu- kauśalamatiśaya- sundaramatimadhura- chitragiterutpādayaitā- kaviraparimita- go- hiraṇya-bhūmi-pradāna —pū-
Line:-8:	nya- kirtterasama –sama-pratāpopanata- sāmantachakrasya- sugṛhita- nāmno -devasya –samataṭeśvara- Śrijivadhāraṇarāta- bhaṭṭarakasya- sunurūditodita -kūlayāma –pa
Line:-9:	rimitaprajādhārinyām -sākṣādiva —vasundharāyāmagramahisy āmutpannah- Sri-Vandhudevyām —prasadātiśayasumukhena — pitra- svayamarpitadhirājyah-
Line:-10:	piteva- pālayaitāpagato —budhi-nigrahādana=ābhimata- prāṇa- nigrahe —manurapara-iva- paramakarunāśrayah —kūla- vasatira=iva —satva-sampado-
Line:-11:	janmabhūmira=iva –priya- vachana- jātasya –gaja-turaga- satata- plḍana- kramochita-śrama-valita –tanu- vibhāga-ramya – darsanah- parama- vaiṣnava- mātā –pitra
Line:-12:	pādānudhyāta —prāpta- pancha- mahāsavdah- samataṭesvarah- Śrī -Śrīdhāranarātadevah- kuśali
Line-13:	Viṣnova tasya- vinaya
Line-14:	bhagabati- prāgate- nihita- bhakte –rājna- śata prāpina pancha=ādhikaraṇa –mahā-kāyastha -bhāskara chandrasya- mukhe
Line-15:	na- sphuṭa-chitra-bhāṣinā- samadisatisma- bhakatasya
Line-16:	Vappa -Simhasya -prasādāda -upagate
Line-17:	tasya- bhavatu mātā hāsita nivandhenasilasya-sammandhe-
Line-18:	acandrārka —sthiti- nimitta- prasāntam=iti niveditam=idam= upasrūta
Line-19:	taste yuyama=āchandrārka- sthiti —nimitta- smatkāṭaka- tapa sāsana-sana tāmram—prajacachhata- soḍaṣa-

pāṭaka- niti

66 Shariful Islam

Line-20:

pitṛ-charaṇa- prasādād –vāptasya- samataṭesvara- pancham-sambatsare......srāvita -nirjātaya -majňāyam –s Īmālingāni-

Line-21:	dātu —likhite viṣayapatāva=ādhikaraṇe- ca -tata —pratilikhitaka- darsanena -bhabanti — simālingāni- yata ll uḍavihāre- Sāmanta —Vappa-
Line-22:	Simhena- bhūktasya- pāṭaka- catugnapasya- soḍaṣa- droṇa=ādhikasya -pūrveṇa -purtta-tāmraptera -villa -kṣetrasca- dakṣiṇena- sarvyajanena -purttajā
Line-23: pte	(?) paschimena- bhāgi-puttrendra —gputa- nabuttaramati -bhogi — puttra- valachandrottaramati -kṣetrāṇi -uttareṇa purttatāmra ll ta (?) namati- prāpina —strinśa-
Line-24:	droṇādhika- pāṭakasya- pūrvveṇa- sarvajanena –purtta-tāmrala- dakṣiṇena- statāmra –navuttaramati-kṣetrāṇca- pascimeṇa- uttaramati- kṣetra –utta-
Line-25:	reṇa -va (?) karanikhāta –tuṣṭipada- kṣetra- kunirapada –kṣetra ll sapta- vimsate- droṇa vāpena –sapādano-pūrveṇa –panca-saraṇi –nandi- kṣetrāṇi –dakṣiṇe-
Line-26:	na-ghrapada- kṣetrāṇi -pascimāsya -karanikhāta —kṣetrāṇi ll deva -dasa -droṇādhika —pāṭakasya- pūrvveṇa- yogeśvara maṭha -tāmra kṣetra- dakṣiṇena
Line-27:	Īsvara —tāmrasca-pada Kṣetrāṇi -paścimena —magusvasti- tāmra (?) yogesvara- maṭha -kṣetra -uttarena —yogesvara- tāmrala llvinśati
Line-28:	paścimāsyaİsvara maṭha
Line-29:	Purvvena kṣetra
Line 30:	Paśchimena
Reverse	
Line-31:	te -mahatibhāge -vibhajya -pratipādita -iti -gauravāta- yasya- yasya- yadā-bhūmi- stasya- tasya- tadā- phalam=iti -sva
Line-32:	dānalapekṣayapya -parilikhita -dāna=ānumodana -vidai paripālaniya
Line-33:	vahubhi vasudhā –dattā- rājābhi -sagarādibhi
Line-34:	yasya -yasya- yadā-bhūmi -stasaya- tasya- tadā -phalam- ṣaṣṭim- varṣa -sahasrāṇi- svagge -modati -bhūmida
Line-35:	ākṣepta -ca=ānumantā-ca -tānyeva- narake- vaseta- Svadattām - paradattām- vā -yo- hareta- vasundharām - sa -viṣṭayām- kṛmi - bhūṛtvā-niṭṭbhiṣaha-nacyate

Content of the text

The genealogical portion of the inscription is almost same as the Kailān copper plate. The inscription begins with two verses, the first in admiration of the god Hari (an epithet of Viṣṇu) and the second the ruling king Srī-Srīdhārana Rāta. The name of his father is Srī-Jivadhāraṇa Rata. Srīdhāraṇa, the ruling king, was born of Bandhu Devi, the *Agramahiṣi* (chief queen) of king Srī-Jivadhāraṇa Rāta. Srīdhāraṇa is called a *Parama Vaisnava* and a devout worshiper of the god *Purūṣottama* (Viṣnu). So, he was a Vaiṣṇava king. He is also called *Parama Karuṇika* (the most merciful) and is said to have disliked of destroying living beings which is not accepted by the *sastras* (religious books). This reference apparently indicates that the *Vaiṣṇava* King was averse to the Slaughtering of animals in association with the worship of the deities.

King Sridharana is described as a poet (Kavi) and a composer of excellent songs striking by their sweetness and pictures as well (ati-madhura-citra-giter = utpādayitā.) He is also reported as a very learned in Sabdavidyā (Grammar and lexicography) and in the other sciences and arts. An interesting description of Sridharana reports that the nice looking of his figure strongly built which was the result of his regular association with riding horses and elephants (gajaturaga-śatata-piḍana-kram-ocita-śrama-valita-tanu-vibhāga-ramya-darsana). King Sridharanarāta is also reported as very fatherly to his subjects (pit=eva pālayaitā). He is said to have been mainly a student of Śabdavidyā (lexicography and grammar). He also mustered the knowledge of taming and managing elephants and horses. The keen interest of the Rata kings for grammar and lexicography gives the impression that they were very much fond of literature. This clearly indicates that the Rata kings were learned men themselves and they were also the fan of learning.

The copper plate is a land grant. On it the king's order was connected to the grant of land made by the charter and it was conveyed to the *Viṣayapatis* (magistrate of the districts) of the three *Viṣayas* (districts) named Guptinātan, Jayanāton and Peranāton to their *Adhikaraṇa* by the *Kumārāmātya* (royal prince) stationed at Devaparvata, the capital city of king. The word *kumārāmātyāh* used in the plural form which most likely points to the exalted rank of the official. Devapararvata, the capital, has been styled as

68 Shariful Islam

sarvatobhadraka perhaps for the reason that it had four gates one each in the east, west, north-and south. The capital city has been surrounded by the river Kṣiroda as if it were a moat. It is stated to the record that elephants played in the waters of the Kṣiroda, both banks of which were decorated by clusters of boats.

Sridhāraṇa Rāta has been entitled Samataṭeśvara (the lord of Samataṭa), but he is not endowed with any of the imperial titles Mahārājā, Paramesvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka and Mahārājādhirāja. An epithet Prāpta-pancha-mahāśabda is attached to the name of Sridharana. His kingdom is claimed to have reached him from his father (pitra-svayam-arpitadhirājyah). King Jivadharana, the father of the ruling king, is also represented as a Samataṭeśvara and as Pratāpopanata-sāmanta-chakra, indicating that he was a very powerful king. Interestingly, he is also not endowed with any imperial title like Raja, Maharaja etc. He seems to have been a independent king, may be identical with Jivadharana mentioned in the Tippera- copper plate of Lokanāṭha. The date of the charter is given in the following lines: pitṛcharaṇa prasādād bāptasya samataṭādyaneka desādhirājya pancham samvatsare srāvon māsasya tiṭhau-(on the seven tithi of the bright half of the month of Srāvana in the fifth year of the sovereignty over Samatata and many other countries which have been received from the grace of the feet of his father.

The grant shows that Sāmanta (feudal lord) Vappa Simha approached to King Sridharana for the grant of a piece of land which he was inclined to dedicate Udavihāra. King Sridharana was pleased to accept Vappa Simha's petition and granted him 30 *droṇavāpas* of land permanently situated in the *viṣaya* called Guptināṭona lying within the jurisdiction of the *Kumārāmātya* of Devaparvata.

It takes 11 lines in the plate in which elaborately described the demarcation of land, such as, in the east villa *Kṣetra*, in the south *sarvajanena purtta kṣetra*, in the west *karanikhāta kṣetra*, *Jogeśvara maṭha* and *Īswara grāma*.

Thus runs the verse: Whoever takes away land that has been granted away by him or granted away by another, becomes a worm in the dog's ordure, and rots along with his ancestors. The granter of land delights in heaven for sixty thousand years. The confiscator or one who approves of confiscation resides in hell for an equal number of years.

Implication

The plate opens up a fresh ground to review the history of the Rātas. The history of the Rātas of Samatata was known first on the basis of Kailan copper plate, which was discovered in 1945 and published in the Bengali journal Bhāratavarṣa for Vaisākha, 1353 B.S. (1946) by D. C. Sircar. He re-edited this inscription in the next year to the journal of the *Indian Historical Quarterly*. This was hitherto the only source of reconstructing the history of the Rātas. The Uḍisvāra copper plate is going to add another new material to write the history of this dynasty. Some of the information of Kailan copper plate is supported by the Uḍiśvara plate and now we are more determined about the history of the Rātas. It also reveals new information about this dynasty. So, the existing idea of the Rātas needs to be revised in the light of the new material.

Land was granted by the plate to a Vihara named Uḍavihāra. The location of granted land may be identical with the find place Uḍiśvara. It is known from the boundary indication that there was a village beside the vihara named Īswaragrama. Village Iswara and the Uḍavihāra may conjunctly be named Uḍiśvara. The Yogeshvara matha was on the western side of the granted land. Uḍiśvara was an important ancient place where *maṭha* and *vihara* were established. A large black stone Image of Sūrya was discovered from the village and now it is preserved in the Mainamati site Museum. A hoard of 3 gold coins, 3 silver coins and two copper coins of the pre-Muslim period were discovered from this place.³ It faces a high land about a thousand feet further west, the end of another village where some traces of ancient remains are reported; potsherds and brickbats are still occurred at Sarkarbaḍi. So, the find place of the plate was an important ancient settlement during the Rāta period.

'Prāpta-panca-mahāśabda' is an interesting epithet that has been attached to the name of Śridharana. It has two meanings: a) the privilege of enjoying the sounds of five musical instruments, b) five titles beginning with Mahā such as

¹ D. C. Sircar, Samatater Rata Rajvamśa (in Bengali), published to the Bengali journal *Bharatayarsa*, *dvitiya khanda*, (part-II), Baishakha, 1353 B.S. (1946), pp. 369-374

D. C. Sircar, The Kailan Copper plate Inscription of King Sridharana Rata of Samatata, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, September 1947, pp. 221-241

³ Harunur Rashid, The Early History of South-East Bengalin the Light of Archaeological Material, Itihasa Academy, Dhaka 2008

70 Shariful Islam

Mahāpratihāra, Mahāsandhivigrahika, Mahāasvasālādhikrtā, Mahābhandagārika, and Mahāsādhanika. 4 D.C. Sircar mentioned that the epithet was used in connection with feudatories. He ultimately came to the decision that Sridharana was a feudatory ruler. In support of his suggestion, he has also mentioned that a counter signature is observed in the seal of Kailan copper plate which may indicate that Sridharana was a feudatory ruler. But the present author does not subscribe to this view on the basis of this copper plate. It appears from the plate that a Sāmanta named Vappasimha had applied for land grant to Sridharana. A Sāmanta (feudal king) cannot request for land to another Sāmanta. This is possible only in the case of a sovereign king. On the other hand, there were a number of Sāmantas, Adhikaraṇas, Kumārāmātyas, Viṣayapatis, even pancādhikaraṇa Vāskarachandra employed under Sridharana and it indicates that he was a sovereign king. Moreover no counter signature appears in the Udiśvara plate and Sridharana is mentioned here as Samatateśvara or the lord of Sāmatata. This title is enough to present him as a sovereign king. Sridharana issued gold coins which have already been published by B.N. Mukherjee⁵ and N. G. Rhodes. Coins cannot be issued unless by a sovereign position. His father Jivadharana is also represented as a Samatatesvara and as pratāp-upanata $s\bar{a}manta-cakra$. Though he is not endowed with any imperial title as $R\bar{a}i\bar{a}$. Mahārājā or Rājādhirājā, he was also a sovereign king. In the Tippera copper plate of Lokanatha, he is mentioned as *npa* or king. He established a large kingdom. In this connection, mention may be made that Sridharana's adhirājya or sovereignty is claimed to have reached him from his father. Jivadharana also issued coin which indicates that both Jivadharana and Sridharana were independent kings.

Prāpta-panca-mahāsabda may be used in the sense of expertise in five musical sounds. It is interesting to note that Sridharana is presented in the inscription as poet, artist and musician (ati-madhura-chitra-giter-utpādayaitā). He is said to have been primarily a student of Śabdavidyā (grammar and lexicography) and

D.C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, published by Motilal Banarsidass Banglow Road, Jawhar Nagar, Delhi-7, India

⁵ B. N. Mukherji, Coins and Currency System of Post-Gupta Bengal (C. 550-700 A.D.), Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. 1993, Delhi, India

⁶ N.G. Rhodes and S. K. Bose, *The Coinage of Assam*, Vol. I, Pre Ahome period, Calcutta, 2010, p. 75

⁷ R. G. Basak, Tippera Copper Plate of Lokanatha, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XV, pp.301.

secondarily of the science of taming and managing elephants and horses as well as that of arms. The love of the Ratas for grammar and lexicography seems to have been due to their love of literature. They were apparently not only patrons of learning but also were learned men themselves.

In the Kailan copper plate two *viṣayas* (districts) have been mentioned, Guptinaton and *Paralāyika*. But two more *viṣayas* (districts) - *Jaynatona* and *Pedanatona* have been mentioned in this plate. So, there is no doubt that Sridharana had an extensive kingdom.

The Udiśvara copper plate also bears a date. It was issued in regnal year five of the ruling king. Regnal year is not a regular era; it is a particular year of the ruling king. So, it is not possible to determine the exact date of the king. An attempt has been made by some scholars to fix the date of the Rātas on paleographic ground. Professor D. C. Sircar has carefully examined the scripts of the Kailan plate and compared to these with the inscriptions of Sasanka, Lokanatha and Devakhadga. He placed to the Ratas between the days of Sasanka (c. 600-625 A.D.) and those of Dharmapala (c. 769-815 A.D.). From the paleographic point of view, he has decided that the Kailan plate may be placed about the second half of the seventh century A.D.8 On paleographic consideration, A. H. Dani has fixed the date of the Kailan inscription in the first half of the seventh century A.D.9 But paleography only can indicate an approximate date, not a definite date. Another attempt has been made to fix the era of the Ratas on the basis of the Tippera copper plate of Lokanatha. The record refers to that Lokanatha came into a violent conflict with a king named Jivadharana. This Jivadharana is considered as an identical with the Samatatesvara Jivadharana Rata and their son Laksinatha and Sridharana similarly were contemporaries. But the date portion of the Tippera copper plate is not deciphered successfully as it is badly corroded. R. G. Basak, who has edited the plate, reads the date portion 'dhāke-catuscatvārinsat-samvatsare'. 10 Sanskrit 'catuscatvārinsat' means 44 and on the basis of this date some scholars have commented that it is the Harsa Era. 11 But there is no any evidence to

⁸ D.C. Sircar, The Kailan Copper plate Inscription of King Sridharana Rata of Samatata, ibid, p. 240

⁹ A. H. Dani, *Indian Paleography*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1963.

¹⁰ R.G. Basak, Tippera Copper Plate of Lokanatha, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XV, pp.301

S. N. Chakravarty: The development of the Bengali Scripts, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. IV, 1938, pp. 351-391

72 Shariful Islam

expand Harsha's empire in South-East Bengal. N. K. Bhattasali speculated correctly that the reading would be *śatādhike*. So, he suggested that the date must be preceded by eka (one), dvi (two) or tri (three). He reads confidently the date *'dvi-śatādhike-catuscatvārinsat-samvatsare'*(two hundred and forty four). He indicates that the date of the Tippera copper plate will be 244 and it must be the Gupta Era. The Gupta Samvat(era) is fairly a known era. If we add 319-20 years with the Gupta era, we can get the Christian era. So, N. K. Bhattasali has fixed the date (244+320)= C. 564 A.D. of Lokanatha and Jivadharana. D. C. Sircar has accepted N. K. Bhattasali's reading as '*satādhike*' but he has differed with the preceding numeral. He has suggested that the preceding numeral will be *tri-(satadhike)* in place of *dvi-(satadhike)* and hence the date will be (344+320)= C.664 A.D.

The date of Lokanatha and Jivadharana is a controversial subject among the scholars. Dr. Ayub Khan has supported to Bhattasali without furnishing any reason. ¹² But D. C. Sircar's view seems to be correct as it is corroborated by the paleographic evidence. Distinct and developed form of some letters, especially medial *a, i, e,* and *ya, pha, la,* palatial *sa* and *ja* etc. are observed in both the Kailan and the Udiswara copper plate than the Midnapore Copper plate of Śaśanka. So, the Ratas and Lokanatha may be placed after Sasanka and their date may be the second half of the seventh century A.D.

Ayub Khan, Rata Vamsera Kala Prasanga; Panditdera Dharana Paryalochona (Bengali), *Pratnatattva*, Vol. 10, June 2004, Department of Archaeology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Bangladesh

THE BLACK SURFACE COATING OF ANCIENT POTTERY EXCAVATED FROM WARI-BATESHWAR AND MAHASTHAN, BANGLADESH

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Quotation: Black coloured ancient potsherds from Bangladesh were analysed to investigate the black coating technique with observing thin sections by optical microscope, scanning electron microscope and pyrolysis-gas chromatography/ mass spectrometric (Py-GC/MS) analysis with ATR spectroscopy. Single-staged, two-staged and multi-staged surface coatings were identified in the analysed black coloured potsherds by thin section observation. The Py-GC/MS method identified oil and lacquer on the single-staged coating, oil on the top coating of NBPW and solely oil on the multi-staged coating of the analysed potsherds. ATR mapping determined the application technique of the surface coating.

Key words: Northern Black Polished Ware, Bangladesh, Thin section, Slip, Lacquer, Drying oil, Py-GC/MS, ATR spectroscopy.

Introduction

Identifying the characteristics of the black coating found on black coloured pottery excavated from Bangladesh is the primary focus of the present study. Several types of pottery have been excavated from many archaeological sites in Bangladesh. These pottery goes by various names, including 'Northern Black Polished Ware' (NBPW), 'Black Slipped Ware' (BSW), 'Black-and-Red Ware', 'Rouletted Ware', 'Glazed Ware', and 'Knobbed Ware'.¹ Until now, however, no diagnostic analysis regarding surface coating technology has been carried out in Bangladesh.

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S.M. Rahman, *Pottery*, 'Archaeological Heritage', Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka 2008, pp. 140-152.

In the present study scientific analyses were conducted on the surface coating of black coloured ancient pottery, which will enable us to evaluate the technological advancements of the past. Initially, potsherds of the black coloured pottery were collected from two early historic sites of Bangladesh, and surfaces of those potsherds were observed using a binocular microscope and a scanning electron microscope. Next, thin sections were prepared from collected potsherds for microscopic observation. Single-staged, two-staged, and multi-staged surface coatings were identified by the thin section observation.

Scientific analysis of this cultural material is important not only to distinguish the technology or characteristics, but also to understand the spread of regional culture related to the analysed material. For that purpose, the collected black coloured potsherds were analysed by Py-GC/MS and ATR spectroscopy. The results show that some of the potsherds contained an organic substance like oil on their top coats; two pieces of potsherds contained solely oil; and one piece of analysed potsherd contained oil with a small amount of lacquer in its surface coating. 'Oil coated' or 'lacquer coated' pottery is not familiar in the ancient pottery of Bangladesh. Therefore, the results of this primary study could provide new information for assessing the technological development of the ancient pottery of Bangladesh as well as south Asia.

SITES, RESEARCH MATERIALS AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

Sites

Potsherds were collected from the excavated sites, namely, Wari-Bateshwar, in the Narshindi district and Mahasthangarh, in the Bogra district [Fig. 1]. Narshingdi is located in central Bangladesh, 50 km northeast of Dhaka, and Bogra is situated in Northern Bangladesh. Wari and Bateshwar are two adjacent villages in the Narshingdi district. The soil of the entire area is red and contains pebbles. Wari and Bateshwar stand on relatively flat ground, which is considerably higher than the surrounding area. There are marshlands between the two villages to their north, northeast, east and southeast. The confluence of the Arial-Kha and Brahmaputra rivers is 4 km northeast of Wari. The shrunken and nearly dry channel of the river Koira borders Wari in the north. Sitalakhya, another major river in the vicinity, flows some 35 km west of Wari and Bateshwar.²

² S.H. Jahan, 'Wari-Bateshwar: An important centre of maritime activities in ancient Bengal', Journal of Bengal Art 4 (Dhaka 1999), pp. 207-216.

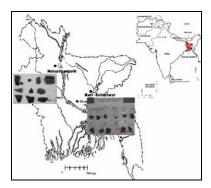


Fig. 1. Map showing the location of Bangladesh in South Asia, the Mahasthangarh and Wari-Bateshwar archaeological sites in Bangladesh and collected potsherds.

The archaeological importance of this site was first brought to light by a local school teacher named Md. Hanif Pathan in 1933. Later, his son, Md. Habibullah Pathan, an amateur archaeologist, took initiative to collect the antiquities and study them. A small-scale trial excavation of this site began in 2000 (February 4th -April 24th), carried out by the International Centre for Study of Bengal Art (ICSBA). This excavation discovered significant artefacts, including NBPW. These discoveries place the active period of Wari-Bateshwar in the early historic period³. Excavation work at the Wari-Bateshwar site is still being carried out under the supervision of archaeologist Dr. Sufi Mostafizur Rahman. Various types of artefacts are being discovered at every phase.

The Mahasthangarh site is located in Mahasthan village in the Bogra district in northern Bangladesh. During early history (c. 500 BCE to 550 A.D) and the early medieval period (c. 550 A.D to 1200 or 1300 A.D), the Bogra district was a part of the kingdom of Pundravardharna and was part of the Gauda Empire. The early historic and early medieval sites of this district are situated on the red-bed Barind tracts, which are slightly elevated terraces on the alluvium. This area is higher in elevation than the surrounding plains and forms a distinct (and relatively flood-free) physiographic unit. The elevation of the district ranges from 15 to 25 m above mean sea level. The plains are dissected by erosion, the ridge tops between the depressions are almost level, and the valley sides and floors have been terraced to allow cultivation. The ridge tops, which preserve evidence of

³ E. Haque, S.M. Rahman, S.M.K. Ahsan, 'A preliminary report on Wari-Bateshwar trial excavation by ICSBA', Journal of Bengal Art, 5 (Dhaka 2001), pp. 11-40.

human occupation in the early historic and early medieval periods, have been designated as 'sites'. Most of the ridge tops were occupied by human groups during the early historic and medieval periods. The majority of the sites consist of a mound containing burnt-brick structures representing a *stupa*, a temple, *viharas*, or other structures. The term 'site' has been used in a broad sense and includes the mounds that lie within it.

The size of the sites in the Mahasthan area has been calculated on the basis of the area over which the found artefacts are distributed. As most of the sites of the Mahasthan area are covered by modern occupied structures, the distribution area of artefacts and, therefore, the size of sites cannot be measured precisely. During exploration, 135 sites were found in an area of 2920 km² in the Bogra district, with Mahasthan as one of the sites. For the present study, potsherd samples were collected from Mahasthan. The Mahasthan citadel is situated in the village of Mahasthan and is surrounded by the river *Karatoya* on the east and a moat on the other three sides. This moat is locally known as *garh*. No archaeological remains prior to the late fourth century BCE have been recovered from the region of Mahatshangarh, which suggests that the initial population selected this area and quickly built the site, possibly as a trading centre, given its favourable location on the banks of the *Karatoya* river.⁵

The archaeological site in the Mahasthan area was discovered by Sir Alexander Cunningham's surveys in the late nineteenth century (1879, precisely). A framework for Mahasthan history was established in 1929 through a survey of written sources at a time when regular excavations were starting at the site under the direction of K.N. Dikshit (Archaeological Survey of India) in 1929-1930 and 1934-1936, with a sketch plan published by P.C. Sen. No final report on the ASI excavation was ever issued.⁶ In 1960-1961, official excavations were conducted by the Pakistan Department of Archaeology and Museums. Short soundings were

⁴ S.M. Rahman, 'Archaeological investigation in Bogra District (from early historic to early medieval period)', Studies in Bengal Art Series: No.3, ed. E. Haque, ICSBA, 2000, pp. 17-95.

⁵ Smith, M. L., 'The archaeological hinterlands of Mahasthangarh observations and potential for future research', First Interim Report 1993-1999, France-Bangladesh Joint Venture Excavations at Mahasthangarh, Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh, 2001, pp. 61-73.

⁶ Salles, J.-F., and Shafiqul Alam, M., 'The archaeology of Mahasthan historical and environmental perspectives', First Interim Report 1993-1999, France-Bangladesh Joint Venture Excavations at Mahasthangarh, Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh, (2001), pp. 1-18.

also made in 1965 and 1966. Since 1988, the Directorate of Archaeology of Bangladesh has conducted several periods of excavation, conservation and restoration. Unfortunately, most of the results of over 50 years of research regarding Mahasthan remain unpublished.⁷ A joint French- Bangladeshi venture excavation was carried out from 1993-1999 in the Mahasthangarh area, and the first interim report was published in 2001.⁸

Research Materials

A total of 30 pieces of black coloured potsherds were collected for this study. Among these, 18 were collected from the Wari-Bateshwar archaeological site. The other 12 pieces were collected from the Mahsthangarh site.

All the potsherds of this study were initially collected as 'NBPW potsherds', but observation suggested that 17 pieces of the Wari-Bateshwar potsherds were similar [Type A], and the remaining one piece was different from the others [Type B]. These potsherds were primarily examined by a binocular microscope (Olympus SZH10) with Fiber light FL-50. The observation suggested that 17 pieces of the potsherds had black glossy coating on both their inner and outer surfaces [Type A] [Fig. 2a & 2b].

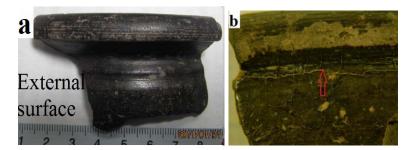


Fig. 2 (a) External surface of the potsherd of Wari-Bateshwar site, type A; (b) Surface observation in binocular microscope (Type A), the arrow indicated place is blackish and glittering than other places.

The one remaining piece was not glossy and was badly marred by piled up clay on both sides [Type B] [Fig. 3a & 3b]. The existing surface coating of Type B was thick and fragile and detached from the body surface.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

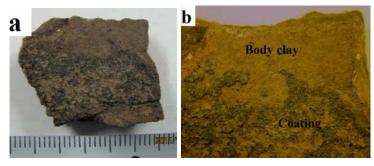


Fig. 3. (a) External surface of the potsherd of Wari-Bateshwar site, type B; (b) Surface observation in binocular microscope (Type B), coating and body clay is visible.

Twelve pieces of black coloured potsherds were collected from the Mahasthangarh site. Among these, 10 pieces of potsherds possessed the same characteristics like Wari-Bateshwar Type A and tiled as Type C [Fig. 4a & 4b].

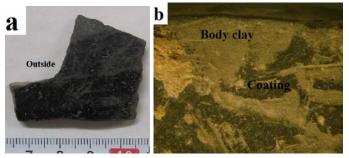


Fig. 4. (a) External surface of the potsherd of Mahasthangarh site, type C; (b) Surface observation in binocular microscope (Type C), body clay and coating is visible.

The remaining two pieces were different from the other 10. Binocular observations of these two pieces revealed they were different from each other [Type D and Type E]. In the potsherd of Type D, the binocular observation found that (a) the applied coating was intact, (b) it was not uniform over the entire surface and (c) it was not detached from the surface [Fig. 5a & 5b]. In the Type E potsherd, the black coating was found on a small portion of the inner side, and the binocular observation revealed that the coating was detached from the body surface [Fig. 5c & 5d].

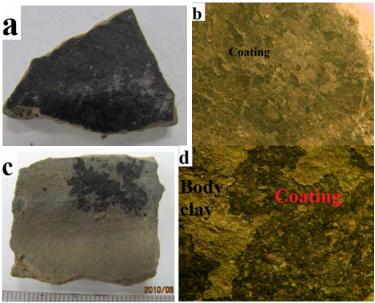


Fig. 5. (a) External surface of the potsherd of Mahasthangarh site, type D; (b) Surface observation in binocular microscope (Type D); (c) Potsherd of Mahasthangarh site, type E; (d) Surface observation in binocular microscope (Type E), body clay and coating is visible.

Previous studies regarding NBPW

The initial recognition of what would become known as 'NBPW' was by Sir John Marshall (ASI-AR 1904-5) at Sarnath, in India (1904). Since then, NBPW has been discovered in various regions of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The Northernmost site of NBPW is in Udegram in Pakistan; the southernmost site is in Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka; the westernmost site is in Prabhas-Pathan in India; and the easternmost site is Wari-Bateshwar in Bangladesh. 10 In 1946, after the excavation of Ahichhatra, India, Wheeler and Krishna Deva (1945) first proposed the term 'Northern Black Polished Ware'. They also discarded the view of J. Marshall, who regarded NBPW as a kind of 'Greek Black Ware' on the grounds that at Taxila, the NBPW was mainly of the

⁹ A. Datta, 'Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) - a typical marker of Mauryan

cultural expansion, Special issue, Indian Museum (1999), pp.102-109.

10 E. Haque, S.M. Rahman, S.M.K. Ahsan, 'A preliminary report on Wari-Bateshwar trial excavation by ICSBA', Journal of Bengal Art 5 (2001), pp. 11-40.

pre-Greek period.¹¹ Asok Datta (1999) mentioned that the area lying to the east at the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna rivers, known as the middle Ganga Valley and where there is very fine alluvium soil, is possibly the birthplace of NBPW.¹²

NBPW was potted on a fast wheel and is made of fine-grained clay with little tempering material. NBPW specimens have a highly glossy surface that can easily be distinguished by the fine quality of its manufacturing technique. ¹³

In the last 65 years, many researchers, including Sana Ullah (1946), B.B. Lal (1956), K.T.M. Hedge (1966, 1976, 1978), H.C. Bhardwaj (1973, 1979), Mitchell (1979), K.J.S. Gillies & D.S. Urch (1983) and Robert Harding (2004), have proposed hypotheses regarding the black glossy coating found on NBPW. Sana Ullah (1946) and K.T.M. Hedge proposed that the black colourations of NBPW are due to iron compounds present in the material, whereas B.B. Lal (1955-1956), H.C. Bhardwaj (1979) and Mitchell (1979) claimed that carbon is the dominant black colourant in NBPW.¹⁴

An examination of NBPW (bichrome and monochrome groups) excavated from Rajgir, India, by Robert Harding (2004), found that the examined samples had two slips, with the upper surface being approximately one µm in thickness. The upper coating was observed to be thinner where an edge was exposed: it was also indicated by the presence of air bubbles on the sherd surface. Despite many hypotheses and scientific analyses, the production method and surface coating technology of NBPW has not been settled satisfactorily.

In Bangladesh, NBPW has been excavated from two early historic sites, Wari-Bateshwar and Mahasthangarh. NBPW from the Mahasthangarh site has been dated from c. the fourth century BCE to the first century A.D. ¹⁶ The forms

¹² A. Datta, 'Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) - a typical marker of Mauryan cultural expansion, Special issue, Indian Museum (1999), pp.102-109.

K.J.S. Gillies, D.S. Urch, 'Spectroscopic studies of iron and carbon in black surfaced wares', Archaeometry 25(1) (2007), pp. 29-44.

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¹¹ T.N. Roy, 'The Ganges Civilization', (New Delhi 1983), p.196.

¹³ E. Haque, S.M. Rahman, S.M.K. Ahsan, 'A preliminary report on Wari-Bateshwar trial excavation by ICSBA', Journal of Bengal Art 5 (2001), pp. 11-40.

¹⁵ R. Harding, 'Reports on scanning electron microscope analysis of NBP sherds', Man and Environment 29 (2) (2004), pp. 30-34.

Shafiqul Alam, M., Salles, J.-F. (Editor), First Interim Report 1993-1999, France-Bangladesh Joint Venture Excavations at Mahasthangarh, published by

of the NBPW found at Mahasthangarh include dishes, cups (with or without a lip), bowls and beakers. Most of the examples of NBPW excavated from the Mahasthangarh site are black, but there are also red, silver, and golden colours. ¹⁷ The time period for the Wari-Bateshwar site has been set at between *c*. 700 BCE and 100 BCE/50 A.D for the sub-continental site. ¹⁸ A series of recent radiocarbon dating results from Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh, India, suggest that the NBPW phase could go back to as early as *c*. 1000 BCE. ¹⁹ The examples of NBPW excavated from the Wari-Bateshwar site are dishes, bowls and spouted jars, all of which possess black and grey cores: their surfaces are commonly a lustrous black colour, however light chocolate, light silver and light red potsherds have also been found. ²⁰

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Scientific analysis of the surface coating is important for identifying the origin of the coating and the characteristics of the materials as well as for the future conservation. The analysis is carried out by four basic methods.

First, the surfaces of the collected potsherds were observed using a scanning electron microscope (SEM) (Hitachi Miniscope TM-1000).

Second, thin sections were prepared using the 'Polished thin section method' for observation in a camera-attached optical microscope (Nikon Digital Camera DXM 1200F, Japan) and scanning electron microscope (SEM). The 'Polished Thin-Section Method' is used in this study to prepare the thin section of the collected potsherds.²¹ This method is advantageous for the following reasons: (a) it requires little experience; (b) it is relatively inexpensive; (c) it requires little variation in technique for different types of material; (d) the prepared thin

Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh, (Dhaka 2001), p. 344.

Shafiqul Alam, M., Mahabub-ul-Alam, M., 'Ceramic from Mahasthan', First Interim Report 1993-1999, France-Bangladesh Joint Venture Excavations at Mahasthangarh, Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh (Dhaka 2001), p. 343.

¹⁸ E. Haque, S.M. Rahman, S.M.K. Ahsan, 'A preliminary report on Wari-Bateshwar trial excavation by ICSBA', Journal of Bengal Art 5 (Dhaka 2001) 11-40.

U. Singh, A history of Ancient and Early Medieval India, (India 2008), p. 260.
 E. Haque, S.M. Rahman, S.M.K. Ahsan, 'A preliminary report on Wari-Bateshwar trial excavation by ICSBA', Journal of Bengal Art 5 (Dhaka 2001), pp. 11-40.

F. Okada, 'study on the Structure of the Coating Film of Urushiware at the Linden-Museum, Stuttgart', Japanese and European Lacquerware: Adoption-Adaption-Conservation, Editor: Michael Kuhlenthal, (Munich 2000), p. 135.

sections are clear for identifying the surface coating, including the ground coat and top coat, with the quality of the used clay; and (e) the prepared thin sections can be stored for many years at normal room temperature. Thin-sectional microscopic specimens can evaluate the making technique, the quality of the used clay, and the characteristics of the applied slip and coating.

The potsherds to be used for thin sections were divided into several pieces (approximately 2.5-4.0 mm in measurement). The potsherd samples were then embedded in epoxy resin. Next, the surfaces of the embedded samples were ground flat and polished with wet-type sandpaper. The upper surfaces were observed with a stereoscopic or metallurgical microscope, and the samples were attached to the slide glass with epoxy resin (Adeka resin). The other side of the sample was ground and polished until it was approximately 20 µm in thickness. Then, the prepared slide was observed using the optical microscope and SEM. All of the microscopic analyses were carried out in the laboratory of the Art Research Institute at the Kyoto University of Art and Design in Kyoto, Japan.

Third, pyrolysis-gas chromatography/mass spectrometric (Py-GC/MS) analysis was carried out to identify the origin of the applied coating of the collected potsherds. ATR (attenuated total reflection) spectroscopy was used to confirm the application of organic substances on the surfaces of analysed potsherds.

To analyse a few samples, we used the Py-GC/MS method. With this method, a small amount (0.5 mg) of black coating can be scratched from the surface and analysed. Additionally, there is no need to destroy the whole sample, so it is an appropriate method for saving valuable archaeological materials. In contrast, the solvent extraction method requires a large amount samples for accurate analyses, and it is difficult to accurately analyse such small samples using this method.

Seven pieces of potsherds were selected for analysis using the Py-GC/MS method in the laboratory of the Department of Applied Chemistry at the School of Science and Technology at Meiji University in Tokyo, Japan. Four of these seven pieces are Type A, one is Type B, one is Type D and the remaining piece is Type E.

The Py-GC/MS measurements were carried out using a vertical micro furnace-type pyrolyser PY-2020id (Frontier Lab, Japan) and an Agilent 6890N/5975 GC/MS system (Agilent Tech. Santa Clara, CA). A stainless steel capillary

column (0.25 mm i.d \times 30 m) coated with Ultra Alloy PY-1 (100% methyl silicone) was used for the separation. First, a small amount of sample (0.5 mg) was placed in tetra methyl ammonium hydroxide [TMAH] (1 μ g). Next, the sample was pyrolysed by reactive pyrolysis gas chromatography/mass spectrometry analysis [TMAH/Py-GC/MS] in a thermal cracking furnace. A sample cup was placed on top of the pyrolyser at near ambient temperature. The sample cup was introduced into the furnace at 500°C, and then the temperature program of the gas chromatograph oven was started. The gas chromatograph oven was programmed to provide a constant temperature increase of 20°C per minute from 40 to 280°C and then hold for 10 minutes at 280°C. The injection and interface temperature was 280°C, and the flow rate of helium gas was 1 ml/min. The mass spectrometry ionisation energy was 70eV (EI-mode).

Fourth, one piece of the black coloured potsherd of Type D was analysed using ATR spectroscopy. A thermo-Nicolet iN10MX FT-IR microscope fitted with an MCT detector cooled by liquid nitrogen was used. The ATR spectra were acquired within the range of 4000-650 cm at a spectral resolution of 4 cm using a slide-on ATR objective with glass. A background single-beam spectrum of the clean ATR crystal was first collected with the slide-on ATR objective inserted but not in contact with the sample surface. A total of 32 scans were recorded for interferogram averaging. For the ATR mapping on a selected area (420×110 μ m for sample Type D), a step size of 20 μ m in the x-direction and 10 μ m in the y-direction was chosen with an aperture of 10.25 μ m.

RESULTS

Observation of surface coating

Type A

All the collected potsherds of type A were observed by SEM and results showed that the place of high reflectivity of the electron image was a plain smooth coating. The place of low reflectivity of the electron image showed another coating on the smooth surface, and there were many cracks in it. Below the plain smooth surface, rough body clay was visible [Fig.6a].

A total of 200 glass slides were prepared from the collected potsherds to allow thin section observation. Thin section observation of Type A distinguished the presence of a two-stage coating on the body surface.

Ground coat which is visible on the body surface is made from clay and

approximately 15-25 μ m thick. Observation shows, the body clay and the clay particles of the ground coat are different. This ground coat is made from fine clay that is free from large mineral particles and uniformly applied to both the internal and external sides of the pottery. This refined clay made surface coat (ground coat) should be called as 'slip'. The colour of the ground coat was deep brown. Over the ground coat was a black coloured top coat (2-4 μ m thick) [Fig. 6b]. The thin section observation by SEM revealed numerous horizontal cracks in the thick ground coat. In contrast, the thin top coat exhibited numerous vertical cracks [Fig.6c].

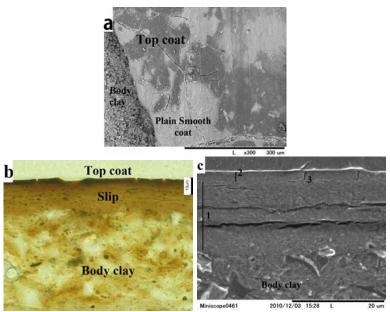


Fig. 6 (a) Surface observation of the potsherds of Type A by SEM, body clay adjacent plain smooth coat (the place of high reflectivity) and top coat (the place of low reflectivity) is identified; (b) Thin section observation of Type A in optical microscope, thin black colour top coat is visible over the surface slip; (c) Observation by SEM, slip (1), top coat (2), cracks in top coat (3) is visible.

Type B

The surface of the collected potsherd of type B was observed by SEM and showed that the place of low reflectivity of electron image was a coating that contained many cracks [Fig. 7a].

In the thin sections of Type B had a black coloured coating (approximately

 $35\Box40~\mu m$ in thickness) on the body surface that looked pure and non-clay-made [Fig.7b]. Many empty places created by bubbles were also found in the thin section observation. The body surface (below the coating) was not polished compared with Type A. In the polarization image by the optical microscope, a lump of reddish coloured clay was also identified below the surface coating. The body clay of the pottery was not especially fine, as many large mineral particles were located in the body surface. The SEM observation distinguished numerous cracks in the coating [Fig.7c].

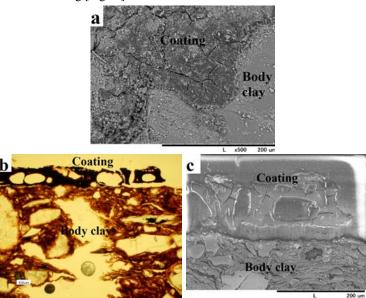


Fig. 7 (a) Surface observation of the potsherds of Type B by SEM, body clay (the place of high reflectivity) and surface coat (the place of low reflectivity) is identified; (b) Thin section observation of the type B potsherds in optical microscope, surface coat is visible; (c) Thin section observation by SEM, thick surface coat and body clay is visible.

Type C

The surface of the collected potsherds of type C were observed by SEM and showed that the place of high reflectivity of the electron image was a plain, smooth coating. The place of low reflectivity of the electron image showed another coating upon the smooth surface, and it had many cracks in it. Below the plain, smooth surface, rough body clay was visible [Fig. 8a].

The thin sections of Type C indicated that a two-stage coating was present on the

surface of the potsherd. The ground coat or slip is made from fine clay and is $25\text{--}30~\mu m$ thick. A thin coat was identified over this ground coat [Fig.8b]. The body clay of the analysed potsherds was fine, and large mineral particles were not identified. The SEM observation revealed horizontal cracks in the ground coat and vertical cracks in the top coat.

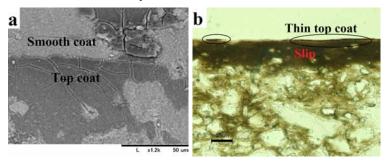


Fig. 8. (a) Surface observation of the potsherds of Type C by SEM, body clay adjacent smooth surface coat (the place of high reflectivity) and top coat (the place of low reflectivity) is identified; (b) Thin section observation of the type C potsherds in optical microscope, body clay, thick surface slip and thin top coat is identified.

Type D

Surface of the collected potsherd of type D was observed by SEM and showed that the place of low reflectivity of electron image was a multi-staged coating upon the body clay, and it had many cracks in it [Fig. 9a].

The thin section observation of Type D revealed a four-staged dark red coating on the body clay, and it did not contain any clay material like the ground coating of Type A. The thickness of the coating was approximately 25-30 μ m [Fig. 9b]. The body clay contained many large mineral particles. The SEM observation located numerous cracks in the coating [Fig. 9c].

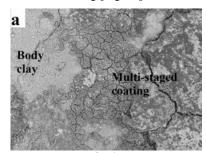


Fig. 9a

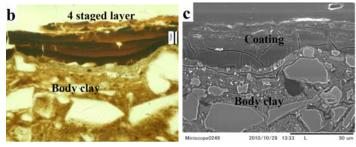


Fig. 9. (a) Surface observation of the potsherds of Type D by SEM, body clay (the place of low reflectivity) and adjacent multi-staged surface coat (the place of high reflectivity) is identified; (b) Thin section observation of the type D potsherds in optical microscope, body clay, thick and multi-staged surface coat is identified; (c) Thin section observation of the potsherd of type D by SEM, body clay, thick surface coating and cracks of the coating are visible.

Type E

Surface of the collected potsherd of type E was observed by SEM and showed that the place of low reflectivity of electron image was a coating upon the body clay with many cracks in it [Fig.10a]. The cracks of this coating were similar to Type B and Type D. In the thin section observation of Type E, a one-staged coating was identified on the surface that was approximately $25 \Box 30 \mu m$ thick [Fig. 10b]. The SEM observation revealed vertical cracks in the coating, different from Type B and Type D [Fig.10c].

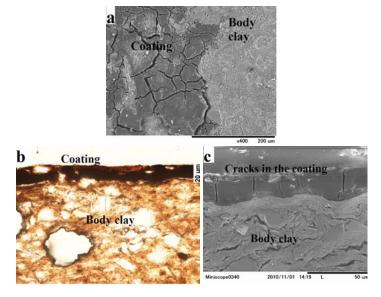


Fig. 10. (a) Surface observation of the potsherds of Type E by SEM, body clay (the place of high reflectivity) and adjacent surface coating (the place of low reflectivity) is identified; (b) Thin section observation of the type E potsherds in optical microscope, body clay and surface coating is identified; (c) Thin section observation of the potsherd of type E by SEM, body clay, surface coating and vertical cracks in the coating are visible.

Py-GC/MS Analysis

The analysis results of the seven analysed potsherd samples are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. List of the black coloured potsherd samples used for pyrolysis and analysis results.

Analyzed potsherd		Collection Method	Analysis results		
samples		Wichiod	Fatty acid methyl ester	Lacquer product	
No.1	Type A	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	X	
No.2	Type A	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	X	
No.3	Type B	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	X	
No.4	Type C	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	X	
No.5	Type C	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	X	
No.6	Type D	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	X	
No.7	Type E	Scratched	Methyl palmitate and Methyl stearate	3-(12-phenyl-dodecacyl) catechol dimethyl ether	

The TIC and mass chromatogram (m/z = 74) of Type A are shown in Fig. 11, and the mass spectra analysis is shown in Fig. 12. The results show that the retention time of 18.24 min is methyl palmitate (peak 1) and at 19.84 min is methyl stearate (peak 2).

The results of the mass chromatogram (m/z = 74, m/z = 151) for Type B, Type D and Type E are shown in Fig. 13. The names of the peaks that are shown in Fig. 13 are listed in Table 2 and Table 3. Methyl palmitate and methyl stearate were detected in the mass spectrum (Figs. 14 and 15). Moreover, from Fig. 17, the mass chromatograph of peak 3 (m/z 382) shows the substance 3-(12-phenyldodecyl) catechol and Mass spectra of standard 3-(12-phenyldodecacyl) catechol dimethyl ether (M.W-382) is shown in Fig. 18.

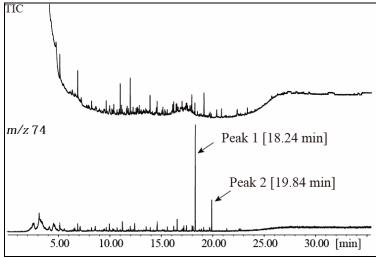


Fig. 11. The TIC and mass chromatogram (m/z = 74) of Type A potsherds.

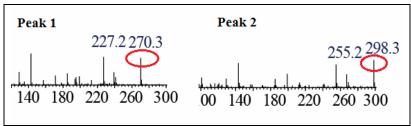
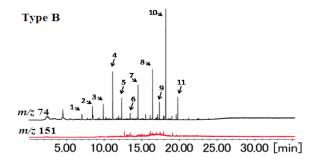


Fig. 12. The mass spectra (Type A potsherds) of peak 1 and peak 2; □□Peak 1: Methyl palmitate, Peak 2: Methyl stearate.



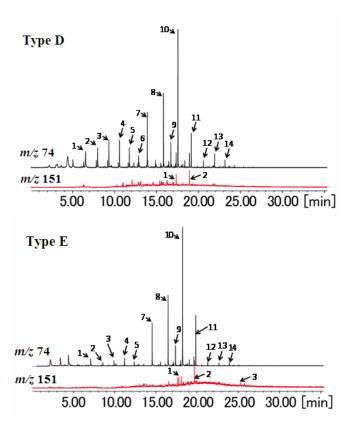


Fig. 13. Mass chromatogram (m/z = 74, m/z = 151) of the black coloured potsherds of Type B, Type D and Type E.

Table 2. List of the peaks of mass chromatogram (m/z 74) [Type B, Type D and Type E.

m/z 74	Name of the peaks and structure
Peak 1	Methyl hexanoate
Peak 2	Methyl heptanoate

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Peak 3	Methyl nonanoate	
Peak 4	Methyl decanoate	
Peak 5	Methyl undecanoate	
Peak 6	Methyl dodecanoate O	
Peak 7	Methyl tridecanoate O O	C
Peak 8	Methyl tetradecanoate O	
Peak 9	Methyl pentadecanoate	C
Peak 10	Methyl palmitate O	
Peak 11	Methyl stearate O	D

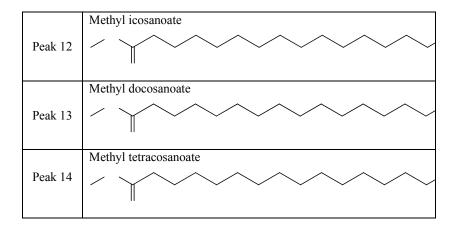


Table 3. List of the peaks of mass chromatogram (m/z 151) [Type B, Type D and Type E].

m/z 151	Name of the peaks and structure	
Pea k 1	Methyl hexadec-9-enoate (Palmitoleic acid methyl ester)	D
Pea k 2	Methyl octadec-9-enoate (Oleic acid methyl ester)	
Pea k 3	3-(12-phenyl-dodecacyl)catechol	D

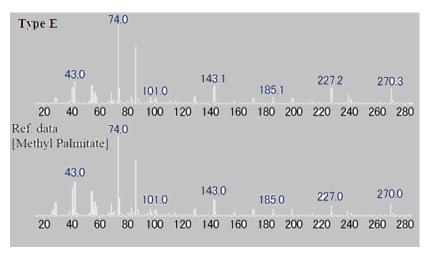


Fig. 14. Mass spectra of peak 10 in Fig. 13 and standard methyl palmitate (Type E potsherd).

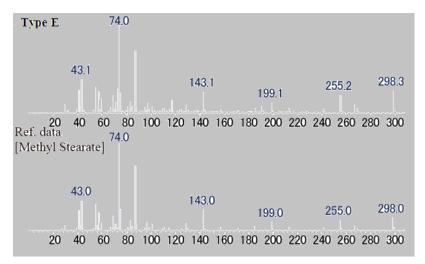


Fig. 15. Mass spectra of peak 11 in Fig. 13 and standard methyl stearate (Type E potsherd).

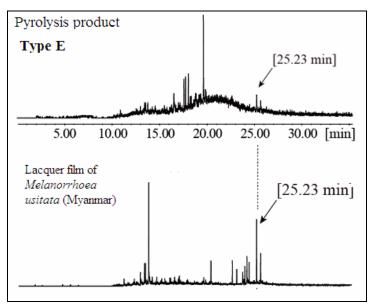


Fig.16. *Mass chromatogram* (m/z = 151) *of the black coloured potsherd of Type E.*

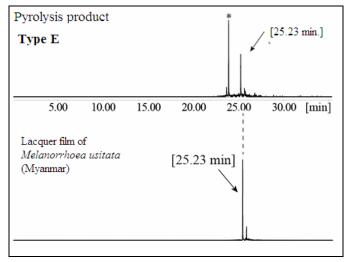


Fig. 17. Comparison of retention time (25.23min.) time of the mass chromatography (m/z = 382) of the black coloured potsherd of Type E and standard 3-(12-phenyldodecacyl) catechol dimethyl ether in the lacquer film of Melanorrhoea usitata (Myanmar).

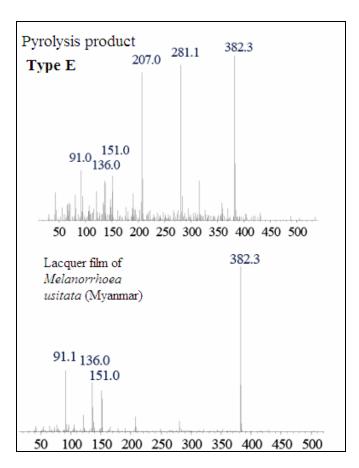


Fig.18. Mass spectra of standard 3-(12-phenyldodecacyl) catechol dimethyl ether (M.W-382).

ATR mapping

The ATR mapping result of a measurement of Type D is shown in Figs. 19-21 and Table 4. In Figure 19, 1700 cm⁻¹ is the peak of a C=O bond of organic acid, and there was stronger absorption in the red part. In contrast, a blue part had weak absorption. The ATR mapping showed that a component with a C=O bond exists at high concentration on the surface of the analysed potsherd.

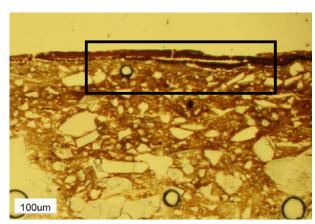


Fig. 19. Measuring range of ATR (Inner side of a black line).

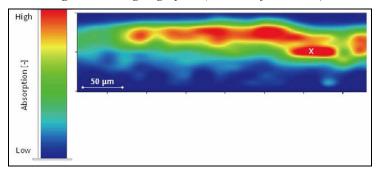


Fig. 20. A profile of a C=O bond (1700 cm⁻¹).

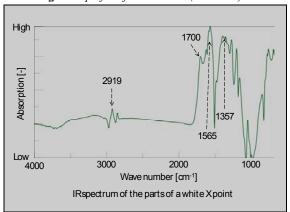


Fig. 21. *IR spectra of the parts of a white X point.*

 Wave number
 Bond Type

 2919
 ν (C-C)

 1700
 ν (C=O)

 1565
 ν (C=C)

 1357
 δ (C-H)

Table 4. List of wave number and bond types

DISCUSSION

The microscopic observation suggests that all 30 pieces of the potsherds of black coloured pottery had a thick coating on their surfaces. The coatings of the potsherds of Type A and Type C were applied with same technology, and they contained a two-stage layer with two different origins. These potsherds of Type A and Type B are the original potsherds of NBPW. Previous researcher like Robert Harding's research (2004) concludes that 'all the examined samples have two slips, with the upper surface being approximately a micron in width...'²². Present research has identified that the ground coat was made from clay (called 'slip') and was approximately $15{\sim}35~\mu m$ thick. However, clay was not identified in the top coating, which is $2{\sim}4~\mu m$ thick. From the result of Py-GC/MS analysis, it is confirmed that potsherds of Type A and Type C contained oil (fatty acid methyl esters) on their top coating. So, the slip was applied for achieve the black colour of the surface and top coating was for the lustrous black surface of NBPW.

The analysed black coloured potsherds of Type B, Type D and Type E were different from the potsherds of Type A and Type C. The thin section observation identified a solid and thick coating on the surface of the potsherds of Type B, Type D and Type E. This solid coating was applied directly on the body surface of the pottery, and no clay-made slip was present, like with Type A and Type C. Compared with Type A and Type C (NBPW), the black coloured potsherds of Type B, Type D and Type E are different with respect to the coating technique.

In the potsherd of Type B, the thin section observation identified a thick coating (approximately $35\sim40~\mu m$) and many empty round spaces inside the surface

²² R. Harding, 'Reports on scanning electron microscope analysis of NBP sherds', Man and Environment. Vol. 29, No. 2, 2004. pp. 30-34.

coating. This characteristic may indicate that organic material was applied to the warm surface condition of the pottery (approximately 100°C) and that the surface temperature of the pottery created the bubbles in the coating. The thin section observations also suggested that coating was applied over a rough surface of the pottery, that's why the applied coating is not uniform. From the thin section observation, this type was completely different from Type A and Type C.

In the Type D potsherd, the surface coating consisted of 4 layers and was approximately $25\sim40~\mu m$ thick. The visual surface of this potsherd was black and without glossiness. The multi-staged coating technique was supposed to obtain the black colour. In the potsherd of Type E, which was approximately $25\sim30~\mu m$ thick, a one-staged and solid coating was found in the thin section observation. The thin section observation in SEM revealed vertical cracks in the coating, similar to the cracks of Type A and Type C (top coat).

The Pyrolysis-Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometric analysis identified 'oil' (fatty acid methyl esters) in the surface coating of the collected black coloured potsherds of Type B and Type D, and the substance 3-(12-phenyldodecyl) catechol was also identified in the coating of Type E.

The ATR mapping analysis of the potsherd from Mahasthangarh site (Type D) was carried out to confirm the application process and showed that a component with a C=O bond exists in high concentration on the surface of the analysed potsherd. In case organic acid sank in the pottery from the surrounding ground when it was buried, the bond of C=O should exist uniformly to the inside of the body clay. However, the ATR mapping data indicate that the coating was uniformly condensed on the surface of the examined earthenware (Type D). On the basis of this measurement result, there is a possibility that oil was applied as a coating material over the surface of the analysed potsherd and that this applied coating was not any type of contamination. The image of thin section produced by the transmitted light micrograph also clearly showed the smooth layers on the pottery surface.

We knew from the previous research of B.P. Sinha that 'black ware' and 'burnished black (black polished) ware' was also common in the NBPW level of Sonpur, located on the east coast of India.²³ He mentioned that 'some sherd had a

²³ B.P. Sinha, 'Ancient Magadha: the cradle of the northern black polished ware', Ancient Ceramics, P.C. Pant and Vidula Jayaswal (eds.), 1997, pp. 85-110.

wash on their exterior surface, but whether the slip is completely peeled off or the ware is black without slip is difficult to ascertain'.²⁴ In the present research, analysed potsherd (Type E) from the Mahasthangarh site possessed a similar quality with those Sonpur specimens; it contained a coating in a small portion of the interior side that was also extremely fragile [Fig. 5c].

The substance 3-(12-phenyldodecyl) catechol was identified in the surface coating of Type E by Py-GC/MS analysis. This substance is considered to have originated from thitsiol, which is the main ingredient of *Melanorrhoea usitata* (one kind of lacquer harvesting tree). In this study, the lacquer film (made from the tree sap of *Melanorrhoea usitata*, collected from Myanmar) was analysed for a comparison between the surface coating of Type E potsherd and the original tree sap of *Melanorrhoea usitata*. A substance with the same mass spectrum was found in the lacquer film of *Melanorrhoea usitata* and Type E, and it was measured in the retention time for 25.23 minutes. Therefore, this potsherd sample (Type E) also contained the same lacquer sap as *Melanorrhoea (Glutata) usitata*. The amount of 3-(12-phenyldodecyl) catechol substance in the analysed potsherd was very low compared with the fatty acid methyl ester substance.

Thitsiol components such as 3-(12-phenyldodecyl) catechol cannot be detected from the top coat of NBPW (Type A and Type C). So, by the analysis of Py-GC/MS, not only oil can distinguish but discriminate between oil and other natural resins also.

Further research about the lacquer will be carried out by analysing the large amount of potsherd samples of Bangladesh, which may deliver some new information. Myanmar, one of the countries neighbouring Bangladesh, also possess lacquer culture from their past to present. Thus, it is assumed that the lacquer culture from Myanmar was exercised in the ancient pottery of Bangladesh. Lacquer has been used in Asian countries for thousands of years as a durable and beautiful coating material. Three kinds of lacquer trees grow in the East: *Rhus vernicifera* (Japan, China and Korea), *Rhus succedanea* (Vietnam), and *Melanorrhoea usitata* (Thailand and Myanmar). The phenol derivative of *R. vernicifera* is urushiol, of *R. succedanea* is laccol and of *M. usitata* is thitsiol.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ T. Honda, R. Lu, N. Kitano, Y. Kamiya, T. Miyakoshi, 'Applied Analysis and Identification of Ancient Lacquer Based on Pyrolysis-Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry', Journal of Applied Polymer Science, Vol. 118, 2007, pp. 897-901.

In Bangladesh, several types of resinous tree are present, for example, Sal tree (*Shorea robustus*, tree sap: Dammar), Neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*, tree sap: Neem gum), Mango tree (*Magnifera indica*, tree sap: Mangiferin), and Udal tree (*Sterculia villosa* Roxb, tree sap: Gum karaya). However, lacquer harvested trees are not available presently in Bangladesh. So, the presence of lacquer coated pottery in present Bangladesh could suggests us two ideas,

First, lacquer harvested tree was present in ancient Bangladesh, and harvested lacquer was used in the indigenous pottery for surface coating.

Second, lacquer was imported from outside of Bangladesh and used as a coating material of the surface of indigenous pottery.

Third, Lacquer coated pottery was imported from outside of Bangladesh.

Usually, drying oil (for example, pine tar, perilla oil, or linseed oil) is used in lacquer as a thinner, which is then applied on the surface of the different types of artistic materials. Lacquer is expensive and difficult to obtain because the harvesting process is costly. It is therefore suggested that potters of those ancient days may have experimented with different types of resin oil-made and solely oil-made surface coating. Another possibility is that different types of pottery may have been used for the people of different social classes on the basis of their ranking and that the analysed potsherds were some of those items.

Conclusion

In this study, 30 pieces of black coloured potsherds were examined that were excavated from two early historic sites in Bangladesh. Among the collected potsherd samples, three different types are distinguished by the observation of thin sections. The NBPW is one of these types; the other two are totally new types of potsherds. A clay-made ground coat (like that of NBPW) was not identified in these new types of potsherds. The results of Py-GC/MS led to the conclusion that oil (fatty acid methyl ester) and thitsiol [3-(12-phenyl-dodecacyl) catechol] are present in the surface coating of these potsherds. This study is a preliminary source for investigating the manufacturing technique of the black coloured ancient pottery of Bangladesh as well as South Asia. The present study claims that NBPW possess two different types of coating which was originated from two different source and tree based lacquer coated pottery was used in ancient Bangladesh.

IMPACT OF ARABIC ON BENGALI LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Afia Dil*

Abstract

This paper is a sociolinguistic study of the impact of Arabic language on Bengali language and culture beginning from the earliest contact of the Arab traders by sea routes with the Chittagong bay area and inland areas like Sonargaon and Dhaka; the coming of Muslim saints from the 7th century onward and later as conquerors from Western and Central Asia. The essay covers: 1) Survey of historical contact of Arabic with Bengali with focus on influence of Muslim missionaries and sufis notably Shah Muhammad Sultan Rumi in Mymensingh (11th century), Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi in Pandua (12th century), Shah Jalal in Sylhet (14th century); Muslim rule of the region (1204-1764); British rule (1764-1947); period of East Pakistan (1947-71); and, Bangladesh (since 1971); 2) Muslim Bengali literature beginning with Shah Muhammad Saghir (14th century), translation of Islamic and Perso-Arabic literature, emergence of Dobhashi literature and Baul poems of Lalon Shah and others; 3) Linguistic impact of Arabic language on the phonology, morphology, syntax and selected semantic domains of Bengali language; 4) Influence on Bengali life and culture in general; 5) Concluding remarks on current trends in the field.

Transliteration of Arabic and Bengali Phonemic Sounds

I have chosen to use in this essay the standard English alphabet for the following phonemic consonants in Arabic and Bengali: b,d,f,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,p,q,r,s, t,w. For *vowel sounds* I have used: /i/ (bit), /ī/ (beet), /ā/ (father), /ɔ/ (ball), /e/ (bet), /æ/ (bat); /o/ (note), /u/ (pull), /ū/ (boot), au (now), /ɔi/ (boy); /ai/ (buy).

Arabic Consonant sounds: /t/ (Arabic takh timeaning seat), /th/ (Arabic thum meaning garlic), /th/ (Arabic halwa meaning sweetmeat), /k/ (Arabic kaas meaning special); /dh/ (Arabic dhikr meaning recitation), /s/ (Arabic sidda timeaning trouble), /s/ (Arabic saaf meaning clean), /d/ (Arabic daman meaning security), /t/ (Arabic talab meaning search/, / z/ (Arabic zulm meaning cruelty), // (Arabic ilm meaning knowledge), /g/ (Arabic gareeb meaning

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102 Afia Dil

poor), /q/ (Arabic *qabil* meaning capable), /h/ Arabic *h*d meaning guidance in the right path). The first character of Arabic alphabet ϵ // called Hamzah or Alif has the sound of the glottal stop which can occur initially, medially and finally.

Arabic Vowel sounds: Arabic has a simple vowel system with only three short vowels /i a u/ where /a/ corresponds more or less to /ə/ as in English "but" and three long vowels / $\bar{1}$ \bar{a} \bar{u} /, where \bar{a} corresponds to English /æ/ as in "bat".

Bengali Consonant sounds:

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/chh/ as aspirated ch as in Bengali chhara (rhymes); /jh/ as aspirated j as in Bengali jhar (storm); /kh/ as aspirated k as in Bengali khal (canal); aspirated /gh/ as in Bengali ghar (house); dental /t/ as in Bengali tui (you, intimate or junior); aspirated dental /t/h/ as in Bengali thala (plate); dental /d/ as in Bengali dana (grain); voiced aspirated alveolar /dh/ as in Dhaka; retroflex / r/ as in ghora (horse).
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Bengali Vowel sounds: /i e æ a ɔ o u/. Bengali does not make any distinction between long and short vowels, though the Bengali alphabet has two letters to show the difference in writing. All the Bengali vowels adjacent to a nasal consonant are nasalized, for example, chāñd (moon).

1. The Historical Contact of Bengali with Arabic

Bengali, one of the major Indo-Aryan languages of South Asia is estimated to be spoken by about 80 million people in the West Bengal province of India and about 150 million in Bangladesh. The language belongs to the Eastern branch of the Indo-European family of languages, and is closely related to Assamese, Uriya and Bihari, which were the Prakrit languages of the area, as well as Sanskrit, which was the classical language limited to the Brahman class. Other languages that have close affinities to Bengali are some non-Aryan languages like Kol and Munda.

The history of the Bengali language goes back to the eighth century A.D. and the earliest record of written Bengali known as "Old Bengali" is a collection of mystic songs called "Charyapadas", composed by Buddhist mystics. The rulers of Bengal at that time were Pala kings, who were Buddhists with Pali as the language of their religion. They had substituted Pali for Sanskrit as the language of administration in the country. They were followed by Sena kings, who were

Impact of Arabic 103

Hindu Brahmans who again replaced Pali with Sanskrit. Bengali as a language had no prestige till the advent of the Muslim rulers who came there by the early thirteenth century.

The Middle Bengali period coincides roughly with the period of the Muslim rule in Bengal, which lasted from 1204 A.D. till its replacement by the British rule in 1764. Muslim rulers in Bengal were first Turks, then Afghans, and later the Mughals, but the language of administration had continued to be Persian all throughout. The language of religion of these rulers as well as the growing Muslim population of Bengal was Arabic, and the common everyday language was Bengali, for the Hindus, the Muslims and people of other religions.

The distinguished Islamic historian Syed Sulaiman Nadvi (1934) established that there were a number of Arab traders' colonies in Southern India and the Chittagong coastal area going back to very early times. The rise of Islam in the 7th century A.D. and the unification of the Arab tribes under the banner of Islam under the centralized state at Medinah helped the Arabs to spread their influence to distant areas. Some of the routes from the Arabian ports to China passed through the Bay of Bengal that was known to the Arabs as Schelahath and Kalahabar. A number of Arab historians notably Abu Zaid Sirafi in the 9th century and Masudi in the early 10th century describe these sea routes. The first documentation by an Arab geographer-traveler who recorded his observations of what is Eastern Bengal was Sulaiman Tajir – a merchant who wrote in his book Silisilatul Tawarikh (The Sequence of History) in 851 A.D. Some scholars take the position that Sulaiman's observations of the Mulkul Dharami (Kingdom of *Dharmi* or *Dharma*) after the name of the ruler of the Pala dynasty called *Dhamma* or *Dharma* was misheard or misread by him as *Ruhmi* (perhaps the Arab's variation on Ramu – an area near Cox's Bazar) is about a part of Eastern Bengal as he describes the elephants and muslin cloth which was a great specialty of the area, and the use of kaudis that was the coin in use at the time. The famous Arab historian Masudi (956 A.D.) mentioned the kingdom of "Rahma" (another variation of Ramu). Both Sulaiman and Masudi mention the inhabitants to be good looking. A number of future historians during the Mughal period especially noted the beauty and charm of the women of the region. One of the earliest authentic historian who wrote on the region because of his personal observation was not Al-Biruni (1048 A.D.) but Ibn Batuta who travelled to China and on the way stopped in Bengal (1345-46) and wrote: "...

104 Afia Dil

we spent forty-three nights at sea, arrived eventually at the end of Bangala. This is a vast country, abounding in rice and nowhere in the world I have seen any land where prices are lower than there. ... The first city in Bengal that we entered was Sudkawan [he meant Chittagong], a large town on the coast of the great sea. Close by it the river Ganges, to which the Hindus go on pilgrimage, and the river Jun (he meant Jamuna) unite and discharge together in the sea." He mentioned Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah as the ruler of the region. He also mentioned that he went from Sudkawan to Sylhet to meet the great Sufi Shah Jalal and returned to Chittagong by river via Sonargaon. It is important to note in this context that the Brahmaputra-Meghna passing through Bangladesh connected Sonargaon with the Bay of Bengal near Sandvip. It must be mentioned here that historically these areas of Bangladesh were very active since the early years of the Christian era and Buddhist missionaries like Atisa Dipankara travelled to China, Korea and Japan in the East and the port cities of Arabia in the West. The sea-raiders had made the Bengali textiles and woodwork very famous in many parts of the world including Europe even during the pre-Christian era. A number of books have described the rare beauty of Bengal muslin and silk cloth, for example, Chanakya's Arthashastra (4th B.C.) and Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (1st century A.D.) write of "muslin of the finest sorts" as a major export of Bengal. Sulaiman Tajir (9th century A.D.), mentioned above, wrote in his Arabic book that he had seen: "a stuff made in this country which is not to be found elsewhere; so fine and so delicate is this material that a dress made of it may be passed through a signet ring."

1.1 The Muslim Saints

Muhammad Enamul Haq wrote in his history of Sufism in Bengal ¹ that probably Sufism was introduced in Bengal in the 11th century with the arrival of Shah Muhammad Sultan Rumi who is reputed to have come to Mymensingh in 1053 A.D. His tomb is in Madanpur in Netrakona area of Mymensingh. His influence spread so fast that the Hindu ruler Koch became afraid of his growing power. In the words of Enamul Haq: "It is said that whoever came in contact with the saint, accepted Islam and became a devoted follower of the saint." Baba Adam was the next major sufi who carried on the tradition. He is known to have been put to death by Raja Ballala Sena at Brikrampur, Dhaka, in 1119

¹ Haq, Muhammad Enamul, A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1975, pp. 144-45

Impact of Arabic 105

A.D. After these two sufis the major name is that of Shaykh Jalaluddin Tabrizi (d. 1225 A.D.) who is compared in the context of the spread of Islam in the region to Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti (1142-1236) who spread Islam in northern India. Tabrizi arrived in Bengal around 1195 – a few years before the Turkish conquest of the region. In the words of Haq, "[He] died in Pandua (Gaur) in or about the year 1225 A.D. As he was a great propagandist, he converted a number of Hindus mostly belonging to lower classes (the fact can be known from the Sanskrit chronicle "Sekhsubhodaya") to the Islamic faith before the coming of the Turks to Bengal.² [This book was written in the 16th century] The last Hindu king of Bengal, Laksmana Sena whose reign came to an end around 1200, is said to have built for him a mosque and a khangah or monastery at Pandua." He acquired land to plant gardens and then dedicated the property to the local inhabitants for the benefit of thousands of travelers to the khangah that became the major center of Sufism in the region. To quote Enamul Haq, "The Darvishes of this centre enhanced the prestige of the Muslims of Bengal, by their piety, education, culture and activities which attracted the attention of the people of Northern India to Bengal." Tabrizi's fame spread throughout northern India and he had disciples in Lucknow, Delhi and Gujrat. After the fall of the Sena kings a growing number of Muslim missionaries and sufis started arriving in Bengal. Tabrizi left a long line of sufis as his inheritors who carried on his mission. By the end of the 15th century Sufism in Bengal had gained so much importance that, according to Enamul Haq4 the "Banga Centre of Sufism" became very famous with its major centers at Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Pabna, Bogra, Rajshahi, Faridpur and Bakherganj: "This seems to be the most ancient centre among all the Sufi centres of Bengal" that played a major role in the spread of Islam and Arabic language in the region from the 11th century onward.

The next very famous saint was Shah Jalal (d.1346) who came to Bengal followed by, according to one account, three hundred and twenty disciples. He was a major figure in the propagation of Islam in the Eastern part of Bengal and Western part of Assam. His tomb in Sylhet is a famous shrine visited by thousands of pilgrims every year. These are some examples that show the

² Enamul Haq, 1975, p. 146

³ *Ibid*, 1975, p. 159

⁴ *Ibid* , 1975, p. 204ff

growing influence of Islam in the area now comprising Bangladesh. These developments also played an important role in making the region become a major center of Muslim rule for several centuries. From the perspective of our study of the influence of Arabic language on Bengali it is important to note that a number of Islamic books from Arabic and Persian were translated into Bengali that brought in a large number of Arabic words into the language.

1.2 The Bauls

Another notable point is the development of a special sect of mystics in Bengal called "Baul". The fact that it developed from Islamic mystic tradition has been overlooked by many scholars and even the origin of the word "Baul" has ignored the possibility of what Enamul Haq⁵ has recorded: "The word 'Aul' is the Bengali contraction of the Perso-Arabic word 'Awliya" (plural of Wali or a Muslim saint) meaning 'the saints'. Accordingly, those people, who lead a saintly life, observe the formalities of Muslim saints in dress, practice and belief, are called the 'Bauls'. ... Bauls of Bengal form a great community, and people affiliated to it are found in almost all the districts of Bengal in one or other name." The important point to note here is that nobody knows who founded this community. The Hindus believe that their Gurus (like Hari Guru, Banachari, Seva Kamalini and others) did so and the Muslims believe that Muslim Sufis called Fagirs (Khushi Biswas, Saheb Dhani, Lalon Shah and others)) in the Nadiya region that was a famous cultural center of Bengal did so. As a mystic system it became very important in Bengal in the later part of the 16th century and in the 18th century it became very influential and a number of Akhras (their meeting places) spread in the region. They gained great popularity through their mystic songs that they sang to the accompaniment of Ektara or Dotara - single stringed or double-stringed lute. The Baul songs of Lalon Shah are especially very popular in Bangladesh. They have a number of Arabic words and Islamic ideas in them.

These settlers have left their permanent mark in the appearance and features of the inhabitants and the local dialect. The places named Alkaran, Sulekul Baher, Bakulia, Sarandi, etc., indicate the Arab influence. The use of negative before verb in the local dialect can also be traced to the same source.

In his Preface to the first-ever written Bengali dictionary, William Carey (1801) noted that while Bengali as a language is "derived from Sanskrit entirely, words

⁵ Enamul Haq, 1975, p. 297

of Arabic or Persian origin bear a small proportion to the whole", and "most of those, the origin of which appears doubtful, may be generally traced to a Sanskrit or an Arabic origin."

Besides being conquered and ruled by Muslim invaders, Bengalees came in contact with the Arabs and Arabic language in two other important ways. First, the Arab sea-traders entered Bengal through the eastern port of Chittagong and carried on business for a long time. Secondly, Arab saints and religious leaders had come to Bengal from the 8th century onwards and converted a large part of the indigenous population before the time of the invaders. Thus we find that the Bengalees had a three-way contact with the Arabs and Arabic language. Muhammad Enamul Haq has recorded: "From the 8th century A.D., the blood of a new race began to be mixed up with the Bengali blood: the people of the Semitic race began to enter Bengal from that date. The recent discovery of a coin of Caliph Harun-al-Rashid (786-809) in Paharpur, (Rajshahi), has established the fact that the Semitic Arabs were preaching their religion as well as carrying on business in this country; they had also established a small principality in Chittagong district under an Amir. Several saints, like Shah Sultan Ba Yazid Bistami (874 A.D.), Mir Sayyid Sultan Mahmud Mahi Sawar (1047 A.D.), Shah Muhammad Sultan Rumi (1053 A.D.), Baba Adam Shahid (1119 A.D.), and Shah Niamat Ullah Butshikhan, were preaching Islam in Bengal during the period of early Muslim settlement here."6

There are records showing that along with the saints a large number of people who were friends and followers of the saints also came and settled in Bengal. Abdul Karim⁷ wrote: "A fresh wave of Muslim migration under the powerful Mughal subadar swelled the ranks of the Muslim population." These Muslim migrants, referred to by Abdul Karim, were not limited to the Persian speakers. There was a sizable number of Arabic speakers as well, as attested by S. Murtaza Ali (1971), who in his Preface to *Saints of East Pakistan* (1971) wrote: "There are more Muslims in East Pakistan than in Arabia, Egypt and Iran."

⁶ Haq, Muhammad Enamul, Muslim Bengali Literature. Karachi: Pakistan Publications, 1957, p. 5

⁷ Karim, Abdul, "Impact of Islam in East Pakistan," In: S. Sajjad Husain, 1962, pp. 30-

^{8 &}quot;Impact of Islam in East Pakistan" in East Pakistan: A Profile, edited by S. Sajjad Husain (Dacca: Orient Longman Ltd.), 1962, p. 46.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, about 55% of the people of Bengal were Muslims. The conversion to Islam had been a very important factor in the introduction of the Arabic language to the newly converted Muslims with the fervor of converts to the new religion. A study of the Bengali language by Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, one of the foremost linguists of our time, has recorded that a total of about 5,000 words have been borrowed in Bengali from Arabic, Persian and Turkish. He was the first scholar in Asia to have earned his Ph.D. degree in Linguistics in 1928 from Sorbonne University in Paris. He served as Editor-in-Chief of the three-volume comprehensive dictionary of Bengali regional dialects and wrote in his introduction that "Bengali literature originated in East Bengal." This is where the people of the region were in contact with several cultures of the world that later became an important part of the intercultural tradition inherited by Bangladesh.

1.3 Arabic Words in Bengali Muslims' Everyday Speech

A look at the borrowing pattern of Arabic into Bengali would tend to show that it was through religion that Arabic first became absorbed in the speech of the Bengali Muslims. But, because Islam is a religion which is not confined to the religious rites only, but is a way of life for its followers in everyday life, Arabic words are found to have penetrated most of the strata of the Muslim society in general and by contact with people of other religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, they have been absorbed in the larger circle of all Bengali speakers.

From his birth to his death a Muslim child keeps hearing Arabic all the time in a manner which is more intimate than even Bengali, which is his first language. As soon as a Muslim child is born, a person in the family has to give the *adhan* (call for prayer) which the child hears first. It is also an announcement to the neighborhood that a child has been born in a Muslim family. Then the child is given an Arabic name. Boys are given Arabic names like Bashir, Khurshid, Maqbul, Musharraf, Shuja, and girls names like Ayesha, Kulthum, Latifa, Maliha, Zubaida. Some of the familiar contractions of these names in Bengali are: Pir Bakhsh to Piru, Idris to Idu, Wilayat to Belu.

As the child grows up and is enculturated in the social and religious ways he is taught to say his greetings in Arabic and also reply to such greetings in Arabic. He is taught to say his prayers in Arabic, go to the mosque and read the holy Qur'an in Arabic. If the child is a girl, she is not required to go to the mosque, but is required to read the Qur'an in Arabic. When the child is four years and

four months old, the first letter that he/she is taught to read and write is the Arabic letter *alif* for *Allah*. After his/her formal education starts, the child is taught to read the life of the Prophet and the first four Caliphs of Islam, a brief history of Islam, and some stories of religious importance. The marriage ceremonies for both young men and women include the recital of Arabic verses, and the festivals (religious or others) are celebrated with prayers read in Arabic. When a person dies, the last words that his/her relatives and friends say in his/her ears are in Arabic, the *kalima* (words of faith), the dead body is given a *gusl* (bath) with Arabic verses recited at the time, and the last rites are performed in Arabic. In between, in everyday life, a Muslim in his conversations uses a number of Arabic words which are a part of his culture.

Bangladesh is one of the countries with the largest Muslim population. It has the largest number of mosques as compared with other Muslim nations where Arabic and Bengali are used interchangeably in sermons showing a large number of Arabic words in the Benglicized versions.

1.4 Muslim Bengali Literature

There is a considerable body of Muslim Bengali literature. The first Muslim Bengali poet was Shah Muhammad Saghir, who was an employee of Sultan Ghyasuddin Azam Shah (1389-1409). He composed a long narrative poem *Yusuf Zuleikha* based on the Qura'nic story of Prophet Joseph and Zuleikha. Interestingly, the name he gave to the merchant who bought Joseph is *Maniru* which is a Bengali name and the coin he used for the purchase is *Dhepua* a Bengali coin. He adapted the Arabic story into Bengali by marrying the younger brother of Joseph named IbnYamin (Benjamin) to Bidhuprava, the daughter of the King of Madhupur in Bengal.

Another major figure of the time who popularized Islamic and Arabic literature and language was Jadu, the son of Raja Ganesh of North Bengal. Jadu embraced Islam under the influence of the Pandua mystics and ruled Bengal (1413-31) as King Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah followed by his son Shamsuddin who ruled from 1431 to 1442. This began the revolutionary period in Bengali language and literature. In the words of Enamul Haq, ⁹ "These twenty-eight years (1414-1442) of this dynasty have a special niche in the history of Bengali literature for the revolution that took place ... Bengali literature and the Bengali language had gained recognition in the court earlier, but they now enjoyed direct royal

⁹ Enamul Haq, 1957, pp. 35, 40

patronage as well as gained public recognition. ... The public recognition of the Bengali language and literature had widespread consequences. ... It may be mentioned here that at the beginning of the 19th century a group of Bengali writers began using Arabic script for religious books in Bengali. Muhammad Jan, who was a poet of this period, wrote his famous book *Namaj Mahatmya* in Arabic script in 1852. ... [I]t is a well-known fact that the manuscript of Alaol's *Padmavati* which is in the Arabic script is about one hundred and fifty years old." In addition to this Alaol contributed to the emergence of a new type of Bengali literature combining the Muslim and Hindu traditions in his *Pada* songs and his Islamic religious book *Tahfa*. It must be noted here that the 16th and 17th centuries were especially marked by synthesizing the Muslim and Hindu cultures in Bengali language especially notable in the tales of Satyapir and in Padavali songs.

Enamul Haq had noted some influence of Islamic subjects and Arabic language in a song in Sekh Shubhodaya (13th century) with reference to the miracles of Shaykh Jalaluddin Tabrizi with some elements of the Arabic language and proper names. During the Turkish rule poets like Shah Muhammad Saghir started composing Bengali literature using the mixture of the local and foreign languages and it has been called a revolutionary period in the history of Bengali language, literature and culture especially during the forty-five years of Hussain Shah as the king of Gauda (1493-1538). A number of Islamic works were made the subject of Bengali poems, notably Shab-e-Meraj (The ascension of Prophet Muhammad) composed in 1586 by Sayyid Sultan of Chittagong (c.1550-1648) as well as Rasul Vijay (The Victory of the Prophet) and his Marfati Gaan (Mystic Songs). His unfinished Rasuler Ofaat (The Death of Prophet Muhammad) was completed by Muhammad Khan (1580-1650) as well as his own Kiyamat Namah (The Last Day of Judgment). The greatest poet of the period was Alaol (1627-1680) of Chittagong. During the Mughal period a number of Muslim literary and religious works were composed in Bengali. For example, Yusuf Zuleikha by Abdul Hakim as well as by Garibullah and Karbala (on martyrdom of Imam Husain) by Abdul Hakim. There is a large body of Islamic literature in Bengali that has greatly enriched Bengali language and culture during the past two hundred years.

During the Mughal period, a number of literary works were produced in Bengali covering Islamic themes incorporating Arabic words. During the British period writers like Mir Musharraf Husain (1847-1911) who wrote on

Meraj Sharif (Prophet Muhammad's ascension), and on the lives of Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Bilal, Hazrat Amir Hamza are especially noteworthy in continuing this tradition. Shaikh Abdur Rahim (1859-1931) wrote an important biography of Prophet Muhammad. Qazi Nazrul Islam wrote a number of Islamic poems and songs and used beautiful Arabic words to make them authentic. Among his most famous poems in this context are "Fateha Doazdahum", "Muharram", "Khalid", "Ourbani" and Hamd (poems in praise of Allah), and Na'at (poems in praise of Prophet Muhammad). He translated passages from the Qur'an in his Ampara. Kavi Gholam Mustafa also translated parts of the Qur'an and wrote essays on Islamic subjects using Arabic words. A number of poems of Farrukh Ahmad are also a landmark in this tradition. In the words of Syed Ali Ashraf, 10 "The cultural panorama of Muslim Bengal from 1857 to 1947 indicate several curious but significant features. The first important feature was the expanded nature of the cultural content. Bengali Muslims were thinking not in terms of regional cultural variety but in terms of Muslim culture, and more particularly the history and culture of the Muslims of India. The revivalist and reformist movement reasserted this trend and made regional thinking rather narrow, limited and unwise. This broadening of outlook can be seen at all levels. ... Writers were looking to the origin and past glory and tragedy of the Muslims. ... A similar non-regional and all-pervasive revivalist attitude is evident in the translations of the Qur'an, Sadi's Gulistan and Bostan, ... the biographies of the Prophet ... At the intellectual and political level we see how Nawab Abdul Latif and Syed Ameer Ali worked for the Muslims ... and how the Muslim League came into existence as a result of the Educational Conference held at Dacca in 1906. ... It was after 1947 that among those educated according to the modern education system prevalent in this country a great search for the identity of Bengali Muslims started." After 1947 a number of the East Bengal writers actively started evolving a new identity that led to the separation from Pakistan in 1971 and a more determined outlook to carve out their identity as the free citizens of the new nation-state of Bangladesh. This brief historical background has been provided to show that our subject covers several centuries of work requiring extensive research on the subject.

Ashraf, Syed Ali, Muslim Traditions in Bengali Literatur, Dhaka: Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 1960, 1983, pp. 26-28

1.5 Dobhashi Language and Literature

One more area that deserves to be highlighted here is what is known as "Dobhashi language and literature". The best work on the subject has been done by Qazi Abdul Mannan¹¹ in his The Emergence and Development of Dobhasi Literature in Bengal up to 1855. It was the author's Ph.D. dissertation at the University of London. His survey of the Middle Bengali literary works shows, in his words, that "the influence of Arabic and specially of Persian literature on the writers was considerable. Many of the works of Muslim writers during the Medieval period were either translations or adaptations from Arabic or Persian works." But he noted that one would expect the languages used to reveal the indebtedness to the languages of the originals but it is not so because they used "the traditional literary language of Bengal." In fact, at times it is difficult to know whether the author of a particular work is a Hindu or a Muslim. However, to quote Mannan: "[T]he first work which has preserved evidence of the influence of the language of the Muslim rulers is the Manasavijaya by Biprardas Piplai, 12 which is generally accepted as belonging to the end of the 15th century." Piplai was a prominent Hindu writer of the time. Mannan quotes some lines showing the type of language he used:

Kaaji majlis kaari
Kitab Koran dhari ...
(The Qazi declares the court open
Taking up the Qur'an the sacred book ...)

Of the forty words in the lines selected Mannan shows that twenty are of Perso-Arabic origin – all nouns. One word is a mixed word *Khatagula* – the first part is a Persian word *Khata* (crime) and second *gula* is Bengali plural suffix. The second borrowed word *sir* (head) is inflected with the Bengali locative case inflection *e*. He also quotes from *Chandimangal* composed in 1589 by a Brahman poet of Burdwan in his description of Muslims in the kingdom of Kalaketu where out of 68 words 20 are of Perso-Arabic origin – all of them nouns except one *danishbanda* which is an adjective used as a noun. Mannan is not quite right because the original in Persian is also used as a noun. There is one hybrid word *Hasanhaati* – *Hasan* is the proper name of a Muslim man and

¹² Biprardas Piplai, 1966, p. 50

¹¹ Mannan, Qazi Abdul, The Emergence and Development of Dobhasi Literature in Bengal upto 1855, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1966.

haati is a Bengali word meaning marketplace. In addition, a number of loanwords have Bengali case inflections, for example, *khairate*, *pirer*, and so on. From a 17th century poem "Satyapirer pacali" by the Hindu poet Dvija Giridhar of Burdwan where in the quoted six lines, out of 39 words 24 are of Perso-Arabic or non-Bengali origin, for example, *duniya* (world) and *baat* (Hindustani). To quote Mannan, "An innovation in Dobhasi can be found in this passage: verbal and pronominal forms of Hindustani origin are used side by side with verbs and pronouns of Bengali origin." It is important because the Muslim saints picked up this Dobhasi and used it in their works for the promotion of their mission among the people of Bengal. The first major Muslim poet to use Dobhasi in all his works was Fakir Garibullah. According to Muhammad Shahidullah, Garibullah's *Yusuf Zuleikha* was composed sometime after 1765. Syed Hamza was the next Muslim poet to use Dobhasi in all his works.

The first scholar to bring to public attention the Dobhasi language and literature was the British scholar Rev. J. Long in his *A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Works* (1855). He called it "Musalman Bengali Literature". W.W. Hunter¹⁴ in his famous book *Indian Musalman* wrote, "So firmly did Islam take hold of lower Bengal, that it has developed a religious literature and a popular dialect of its own." Mannan refers to the collected works of Dobhasi literature identified by Abdul Ghafur Siddiqi (1916) that out of his estimated 8,325 works in Dobhasi diction 4,446 works were still available and in use. In Mannan's words, "[H]e accused the Hindu scholars of eradicating Arabic, Persian and Urdu vocabulary elements, from the Bengali language, and substituting difficult Sanskrit words in their place." Another notable work is Ahsan Ullah's *Banga Bhasa O Musalman Sahitya* 16 where he pointed out the large number of Musalman puthis published by the Battala Press in the 18th century notably *Amir Hamza, Laila Majnu, Yusuf Zuleikha* that were "neglected by the Hindu community because the language in which they were written was hardly

¹³ Mannan, Qazi Abdul, The Emergence and Development of Dobhasi Literature in Bengal upto 1855, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1966, p. 53

Hunter, William W, *The Indian Musalmans*, London: Trubner and Company. [Reprint: Lahore: Premier Book House, 1964.], Calcutta, 1871, p. 152

¹⁵ Mannan, 1966, p. 148

¹⁶ Mannan, Calcutta, 1918, p. 3

influenced by Sanskrit." Mannan also records the influential monthly journal *Islam Darsan* edited by Muhammad Abdul Hakim who published a detailed article "Banga Sahitye Musalman" on the contributions of the Muslims to the development of Bengali language in 1921. In the section entitled "Islami Bangla ba Puthi-Sahitya" he wrote that Islami Bangla was used by the Muslim writers "as a rival language to the Sanskritized language of the Hindu pundits who flourished before the establishment of the present day 'lucid' style by the persistent efforts of Vidyasagar" and others. He called the Dobhasi literature "the national literature of the Muslims of Bengal" and condemned those Hindu writers who excluded Perso-Arabic words and replaced them with unfamiliar and difficult Sanskrit words and terms. Mannan quoted the famous Hindu scholar Dinesh Chandra Sen 18 who "supported the use of Perso-Arabic vocabulary elements on many occasions and strongly condemned the Hindu writers who avoided them as an orthodox Brahman avoids the touch of a Muhammadan."

Suniti Kumar Chatterji wrote in Volume One of *The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language*, ¹⁹ "[In] Musalmani Bengali a considerable literature consisting of adoptions of Muslim and Persian stories and romances and religious works and tracts has grown up. ... 'The Musalmani Bengali' employed in these works, however, is often too much Persianized; but the metres are Bengali, and a large percentage of Sanskrit words are retained, cheek by jowl, with the Perso-Arabic importations. ... It is the Maulavi's reply to the Pandit's *sadhubhasa* of the early and middle part of the 19th century. The percentage of Persian words [he meant Perso-Arabic words] in a typical 'Musalmani Bengali' work ... is about 31.74. ... Books in 'Musalmani Bengali' begin from the right side, following the way of an Arabic or Persian book,

Towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th began the translation of 'Islamic literature' for making known the ancient cultural heritage of the Muslims all the world over to the Bengali Muslims. It was a Hindu scholar, Bhai Girish Chandra Sen who made the first complete Bengali translation of *The Qur'an* in 1886. He also translated half of *Mishkat Sharif*. Later, Mirza Mohammad Yusuf Ali translated *Kimiya-e Saadat* in full and published it in five volumes.

¹⁸ Sen, Dinesh Chandra, Eastern Bengal Ballads, I, Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, Vol. XIII, 1923.

Chatterji, Suniti Kumar, *The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language*, Vols.
 2 & 2, First published by University of Calcutta Press, Calcutta, 1926, pp. 210-11;
 Published by London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970.

although the alphabet is Bengali." Sukumar Sen²⁰ in his *Islami Bangla Sahitya* wrote, "Some of the Perso-Arabic words they used were well-known only to the Muslim population and others were the common property of the work-a-day language of both Hindus and Muslims." He wrote in his *History of Bengali Literature* (1960: 158): "The early nineteenth century Muslim writers ... their language was so much saturated with Perso-Arabic and Hindi[and Urdu] words that it was often unintelligible to persons not acquainted with those tongues. The jargon was known as Muslim Bengali."

Muhammad Abdul Hai and Syed Ali Ahsan²¹ in their Bangla Sahityer Itivratta wrote, "We have named this literature Dobhasi puthi because in it Perso-Arabic words were used in large numbers along with Bengali. ... The use of Perso-Arabic words in Bengali is not new in Bengali poems. Throughout the Middle Bengali literature Perso-Arabic words were used to create particular situation or to make the society, customs or behavior of Muslims lively." Mannan added that these comments are brief and very general and no attempt was made to analyze the language: "No critic has made a detailed examination of the Dobhasi texts or constructed the history of the literature in that diction." He states that he made the effort in his chapters IX-XIII.²² From our perspective in this essay the following points of Mannan deserve to be quoted to conclude this section: "The word, Dobhasi, obviously means derived from two languages, and is, therefore, an oversimplification, as the language contains elements from more than two languages, namely, Bengali, Arabic, Persian and Hindustani. Nevertheless, it has a logical justification. The three languages, Arabic, Persian and Hindustani [Urdu] all came into Bengal as part of Muslim culture, and can, therefore, be regarded as forming one group, bound together by certain characteristics which differentiate them from the indigenous language, Bengali, with which they became mixed. The term therefore, can be interpreted as meaning Bengali and Islamic, if that word may be coined to cover the group of languages which came into Bengal with Islamic culture. 23 ... [Rev.] Long maintained that the Muslims of Bengal created a mixed diction as 'a kind of lingua franca', because as he says, they were 'averse to learning the

²⁰ Sukumar Sen, 1951, p. 183

Ahsan, Syed Ali & Muhammad Abdul Hai, Bangla Sahityer Itibritta, (Bengali: History of Bengali Literature). Dhaka: Student Ways, 1956, pp. 20, 22-23

²² Ahsan, Syed Ali & Muhammad Abdul Hai, 1956, pp. 156-219

²³ Ahsan, Syed Ali & Muhammad Abdul Hai, 1956, p.158

vernaculars.' He pointed out also that the Muslims ... were inclined to resist 'foreign influence' by which he seems to have meant the influence of English.²⁴ ... [N]one of these critics mentions the fact that the Dobhasi diction was first used by Hindu poets in the 15th century and more widely in the 16th and 17th centuries; and that during this period Muslim poets employed only the standard Bengali of the time.²⁵ ... It may also be observed that some Muslim poets continued to write on imported themes in the standard language during the 18th and 19th centuries after Dobhasi literature had begun to flourish. 26 ... [William] Carey comments on this subject in the following words though he is referring more specifically to the spoken language: 'Multitudes of words, originally Persian or Arabic, are constantly employed in common conversation, which perhaps ought to be considered as enriching rather than corrupting the language.' 27 ... The impression that Perso-Arabic elements in the Bengali vocabulary actually debased the language has continued into this century. Even so distinguished a scholar as S.K. De has had a hand in continuing it." In fact, the matter of the origin and development of Dobhasi has to be studied against the background of the history of Bengal as outlined above. It was the advent of the Muslims in the region that began this process.

1.6 Arabic Loanwords in Bengali

The subject of Arabic loanwords in Bengali deserves to be approached in this larger framework of the cultural history of the region. One of the most comprehensive studies of Arabic loanwords in Bengali from this perspective is to be found in Shaikh Ghulam Maqsud Hilali's *Perso-Arabic Elements in Bengali* (1967) which in the words of Muhammad Enamul Haq ²⁸ is a lexicographical work in Bengali that "in the realm of its vocabulary, it built up over its main Prakrit structure, a fine super-structure with word-elements borrowed from a number of languages including Persian, and (mainly through Persian) Arabic, with which it was historically destined to come in contact." In Enamul Haq's words, "[Hilali's book] aims at giving a lexical account of those Perso-Arabic words which were used freely in Bengali literature by the Hindus

²⁴ *Ibid*, 1956, p.159

²⁵ *Ibid*, 1956, p.160

²⁶ *Ibid*, 1956, p.161

²⁷ Carey, William, A Grammar of the Bengali Language, Serampore, Bengal: Mission Press, 1801, p. iii.

²⁸ Enamul Haq, 1967, p. iii

and Muslims alike during the British period. Going through the normal philological process of changes in words taken as loan from a foreign language, Perso-Arabic words in Bengali lost more or less their own phonology to adapt themselves to the phonology of the language, they enriched. In some cases, original meanings of these words were changed altogether; in most of the cases however, they were modified or extended; and in a number of cases, they were retained intact. In the domain of philology, this kind of changes in loan-words is known as 'Process of Naturalization' and it was very fully active in Bengali in the beginning of its formative period." The book was published posthumously with Enamul Haq as the Editor who calls it "the first work of its kind in Bengali" and adds that such loanwords and expressions "are often found with bewildering spellings in Bengali, starting from a name or a title of a person to very common words of daily use. ... Therefore, some of these words and expressions were metamorphosed into Bengali forms almost beyond recognition in respect of phonology and spelling, while others were changed or modified partially. In the wake of orthographic changes of these words and expressions, 'Semantic Changes' also came." And he adds that in order to determine their forms, origins and connotations they were noted more than once in appropriate places in the book. The titles of the Bengali and English books consulted for compiling the list is provided in the book. It must be said that in spite of its limitations the work covering 304 pages is useful for future researchers on the subject. It provides the origin of these borrowed words written in Bengali script and their meaning(s) in English, for example, keccha (Arabic qissa) story, tale, legend; and Ajib (Arabic Ajib) wonderful, curious.

Munier Chowdhury's landmark article on "The Language Problem of East Pakistan" (1960) shows the influence of Arabic language in the use of [s] and [š] and [j] and [z] as variants in the speech of Muslim speakers. He also noted the difference between the Hindu and Muslim speech in the context of [s] and [z] sounds. To quote Munier Chowdhury, "One definite feature of 'Muslim phonology' is the fact that many Muslim speakers of SCB [Standard Colloquial Bengali] seem to make consistent distinctions between s and š and between z and j. It is difficult to find absolute minimal pairs but these four sound types in the speech of such Muslims cannot be accepted as contextual variants of two phonemes. In this kind of SCB [s] and [z] occur intervocalically and initially before a vowel. Frequently occurring examples include asia, samad, zaman, azad, aziz. All these words the vast majority of Hindus would pronounce with

[§] and [j]; we may therefore include these two as phonemes /s z/ of SCB as spoken by the average educated Muslim Bengali."²⁹ Munier Chowdhury also observed in this essay that Bengali in East Bengal has "a large variety of dialects, some of them even mutually unintelligible. In the very near future a new standard colloquial language with a special prestige value may pattern out a blend of these dialects. ... A sense of release from constraining obligations in verbal behavior is noticeable everywhere. Intellectuals are found engaged in discussing economics, philosophy, art, politics all in a language not definitely the same old SCB. ... All these portend to one thing: the Dacca-Mymensing group of dialects may play the major role in moulding the Standard Colloquial."³⁰ It is in this context of the emerging Standard Bengali that the study of the Islamic tradition in the development of Bengali language is very important today in Bangladesh because of its special relations with the Muslim nations especially Saudi Arabia.

Munier Chowdhury (1970) has provided some important insights into the subject with his critical review of the Muslim authors and the speech forms of Bengali in East Pakistan developments from 1947 to 1969 – just about the beginning of Bangladesh. His discussion of the Perso-Arabic words point them out serving as a linking thread running through all the dialects across their geographical spread. He provides a large number of such words used by the authors in the illustrative texts which show, for example, that out of the fifty words under the letter /m/ thirty-six are of Perso-Arabic origin used by any Muslim author across the dialectal variations.³¹ Chowdhury wrote that this was not new because the first Bengali author who used such words was Ram Ram Basu followed by Tek Chand Thakur and Vidyasagar took it to higher levels. This trend was followed by a number of later writers. Abul Mansoor Ahmed's book *Ayna* and Habibullah Bahar's newspaper column called *Hing o Halim* are notable examples of this usage. Muslim Bengali writers used this style ten years before the creation of Pakistan and five years after that. Among the East

²⁹ Chowdhury, Munier, "The Language Problem in east Pakistan," In: *Linguistic Diversity in South Asia: Studies in Regional, Social, and Functional Variation*, Charles A. Ferguson and John J. Gumperz (ed.), *Bloomington*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1960, pp. 64-80.

³⁰ Chowdhur, pp. 64-65, 75, 76

³¹ Chowdhury, Munier, Bangla Gadyareeti (Bengali: Bengali Prose Style), Dhaka: Central Board for Development of Bengali, 1970, pp. 51-101

Pakistani writers the one who used Perso-Arabic words with great skill was Shaukat Osman. Chowdhury has given a list of such words and phrases for example, *kabira* (Major), *kabil* (*capable*), *kamal* (perfect), *ibnul wakt* (opportunist, timeserver), *hayat maut* (life and death). ³² Chowdhury's list covered Arabic loanwords used mostly in the speech of the common people and in the works of writers like Abu Rushd, Abul Mansoor Ahmed, Ibrahim Khan, Shahed Ali, Alauddin Al-Azad, Shamsuddin Abul Kalam, Syed Waliullah, Shaukat Osman, Sanaul Haq, Hasan Azizul Haq, and Shahidullah Qaiser.

Afia Dil completed her Ph.D. degree in linguistics at Stanford University in 1972 with her dissertation entitled "The Hindu and Muslim Dialects of Bengali"³³ in which she mentioned that in some ways the Hindu and Muslim dialects of Bengali are similar to the use of Hindi and Urdu dialects of the common lingua franca called Hindustani with one difference that while Hindi spoken by the Hindus was written in the Devanagari script and Urdu spoken by the Muslims was written in the Perso-Arabic script, the differences between the Hindu and Muslim dialects of Bengali did not crystallize in a visible manner because they used the same Bengali script. Only a few Bengali Muslims wrote their Bengali works mainly in the Chittagong area in Perso-Arabic script but this was not taken up by the Muslims of other parts of Bengal.³⁴ However, she pointed out: "The Hindu/Muslim dialects of Bengali do not show regional origin like the Baghdad communal dialects. 35 Bengali communal differences in dialects is more like the Jewish-Muslim differences in Tunisian Arabic, but with the roles reversed, i.e., the Muslim dialect of Bengali has some of the minority characteristics (including influence of a pervasive religious classical language) of the Jewish dialect in Tunis. ... The social isolation of this new Muslim community ... helped in keeping the dialects distinct. ... [Later] the prestige and power of the Muslim ruling class resulted in the acceptance of many Perso-Arabic words in the common core of the language and created a certain

³² Munier Chowdhury, pp. 51-101

³³ In 1991 a slightly revised version of the dissertation was published under the title of *Two Traditions of Bengali Language* (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Academy, 1991; and, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1993.)

³⁴ Dil, Afia, *The Hindu and Muslim Dialects of Bengali*, Stanford University, 1972. [*Two Traditions of the Bengali Language*, Cambridge, UK: The Islamic Academy, 1991, pp. 46-47; Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1993.]

³⁵ Haim Blanc, Communal Dialects in Baghdad. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University, 1964.

pride in the Muslims at having a new linguistic distinctiveness to reflect their new identity."

The main differences between the Hindu and Muslim varieties of Bengali in Afia Dil's words are:

The differences between Hindu and Muslim dialects seem to be most striking in the lexical items. There are also some phonological characteristics that differ. In the realm of morphology and syntax the difference seems to be minimal.

- a) Features of phonology: The phonological difference between the Hindu and Muslim dialects can be noted in the presence of two extra phonemes /s/ and /z/ as separate phonemes: /s/ occurs only in clusters before certain dentals initially and 3 In 1991 a slightly revised version of the dissertation was published under the title of Two Traditions of Bengali Language (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Academy, 1991; and, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1993.) Haim Blanc. 1964. Communal Dialects in Baghdad. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University. medially. Similarly /z/ is not a separate phoneme in Hindu Bengali; it occurs only as a phonetic variant of /j/ in some cases. But Muslims have both /s/ and /z/ with the status of separate phonemes. For example, /sālun/ "curry", /sirkā/ "vinegar", /sāph/ "clean". There are a great many names for the Bengali Muslims that start with /s/, e.g., /selim/, /samad/ (Arabic sd/. Words with /z/ are /zāmān/, /āzād/, /āzīz/which are very distinctively Muslim names and are likely to be pronounced by Hindus as well as some Muslims as /jāmān/, /ājād/ and /ājīj/. The Muslim dialect has some final consonant clusters which are not present in the Hindu dialect, for example: /gošť/ "meat", /dosť/ friend", /d'cover of a book", /hamd"a song in praise of God".
- b) Features of morphology: In the Hindu and Muslim dialects the pronominal forms, the case endings and the verb forms do not show any difference. The only morphological difference may be detected in the use of some Persian and Arabic suffixes. Many such suffixes have been assimilated in the language completely, but some of them still survive as specifically Muslim suffixes. For example, words with prefixes like /k m/ as in /k m ākkel/ "foolish", /k m bakt/"unfortunate" are mostly used by Muslims. The suffix /i/ [nisbā] from Arabic has entered the language in such a way that it is used by all. For example: Bangladesh- Bangladeshi, Bihar-Bihari, pahar-pahari. Hilali in his Perso-Arabic

Elements in Bengali (1967) mentions this form as being borrowed from Persian, but as the form is prevalent in Arabic as well we may assume either.

c) Syntactical differences: In the syntactic structure of Muslim Bengali (MB) as opposed to the Hindu Bengali (HB), we may notice some special use of certain prepositional forms in cases where normally SCB would use postpositional forms. For example, /baadjuma/ "after the Juma prayers" meaning early afternoon, /baadmagreb/ "after the Magreb prayers" meaning after sunset.

d) *Lexical differences*: The greatest divergence in the Hindu and Muslim dialects of Bengali lies in the difference in the lexical items used by the two communities. It appears that the lexicon used by the Hindus and the Muslims differs in certain well-defined semantic areas, such as kinship terminology, proper names and nicknames, forms of address, greetings and politeness formulas, and terms for food and clothing. About one-fourth of the basic vocabulary items of the Muslims are different from those of the Hindus.³⁶

Dil in her discussion of the general verbal and non-verbal behavior of Hindus and Muslims 37 shows the dominance of Arabic elements in the greetings, politeness formulas, verbal signals, and interjections and exclamations like $/assalamo\ alaikum/$, $/haa-e\ Allah/$, $/subhan\ Allah/$, $/maša\ Allah/$. She has also provided a section on the 209-word "Basic Vocabulary" of Bengali. The term Basic Vocabulary of a language is that which has the attributes of historical commonness and persistence without variants and resistance to borrowing, for example, $/m\bar{a}chh/$ (fish), but even in this domain there was a difference in the word for water $/p\bar{a}ni/$ used by Muslims and /jDl/ by Hindus – even though $/p\ \bar{a}ni/$ is a word of Sanskrit origin. The common word /dim/ (egg) has two additional variants in Muslim speech $/\bar{a}nd\bar{a}/$ (Sanskrit origin) and $/bDed\bar{a}/$ (Arabic word). The domain of food shows that even though the same raw materials are used by both the communities as they are cooked and dishes are ready they are given different names. For bath the Hindus use $/sn\bar{a}n/$ and the Muslims use /sosol/. The section on clothing also shows a number of items

³⁶ Dil, Afia, 1972, pp. 32-33; 1991, pp. 48-49

³⁷ Dil, Afia, pp. 75-79

³⁸ Dil, Afia, pp. 137-41

³⁹ Dil, Afia, pp. 87-97

⁴⁰ Dil, Afia, pp. 141-48

⁴¹ Dil, Afia, pp. 148-51

borrowed from Arabic. The influence of Arabic is also well marked in the nearly one hundred items of kinship terminology⁴² and the differences show the two systems of terms as isomorphic in that the terms have translation equivalents but the connotations and behavioral implications may be very different. The section on proper names and nicknames is covered on pages 111-137.

Dil concluded her study as follows: "[The Hindus and Muslims] now speak two distinct varieties of the language, each correlated with communal affiliation, but with a common core in the language shared by both. Even if an individual Bengali does not profess to be either a devout Muslim or an orthodox Hindu, he is unmistakably marked as a Muslim or a Hindu by both his verbal and nonverbal behavior. Though the growing interaction between the two communities may have made each more aware of the other's distinctiveness and there is at present an increase in code-switching and interpenetration of the two dialects, it is possible to conceive that when Hindus and Muslims speak in their own family circles, in their own social spheres, the dialects used by them would be clearly either the Hindu or the Muslim variety." The main feature of distinctness in the Muslim variety is the influence of Arabic and in the Hindu variety of Sanskrit loanwords and cultural outlook. One often comes across Arabic words like *Saiyed*, *Shaikh*, *Maulana* as part of the names of Bengali Muslims.

Monsur Musa⁴³ talked about the usage of Perso- Arabic vocabulary that entered the speech of Bengali Muslims and were used in Bengali newspapers. He noted that in recent years the Bengali newspapers tend to use words of Arabic origin rather than words of Persian origin. For example, *sala*tin place of *namaz*, *siyam* in place of *roza/roja*, *Allah* in place of *Khuda*. He also mentioned that during the month of *Ramadan* (fasting) these words multiply. More importantly, Musa mentioned that the spelling of these loanwords is also undergoing a change, for example, *jama*tis written *jamayat*, *tofsir* as *tafsir*, *moulana as maulana*, *rosul* as *rasul*, *rohmanir rohim* as *rahmanir rahim*. Arabic terms like *aakheri munajaat* (last prayer) and *mahe ramjan* (the month of fasting) are examples of terms that are being used nowadays. Musa observed that sometimes these changes are difficult for the ordinary Bengali Muslims to follow. He gave extensive

⁴² *Ibid*, pp. 97-106

⁴³ Musa, Mansur, Bangladesher Rastrabhasa [Bengali: The State Language of Bangladesh], Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1995, pp. 92-93

examples from Syed Waliullah's novel *Lal Shalu* where the author used a sociolect (also known as *mollabuli* – the dialect of the moulvi) that is used in institutions like the mosque, the dargahs or khanqahs of the saints and the astanas of the dervishes and in religious festivals like *milad*, *wa'j* (sermon), *janaja munajat* (funeral prayers), *jalsa* (festive gatherings), and *bahas* (religious discussions). This sociolect is largely used in the funeral ceremonies. Musa has given a list of seven hundred Perso-Arabic loanwords in which there are a large number of words of Arabic origin.⁴⁴

James Wilce, an American scholar in a recent article (2005) wrote: "There are no large corpus-based linguistic studies of Bengali, let alone of the frequency of Perso-Arabic terms in actual instances of contemporary Bengali discourse. ... According to Hilali (1967) there are 9,000 such loan-words but the relation of such counts to actual usage is unknown." Based on his own research Wilce observed: "Arabic-laden prayers and other speech registers — and metadiscourses on the frequency of loan-words — reflect linguistic ideologies inseparable from postcoloniality and competing nationalisms." He concluded his essay with this observation: "While for some, proliferating loan-words represent an impure accretion on the language of the land of Bengal, for others they can signal the true identity of the Bangladeshi nation-state — an Islamic identity. ... And there are many positions in between, for example, those who celebrate Bengali authors' *playful* use of Perso-Arabic loan-words."

The subject of Arabic loanwords has been acknowledged as an important subject of study and research in a number of languages of the world, especially in areas where Islam has had a deep historic influence in about sixty nation-states in our time that have Muslim majority in population or that call themselves Islamic and/or Muslim nations. Among the languages that have a prominent number of Arabic loanwords mention should be made here of Berber, Catalan, French, Hausa, Indonesian, Italian, Kurdish, Malay, Pashto, Persian, Portuguese, Sicilian, Sindhi, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Turkish, Urdu. A number of the loanwords are not borrowed directly from Arabic into the borrowing language but through an intermediary language, for example, a number of words in Bengali are borrowed through Persian and Urdu languages. Persian, Sicilian, Spanish, Catalan and Portuguese are languages that exemplify

44 Musa, pp. 125-28

the Arabic loanwords directly from Arabic because for centuries they were part of the Arab Empire during the Middle Ages. It is estimated that there are more than four thousand words of Arabic in Spanish. A very large number of toponyms (place names) in Spanish are also Arabic or Arabic derivations. A large number of terms and phrases in Spanish are adapted or translated from Arabic. Turkish language shows a great deal of similar influence because of the more than six centuries of Ottoman Empire (c.1299-1922) and is identified as Ottoman Turkish. It was the revolution of Mustafa Kamal that laid the foundations of the modern Republic of Turkey and under his orders, the Turkish language undertook in 1932 to replace the Arabic and Persian loanwords with words of Turkish origin.

The subject of Arabic loanwords in Bengali has not attracted the attention of Bengali or international scholars as much as it deserves especially because Bangladesh was created as a secular state in 1971 even though some political leaders backed by Islamic groups have been moving it toward a dominantly Muslim state. Unquestionably, the country has been developing very close relations with the Arab world especially with its need to borrow foreign exchange for its development projects especially from Saudi Arabia. In defining its cultural identity a number of political leaders have been emphasizing the importance of Arabic in its educational and socio-cultural programs. The subject of Arabic loanwords is therefore of great importance in Bangladesh in defining its national ideology.

The present paper is an attempt to describe the extensive linguistic and cultural borrowing as it has affected the language and culture of the Muslim Bengal. In fact, the language of present-day Bangladesh with a population of over 158 million shows a continuation of the tradition of borrowing from Arabic. To a Bengali Muslim, the knowledge of Arabic is a sign of his individual and social personality. Through massive borrowing, Bengali Muslims have carved for themselves a new identity in their way of speech and have created a new Bengali Muslim dialect.

2. Varieties of Arabic

Arabic is spoken by over 600 million people over the area from Morocco to the Persian Gulf. It is one of the six international languages used officially in the United Nations. The most important variety of Arabic is the Classical Arabic in

which the Qur'an is written which has continued as the Standard Arabic for more than fourteen centuries. It has a large variety of spoken dialects known as Colloquial Arabic. The colloquial varieties of Arabic show great variations, but the speakers of these dialects all consider themselves to be speaking Arabic, as it happens in Bengali. Even when the dialects are sometimes mutually unintelligible, speakers still claim that they are speaking the same language. Various scholars have studied the existence of classical and colloquial Arabic in a diglossia relationship. 45

Some of the colloquial varieties in Arabic (as happens in all languages) are regarded as more prestigious than others. For example, the dialects of important cities like Cairo, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, are all considered to be more "prestigious" than those of less important places. Speakers of these standard dialects often believe that their variety is closest to the Standard Language of the Qur'an. The fact that Arabic has spread far and wide as a language of business and has close contact with other languages around the world has produced forms of pidginized Arabic that are found, for example, in East and South Africa.

The variety called Modern Standard Arabic, according to Charles Ferguson, a leading scholar of Arabic, is the uniform language used all over the Arab world as the medium of written as well as oral communication. It is used in radio broadcasts, on the stage, in formal speeches, lectures or sermons, and on any formal occasion. Modern Standard Arabic differs very little from Classical Arabic (Abboud, 1968), which is the language of the Qur'an and the literary language of pre-Islamic poetry as well as the best Arabic literature. But it is the language of the Qur'an, that is Classical Arabic, that has traveled the most into various countries, though a number of dialects also have traveled through the Arab traders and the religious preachers and saints.

It is often difficult to know whether an Arabic loanword in Bengali has come directly from an Arabic dialect or through an intermediary of other languages, e.g., Persian and Turkish. In his discussion of the foreign loanwords in Bengali,

⁴⁵ Ferguson, Charles A, "Diglossia", Word, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1959, pp. 325-40; Dil, Afia, "Diglossia in Bangla: A Study of Shifts in the Verbal Repertoire of the Educated Classes in Dhaka, Bangladesh", in Joshua A. Fishman (ed.), The Fergusonian Impact: II: Sociolinguistics and the Sociology of Language, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1986, pp. 451-65.

Suniti Kumar Chatterjee 46 stated that Arabic loanwords came into Bengali through Persian: "Arabic words have come into Bengali through the medium of Persian, after these were naturalized in that language and had conformed to its phonetics: as such, they are to be treated as Persian words." In support of this statement, he pointed out in a footnote that: "Bengal was never settled in by any considerable body of Arabs from whom Arabic words might be borrowed by the people of the land." He also mentioned that there is no instance of borrowing the word initial Arabic article /al/, so characteristic of Arabic nouns and adjectives. It is a known fact that in Spain, where Spanish speakers came in intimate contact with the Arabic speaking Moors, Spanish has borrowed Arabic words with the article /al/ that has gone to other countries in Southern America where Spanish is spoken. When Persian borrowed Arabic words, it "received most of its Arabic elements more through books than through contact with Arabic speakers" and that is why Persian has no /al/ as a part of its borrowed Arabic words. Bengali also does not have /al/ as a part of its borrowed Arabic words, because Bengali borrowed Arabic mainly through Persian. The present essay is not the place where a lengthy argument can be presented to show how far this conjecture is true, but a few points deserve to be put on record. It is quite clear from historical records that more than one Arabic dialect has been the source of Arabic loanwords in Bengali. People who came from Arabia were from different parts of the Arabic speaking regions and naturally they brought in different dialects of Arabic.

It is not true that Bengal was never settled in by any considerable body of Arabs from whom Arabic words might be borrowed by the people of the land. Even before the political conquest of Bengal by Muhammad Bakhtiar in 1204 A.D., the ground was well prepared to receive the Muslim rulers by the presence of a large number of Muslims in the country. Many Sufi dervishes, missionaries and religious leaders had started to come to Bengal from the 8th century A.D., and a number of businessmen from Arabia, and Persia even before that time had been carrying on trade by sea-route with the Bengalees.

The present study has taken examples from the Classical Arabic as the basis for analysis to show the variations that have taken place in the process of borrowing. In other words, we have assumed that all the loanwords have been

⁴⁶ Chatterji, Suniti Kumar, *The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language*, Vols. 1 & 2, First published by University of Calcutta Press, Calcutta, 1926, p. 559.

borrowed from Classical Arabic, even though in reality, many of them must have come through a number of varieties of Arabic as well as other related languages, which themselves had borrowed them from Arabic, for example, Persian and Turkish. The distinct differences in the phonological structure of Bengali spoken by Muslims might have been affected by the extensive Arabic borrowings. Some loanwords often have learned connotations but a large number of them are of ordinary, everyday usage, for example, *thom* (garlic) and *mouz* (banana).

It is possible that Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee being a Hindu, and not being in a position to observe closely the Muslims in their everyday situations, could not really measure the central position that Arabic holds in a Muslim household and consequently the effect Arabic has on their speech. The simple fact that Bengali, like Persian, does not borrow the article (al) of Arabic words should not lead persons to conclude that it is not Arabic but Persian as the source of such borrowings. In fact, one could say that if Persian could borrow such a large number of Arabic words without the Arabic /al/, there is no reason why Bengali cannot borrow Arabic words without it. It is only an article which adds definiteness to the noun or the adjective. Ordinary Arabic words in citation forms are always without the /al/.In general, it is also found that languages do not borrow articles from another language. They mostly borrow substantives. We all know that even though we have borrowed a large number of English words, we have not borrowed the article 'the' or 'a'.

According to Dr. Enamul Haq, "Bengali has never been outside the pale of Muslim influence from the period of its inception to the period of its modern development. During its formative period (900 A.D. to 1200 A.D.), the language came in contact with Islam through missionary and maritime activities of the Muslims of Arabia and Persia. ... These commercial relations were undoubtedly strengthened by the influx of a band of Muslim missionaries known as *Darwishes*, men like Sultan Bayizid Bistami (d. 874 A.D.), ... ".⁴⁷ He also mentioned Shah Niamatullah Butshikan, who built a Khanqah or monastery at Khilgaon, now known as Dilkusha Bagh in Dhaka. Even though no one can be very precise about the extent of influence of these early merchants and saints on the people of Bengal, it is true that they did lay the

⁴⁷ Enamul Huq, 1962, p. 103

foundation of the Muslim faith in Bengal and definitely exercised influence on the culture of the people and their speech.

It is not only the number of Muslims who came to settle in Bengal that determined the borrowing; it is the influence of the religion that came and changed the character of the people who accepted Islam because it broke down the barriers of the caste system and introduced the principles of equality of all people and social justice. The Bengalees, after they became Muslims, were required to read the Qur'an in Arabic and say their prayers in Arabic. This requirement is as strong today as it was centuries ago. Muslims all over the world have to read the Qur'an in Arabic and have to say their prayers five times a day in Arabic. Even though common people do not understand the Qur'an when they read it, there are a large number of scholars in the region who read the Qur'an with understanding. In recent decades the Qur'an has been translated in Bengali for understanding the meaning, but the reading of the translation is considered supplementary to reciting of the original Qur'an in Arabic. Moreover, Muslims are required to go on pilgrimage to Mecca once in their lifetime and every year thousands of Muslims have been going to Mecca for pilgrimage. The pilgrims go and stay there as long as they can afford to and when they come back they always bring back some Arabic words that they learned to use there and a number of them have entered into the Bengali language.

There has been a long-standing tradition in Bengal to send boys to Arabic schools and colleges, known as *maktabs* and *madrasas*, before they go to regular schools. Many persons in positions of importance in several fields including university professors had their early education in Arabic in madrasas before they were sent to schools. When the saints were settled in Bengal, they always had *khanqas* established, where people got their education. It is more likely than not that Arabic was one of the languages used in those *khanqas*.

Most Bengali Muslim names are chosen from the Qur'an. These are generally the names and epithets of Allah (God), the names of Prophet Muhammad and other prophets mentioned in the Qur'an. Other common names are taken from the caliphs and the saints of Islam. Literate parents try to find the child's first name from the Qur'an. Illiterate parents try to find the same from a moulvi or from a respected literate person in the locality. Besides the religious sources, other important sources of names for Muslims are nature, plants, animals,

minerals and other elements as well as characteristics of the human mind. Even here, the first choice is sure to be Arabic or Persian. For example, it is quite common to have a Muslim girl called /nasimā/ "breeze", /hāoā/ "breeze", /hābībā/ "beloved", /jāmīlā/ "beautiful", /hālīmā / "patient/, /lūlū/ "pearl" and so on.

3. Expected Changes in Vowel Sounds in Bengali

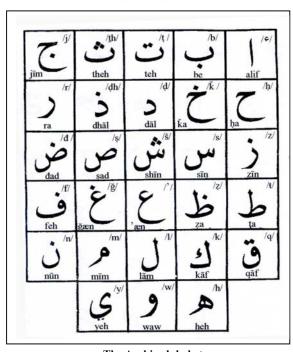
The Standard Colloquial Bengali has a simple vowel system consisting of seven (eight, according to some scholars) vowel sounds /i e æ a o o u/ and Arabic has an even simpler vowel system with only three short vowels /i a u/ where /a/ corresponds more or less to /ə/ as in English "but" and three long vowels /ī ā ū/, where a corresponds to English /æ/ as in "bat". Superficially speaking, therefore, it would appear that Bengali speakers would have no problem in transferring the Arabic vowel sounds in the loanwords. But it is not that simple, as explained below. Length is not phonemic in Bengali, so, the very first change that occurs in the borrowed words is that the distinction in length in Arabic is not maintained. Generally speaking, Bengali vowels tend to be long in monosyllabic words and short otherwise. Our survey of the vowel changes in Bengali shows that Arabic short vowels are realized as the corresponding low vowels, depending on the following vowel. In other words, if the following vowel is the low short /a/, the high vowels are lowered, i.e., /i/ is lowered to /e/, and /u/ is lowered to /o/; but if /a/ is followed by high vowels it is raised to /o/ if followed by /u/ and to /e/ if it is followed by /i/. The Arabic short vowels /i, a, u/ when final are not changed. While examining the correspondence of Arabic vowels with Bengali vowels one has also to remember that in Arabic no word starts with a vowel. It always starts with a consonant, and as Bengali does not have any equivalent sound for hamza or 'æn, 48 words beginning with hamza or 'æn sound to a Bengali ear as if they are vowel sounds. The alif, which Arabic uses as the seat for hamza also adds to the misguidance because to a Bengalee the alif stands for the vowel sound /ā/ rather than the consonant. Thus, in words that start with hamza or 'æn, the Bengalees always drop the hamza or the 'æn, and there is a compensatory lengthening of the short vowel, whether a fatah /a/, kasrah /i/ or damma /u/, either at the beginning or the middle of a word.

⁴⁸ In Arabic is the glottal stop.

3.1 Arabic /a/ and /a/

Following the preceding rule we find that while Arabic $/\bar{a}/$ is always realized as Bengali /a/, Arabic /a/ while generally realized as Bengali low rounded /3/ shows variations.

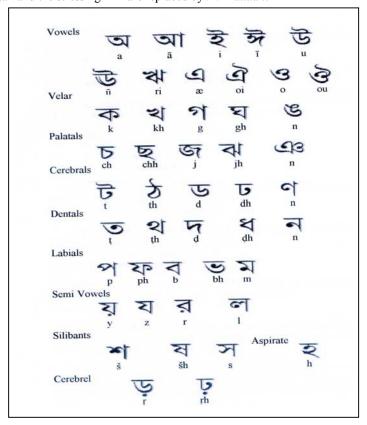
For example, Arabic /ā/ → Bengali /a/:
/hawā/ → /hāwā/ (air)
/harām/ → /hārām/ (not permitted)
/ḍā→ /ḍān/ (shop, stall)
/munāsib/ → /munāsib/ (suitable)



The Arabic alphabet
The Arabic alphabet is read, unlike English, from right to left.

Alif / † / is really the seat of the sound of the glottal stop / $^{\bullet}$ / Hamza, which can be found initially, medially and finally in a word. Arabic never starts a word with a vowel sound. Arabic has no vowel letters but three signs for the short vowels: 1) Fatah / $^{\bullet}$ O/ which goes on the top of a letter has the value of a short /a/; 2) Kasrah / $^{\bullet}$ O / which goes under the letter has the value of a short /i/; 3) Dammah / $^{\bullet}$ O / goes on the top of the letter and has the value of a short /u/. All these three vowels can be made into long vowels with the help of a consonant

symbol with it. The short /a/ becomes \bar{a} when the *fatah* is followed by an *alif*, the short /i/ becomes long / $\bar{\imath}$ /when followed by the letter /y/, and the short /u/ becomes / \bar{u} / when followed by /w/. / **O** / *Shaddah* indicates that the consonant is duplicated. When the consonant of the enlongated Fatah is Alif the signs of the Fatah and the stressing Alif are replaced by / \bar{u} / *Maddah*.



The Bengali Alphabet

The Bengali alphabet is read, like English, from left to right.

Variations

1) In syllables with initial consonants other than *hamza* or 'aen, Arabic /a/ is realized as Bengali low round /D/, as in:

 $/\check{k}abar/ \rightarrow /khbbr/ (news)$

 $\frac{\lambda}{\Delta}$ /talab/ → $\frac{\lambda}{\Delta}$ (demand or need)

```
/qabađ / → /kɔbɔj/ (constipation)
```

2) All syllables with Arabic /a/ with *hamza* or 'aen as initial or middle consonants, are realized as Bengali /ā/, for example:

```
/'allāhu/ → /āllāhu/ (O God)
/'awwal/ → /āwwāl/ (first)
/'aql/ → /ākkel/ (reason)
/ba'ḍ/→/bāḍ/ (after)
```

 $/jama'/ \rightarrow /j Dm\bar{a}/ (addition)$

3) If the Arabic $\langle a \rangle$ is followed by a consonant cluster, it is generally realized as a Bengali $\langle \bar{a} \rangle$, for example:

/haml/ → /hāmel/ (pregnant))

4) If the Arabic /a/ is followed by the high vowel /i/ it is often realized as Bengali /o/

```
/naṣīb/ → /nosīb/ (destiny)
/šarīk/→/šorīk/ (partner)
```

5) In some cases Arabic /a/ is realized as Bengali /i/, where /a/ is followed by a consonant cluster and a high vowel, as in:

```
/sanduq/ \rightarrow /sinduk/ (box)
```

6) Words in Arabic which end in *taa marbuuta* (tat the end of words) lose it as well as the nunation in pausal form. For example,

/mālikatun/ is pronounced as /mālikā/.

When such words are borrowed in Bengali (the nunation is never borrowed), the /h/ is dropped and the final Arabic \bar{a} is produced as Bengali \bar{a} , for example: /huqqah/ \rightarrow /hukkāh/ \rightarrow /hukkāh/ (tobaccopipe).

7) If the Arabic short /a/ is followed in the second syllable by the corresponding long \sqrt{a} , it is realized in Bengali as \sqrt{a} / rather than $\sqrt{2}$ /.

```
/talāq/ → /tālāk/ (divorce)
/harām/ → /hārām/ (forbidden)
```

3.2 Arabic /i/ and /ī/

It appears that Arabic /i/ and /ī/ are both realized as Bengali /i/, but whereas Arabic /ī/ is always realized as Bengali /i/, Arabic short /i/ is realized, in a few cases, as the Bengali middle front vowel /e/ and low vowel /a/. For example:

```
/qibla/ → /keblā/~/kiblā/

/ṣāt/ → /serāṭ/~/sirāṭ/ (straight)

/bāliġ/ → /bāleg/~/bālɔg/ (adult)

/lihāf/→ /lep/ (quilt)

/naṣīb/ → /nosīb/ (destiny)

/ṭārk/ → /ṭarīkh/ (history, date)

/śarīk/ → /šorik/ (partner)
```

```
/kāfir/ → /kāfer/~/kāfir/ (nonbeliever)
/masjiḍ/ → /mošjiḍ/ (mosque)
/'iṭr/ → /āṭɔr/ (perfume)
/mīlāḍ/ → /milāḍ/ (birthday celebration of the Prophet Muhammad)
/kiṭā→ /kiṭāb/~/keṭā/ (religious books)
```

In the examples cited above, in only one case the Arabic /'/ becomes $/\bar{a}/.$

3.3 Arabic /u/ and /ū/

The Arabic long $/\bar{u}/$ is realized as Bengali /u/ in all cases and the short /u/ is realized as /u/ if followed by the low vowel /u/ in the next syllable. For example,

```
/tūfān/~/tuphān/ (storm, tempest)
/muk̃ālif/~/mukhāliph/~/mokhaliph/ (opponent, enemy)
/munāsib/~/munāsib/ ~/monāsib/ (proper, appropriate)
```

In other words, generally speaking, all the long vowels of Arabic are realized by the corresponding vowels in Bengali. Arabic $/\bar{a}/\to Bengali$ /a/, Arabic / $\bar{i}/\to Bengali$ /i/, and Arabic / $\bar{u}/\to Bengali$ /u/. But the short vowels differ in their realization. Generally speaking, however, Arabic /a/ is realized as Bengali low round /D/, /u/ as /o/, and /i/ as /e/.

4. Consonant Sounds

4.1 *Arabic* → /b/

The Arabic /b/ is realized as Bengali /b/ in all positions:

```
/baḍala/ → /bɔḍɔl/ (to replace)
/barkāṭun/→ /bɔrkāṭ/ (blessing)
/bayān/ → /bɔyān/ (clear manifestation)
/baqiya/ → /bɔkeya/ (debt)
/bakīl/ → /bokhīl/ (miser)
/bāin/ → /bāin/ (final)
/jaib/ → /jeb/ (pocket)
/qibla/ → /keblā/ (the direction of the Ka'ba)
/tabl/ → /ṭablā/ (a small drum)
```

4.2 *Arabic ∸ /***t**/

```
The Arabic /t/ is realized as Bengali /t/ in all positions:
```

```
/zakāṭ/ → /zākāṭ/ ~/jākāṭ/ (poor-due)
/ṭarjama/ → /ṭɔrjɔmā/ (translation)
/faṭiḥa/ → /phāṭehā/ (the opening chapter of the Quran)
```

/th/ ٹ 4.3 *Arabic ٹ*

The Arabic $/\underline{t}h/$ is realized as Bengali dental /s/ in all positions. In one dialect however, the present writer heard $/\underline{t}h/$ being realized as Bengali stop /th/, which is nearer the pronunciation of Arabic $/\underline{t}h/$.

```
/thawāb/ → /sDoāb/ (requital, merit)
/kauthar/ → /kausār/ (plentiful)
/baḥatha/ → /bāhās/ (to look, research)
/haḍīt/ → /hāḍīs/~/ hāḍīchh/ (Prophet's saying or tradition)
/thaum/ → /thom/ (garlic)
```

4.4 Arabic > /j/

The Arabic /j/ is pronounced as Bengali /j/ in all positions.

```
/jubba/ → /jubbā/ (a long garment)

/jalsa/ → /jɔlsā/ (to sit)

/jama'a/ → /jɔmā/ (to gather, collect)

/jāmi'aṭ/ → /jāmiā/ (university)

/jāhilun/ → /jāhel/ (ignorant)

/hajj/ → /hɔj/ (pilgrimage)
```

/darājātun/ \rightarrow /dɔrjā/ (door, entry). In Arabic other meanings are (step, ladder, rank, position)

4.5 *Arabic* > /h/

The Arabic /h/ is a voiceless pharyngeal fricative, and it is realized as Bengali /h/ which is a voiced velar fricative, in all positions. But /h/ is very rare in the final position in Bengali

```
/ḥujra/ → /hujrā/
/ḥarb/ → /hɔrɔb/ (war)
/ḥukm/ → /hukum/ (government)
/ḥamḍ/ → /hamḍ/ (praise)
/ḥā→ /hāl/ (condition)
/ḥarf/ → /hɔrɔf/ (letter)
/ḍabaḥ/ → /jɔbāh/ (sacrifice)
/ḥā→ /hišāb/ (count)
/wāḥeḍ/ → /wāheḍ/ (one)
```

4.6 *Arabic ċ* /**k**/

The Arabic $/\check{k}/$ is a voiceless velar fricative, and as Bengali does not have a voiceless velar fricative, it is substituted by the velar aspirated stop /kh/. $/\check{k}/$ is rather infrequent in the final position.

```
/k̃abar/ → /khɔbɔr/ (news)
/k̃iḍmaṭ/→/kheḍmɔṭ/ (service)
/k̃āṣ/ → /khās/ (special)
```

```
/kalifa/ → /kholifā/ (representative)

/mukliṣ/ → /mukhlis/ (sincere)

/ḍakalā/ → /ḍɔkhɔl/ (to enter)

/katama/ → /khɔtɔm/ (to seal)

/bakt/ → /bɔkht/ (luck)

/bakšiš/ → /bokhšiš/ (tip)

/šayk/ → /šekh/ (chief)
```

4.7 *Arabic* △ /**d**/

The Arabic voiced dental stop is pronounced in Bengali as a voiced dental stop in all positions.

```
/dakala/ → /dɔkhɔl/ (to capture)
/mad̞rasaṭun/ → /mad̞rasā/ (Arabic teaching school)
/duniyā/ → /duniā/ (world)
/daolaṭun/ → /doulat̞/ (wealth, property)
/dī/ → /d̄ɪn/ (religion)
/dɪā→ /dinār/ (dinar)
/mayd̄a→ /mɔyd̄ān/ (open place)
/hamd/ → /hāmd̞/ (praise of God)
/mīlād/ → /milād/ (Birth celebration of Prophet Muhammad)
```

4.8 Arabic $\stackrel{.}{\rightarrow}$ |**d**/ interdental voiced fricative

Generally Arabic /d/ is substituted by Bengali voiced dental stop /d/. Bengali does not have any interdental fricative, voiced or voiceless. While the Arabic voiceless interdental fricative /th/ is substituted by the voiceless dental stop /th/, the voiced interdental fricative / dh/ is substituted by the alveopalatal voiced affricate /j/. Among some of the sophisticated Muslims, however, it is sometimes substituted by the alveolar voiced fricative /z/, which is absent in Bengali phonology. However, the phoneme /z/ is a part of the Muslim Bengali dialect. ⁴⁹ This apparent anomaly is represented in the writing system as well. Ordinarily speaking the borrowed words would be spelt by {j}, the voiced alveolar affricate, but {j} for the sound /z/ is also used, and after 1947, the use of the letter {z} has become very popular with the Muslims. The use of the symbol {z} had become a symbol of the Islamization process that went on in the country. A subcommittee for the spelling reconstruction in Bengali founded by the Bengali Academy had recommended that to transliterate English and

⁴⁹ Dil, Afia, The Hindu and Muslim Dialects of Bengali.

Arabic, Bengali should use $\{z\}$. But the recommendations had never been accepted in practice.⁵⁰ But while the use of $\{z\}$ is common for the Arabic /d/, in a very interesting and frequently occurring example /d/ is substituted by the Bengali /j/, an affricate, for example /dikr/ \rightarrow /jikir/ (recital of God's names and attributes) and Arabic /dabh/ \rightarrow /jbāh/ (to slaughter).

/r/ د 4.9 Arabic

In all positions Arabic /r/ is substituted by Bengali /r/.

```
/rabbun/ → /rɔb/ (God)
/rahmaṭ/ → /rɔhmɔṭ/ (beneficence)
/rasūl/ → /rosūl/ (prophet)
/rūh/ → /rūh/ (spirit)
/qabar/ → /kɔbɔr/ (grave)
/harf/ → /hɔrɔph/ (letter, syllable)
/ḍaṭṭar/ → /ḍɔpḥṭɔr/ (notebook, copybook, journal ledger)
/ākiraṭ/ → /ākhirāṭ/ (the other world)
```

/z/ خ 4.10 *Arabic*

Bengali does not have any /z/ sound ordinarily. But it has been accepted by the Muslims in their dialect, mainly in personal names, but in everyday conversation Arabic /z/ is rendered as the Bengali /j/. But as has been mentioned earlier, ever since 1947 Muslim Bengalees, under the influence of Urdu language, have learnt to make the distinction between /z/ and /j/ and a new phoneme /z/ has sprung up.⁵¹ Thus most of the words with /z/ are pronounced with both /j/ and /z/. It is not rare, therefore, to find someone saying /zaman/ instead of /jaman/. This trend is also visible in the new spellings innovated for these words:

```
/zamāna/ → /jamānā/ (time)

/wazīr/ → /ujir/ (minister)

/wazn/ → /ojon/ (weight, measure)

/zakāṭ/ → /jākāṭ/ (poor-due)

/mizān/ → /mijān/ (balance, scale)

/fāyez/ → /phāyej/ (successful)
```

⁵⁰ Chowdhury, Munier, Bangla Gadyareeti (Bengali: Bengali Prose Style), Dhaka: Central Board for Development of Bengali, 1970, p. 11

⁵¹ Dil, Afia, The Hindu and Muslim Dialects of Bengali.

/s/ س 4.11 *Arabic*

Arabic /s/ is represented in Bengali as /s/, but Bengali has no initial /s/ except in the speech of Bengali Muslims. Thus we encounter two pronunciations of Arabic /s/, both /s/ and /š/. In words that are used mostly or only by the Muslims, the initial /s/ is retained as /s/, otherwise it is pronounced as /š/, initially and sometimes even medially, e.g., in /sɔphɔr/ for Arabic /safar/ (journey), and /hišāb/ for Arabic /ḥisāb/ (account, reckoning, calculation, arithmetic). In some cases where /s/ is a part of a consonant cluster, in some dialects /s/ even disappears, for example, /mošjid/ ~ /mojid/.

```
/safar/ → /sɔphɔr/ (travel)

/salām/ → /sālām/ (greeting)

/sunnaṭ/ → /sunnaṭ/

/sana/ → /šɔn/ (year)

/masjiḍ/ → /mošjiḍ/ (mosque)

/ḥisāb/ → /hišāb/ (count)

/nafis/ → /nophis/ (precious)

/nafs/ → /naphs/ (soul)
```

4.12 Arabic ش /š/

Arabic /\$/ is a voiceless alveopalatal fricative and is pronounced as Bengali /\$/ in all positions.

```
/šarbat/ → /šɔrbɔt/ (sweet drink)
/šarāb/ → / šɔrāb/ (wine)
/mašriki/ → /mašriki/ (eastern)
/muškilat/ → /muškil/ (problem)
/šāmil/ → /šāmil/ (to include)
/šaytān/ → /šaytān/ (devil)
/šaks/ → /šɔkhs/ (individual, person)
/farš/ → /phɔrāš/ (furnishing, household effects)
/ištāhār/ → /ištehār/ (advertisement)
```

4.13 *Arabic* ص / **ج**/

Arabic /ṣ/ is a velarized voiceless alveolar s. It is realized in Bengali as /š/ except in some words of Muslim Bengali where it is realized as /s/. In some cases the /ṣ/ is realized as /ch~chh/, e.g., Arabic /qiṣṣa/ \rightarrow /kissā/~/kichchhā/.

```
/şubahun/ → /subāh/ (morning)
/ṣabara/ → /sobur/~/sɔbɔr/~/šobur/ (patience)
/ṣā→ /šāhārā/ (desert)
/ṣaḍarun/ → /sɔdɔr/ (chest)
```

```
/ṣaḍaqatun/ → /saḍkā/ (alms, charitable giving)
/miṣr/ → /mišɔr/ (Egypt)
/ṣaḍiq/ → /sāḍek/ (friend)
/ṣiḍḍiq/ → /siḍḍik/ (upright)
```

4.14 *Arabic* ض /**đ**/

The emphatic /d/, a velarized voiced alveolar stop, is realized as Bengali voiced alveopalatal affricate /j/ all the time. However, nowadays there is a tendency among the Bengali Muslims to substitute /z/ in place of /j/ in many of the words, e.g., /qāđi/ may be /kāji/ or /kāzi/.

```
/fard/ → /phɔrɔj/ (duty, precept)
/qabđā/ → /kɔbjā/ (hinge)
/fudūl/ → /phojūl/ (excessive, superfluous)
/darūri/ → /jorūri/ (necessary)
/fadl/ → /phɔjɔl/ (to bestow, grant, confer, deign)
/qadā/ → /kājā/~/kāzā/ (complete)
```

4.15 Arabic → /ŧ/

Arabic /t/, a voiceless velarized alveolar stop, is realized as Bengali /t/, a voiceless dental stop. In other words, there is no distinction in Bengali speech between Arabic /t/ and Arabic /t/.

```
/tariqun/ → /torikā/ (way)
/talāq/ → /talāk/ (divorce)
/taraf/ → /tɔrɔph/ (side, party, estate)
/maŧlab/ → /mɔṭlɔb/ (wish, desire)
/fitrat/ → /phitrāt/ (creation, nature)
/bāṭalā/ → /bāṭil/ (to become void, null)
/ṣirāt/ → /sirāt/ (way, path, road)
```

4.16 *Arabic ≟ /***Z**/

The emphatic /z/, voiced velarized fricative, is realized as Bengali /j/ in all positions. Among the Bengali Muslims, it is also realized as /z/.

```
/zuhrun/ → /johor/ ~ /zohor/ (noon)
/nazar/ → /nɔjor/ (eyesight, vision)
/zulm/ → /julum/ (wrong, inequity)
/zālim/ → /jālim/ (unjust, unfair)
/zāhir/ → /jāhir/ (helper, assistant)
/izhār/ → /ijhār/ ~ /ejhār/ (exposition, exhibition)
/ğalīz/ → /golīj/ (dirt, filth, foul)
```

4.17 Arabic / '/ و

Arabic 'æn is a glottal stop which is absent in Bengali sound system. It is, therefore, substituted by the simple vowel /a/

```
/'ajābun/ → /ājɔb/ (astonishing)
/'arabiy/ → /ārbi/ (Arabic)

/'aql/ → /ākɔl/ (reason, intelligence)
/'ursun/ → /urus/ (wedding, celebrations in the memory of a saint)
/'azīz/ → /ājīj/ (friend, male name)
/'ilm/ → /elem/ (knowledge)

/'ālam/ → /ālɔm/ (universe)
/'alim/ → /ālim/ ~ /ālem/ (learned)
/'allāmāh/ → /āllāmā/ (very learned)
/fir'aun/ → /pherāun/ (Pharaoh)
/'amal/ → /āmal/ (doing, acting)
```

4.18 *Arabic* خ /**ğ** /

The Arabic gen, voiced velar fricative g, is realized as the voiced velar stop g in all positions in Bengali.

```
/garīb/ → /gorīb/ (strange, foreign, poor)

/gayrāh/ → /gɔyrɔhɔ/ (other than)

/magrib/ → /magreb/ (West)

/bālig/ → /bāleg/ ~ /bālɔg/ (adolescent)
```

/f/ ف 4.19 *Arabic*

Arabic /f/, a voiceless interdental fricative, is realized in Bengali as a voiceless bilabial aspirated stop /ph/ in all positions.

```
/farq/ → /phārāk/ (difference)
/tafsīl/ → /tophsīl/ (details, meaning)
/haraf/ → /hɔrɔph/ (letter, syllable)
/nafs/ → /nɔphs/ (soul, psyche)
/farš/ → /phɔrāš/ (furnishing, mat, rug, carpet)
/fikr/ → /phikir/ (thinking, consideration, thought)
/ğilāf/ → /gilāph/ (cover, wrap, case)
```

/q/ ق 4.20 *Arabic*

Arabic /q/, an emphatic voiceless uvular stop, is realized in Bengali as a voiceless velar stop /k/.

```
/huqqah/ → /hukkā/ (tobacco-pipe)

/qiṢah/ → /kissā ~ kichchhā/ (story)

/qā'iḍah/ → /kāyḍā(rule, grammar)

/qasāra/ → /kosur/ (fault)
```

```
/q\bar{a}'im/ \rightarrow /k\bar{a}em/ (standing, existing)
          /qiblah/ → /keblā/ ~ /kiblā/ (direction of the Kabah in Mecca)
          /qabūl/ → /kobūl/ (reception)
          /qaul \rightarrow /kDul/ (word, speech, declaration)
          /qatala/ \rightarrow /kctal/ (to kill)
          /qadr/ \rightarrow /k 2d^{2}r/ (extent, scope, quantity, degree, value)
          /taqrīr/ → /tɔkrīr/ (statement)
          /qard/ \rightarrow /k rj/ (usury)
          /qalb/ \rightarrow /kolob/ (heart)
          /haqq/ \rightarrow /h3k/ (true)
          /farq/ → /phārāk/ (difference
4.21 Arabic ⊴ /k/
Arabic /k/, a voiceless velar stop, and /q/, a voiceless emphatic uvular stop, are
interchangeable in Bengali and both are realized as the voiceless velar stop /k/
in all positions.
          /kāfir/ → /kāpher/ (unbeliever)
          /kādhib/ → /kājeb/ (lie, deceit)
          /kisim/ → /kisim/ (cut, style, manner, fashion)
          /makṭab/ → /mɔkṭɔb/ (school, library, bookstore)
          /\text{makr}/ \rightarrow /\text{m3k3r}/ \text{ (fraud, trick, plot)}
          /kafan/ → /kāphon/ (shroud)
          /mālik/ → /mālik/ (king, owner)
4.22 Arabic ∪ /l/
Arabic /l/, a lateral, is realized as Bengali /l/ in all positions.
          /lihāf/ → /lep/ (cover, blanket, bedcover)
          /|\bar{a}|/ \rightarrow /|\bar{a}|/ \text{ (ruby, garnet)}
          /lifāfah/ → /lephāphā/ (covering, cover, envelop)
          /majlis/ → /mojliš/ (session)
          /ĕilāf/ → /gilāph/ (wrap, wrapper, case, box)
          /halāl/ → /hālāl/ (allowed, permissible)
          /lahlaqa/ \rightarrow /lok lok/ (to loll one's tongue with thirst)
/m/ م 4.23 Arabic
Arabic /m/, a voiced bilabial nasal, is realized as Bengali voiced bilabial nasal
/m/ in all positions.
          /m\bar{a}lik/ \rightarrow /m\bar{a}lik/ (king, owner)
          /m\bar{a}l/ \rightarrow /m\bar{a}l/ \text{ (wealth)}
          /hammām/ → /hāmmām/ (bath)
          /madlum/ → /mojlum/ (oppress)
```

```
/makṭab/ → /mɔkṭɔb/ (school with Arabic as medium of instruction)
/mizāj/ → /mijāj/ (temper, mood, frame of mind)
/mum/ → /mom/ (wax)
```

/n/ ن 4.24 *Arabic*

Arabic /n/, a voiced alveolar nasal, is realized as Bengali voiced alveolar nasal /n/ in all positions.

```
/naZar/ → /nɔjor/ (look, glance, view)
/nafs/ → /nɔphs/ (self, soul)
/inteqāl/ → /entekāl/ (to be transferred, to die)
/dīn/ → /dīn/ (religion)
/dinār/ → /dinār/ (money unit)
/adān/ → /ājān/~/āzān/ (call for prayers)
/nūr/ → /nūr/ (light)
```

4.25 *Arabic* **b** /h/

/h/, a voiceless laryngeal fricative, as well as Arabic / h/ are realized as Bengali /h/, a voiced glottal fricative, in all positions. In final positions, however, Arabic /h/ is not produced, so in borrowed words it leaves the preceding vowel long.

```
/haḍiya/ → /hāḍiyā/~/hāḍi/ (gift)
/hābīl/ → /hābīl/ (Abel)
/hijrā/ → /hijraṭ/ (departure, exit)
/muhājir/ → /muhājir/ (emigrant)
/huḍhuḍ/ → /huḍhuḍ/ (Hoopoe bird)
/hāḍī/ → /hāḍi/ (a guide, one who gives directions)
/hilāl/ → /helāl/ (new moon)
/hā hā / → /hā hā/ (to burst into laughter)
/zamānah/ → /zāmānā/~/jāmānā/ (period of time)
```

/w/ و 4.26 *Arabic*

Arabic /w/, a semi-vowel, as a consonant is realized as Bengali /w/, except when the second consonant is followed by a long vowel. In such cases, Arabic /w/ is realized as a vowel which follows rules of Bengali vowel harmony.

```
/wājib/ → /wājeb/ (duty, obligation)
/wazir/ → /ujir/ ~ /uzir/ (minister of state)
/wuṣūl/ → /ušūl/ (arrival, attainment, achievement)
/waḍa/ → /wāḍā/ (promise)
/ḍāt/ → /ḍowāt/ (inkpot)
/ḍāi/ → /ḍāāi/ (medicine)
/wafāt/ → /ophāt/ (death)
/wazn/ → /ojon/ (weight)
/wasīla/ → /usīlā/ (means, medium)
/wuðu / → /oju/ (purity, cleanliness)
```

142 Afia Dil

```
/wakīl/ → /ukīl/ (lawyer)
/tawfīq/ → /touphīk/ (conformation, adaptation)
```

اy/ کی 4.27 Arabic کے ا

Arabic /y/, semi-vowel, is realized as the Bengali semi-vowel /y/ if it is followed by a long vowel or an /e/ in the original word. If not, it is realized as the Bengali vowel /i/ or /e/.

```
/yā/ → /yā/ (vocative particle)

/yāsmīn/ → /yāsmīn / (female name)

/yāqūṭ/ → /yākuṭ/ (precious stone)

/yaqīn/ → /ekīn/ (to be sure, certain)
```

4.28 Arabic / \$ / \$

Arabic / \mathcal{F} / [Hamza] is a glottal stop and it can be heard in the beginning, the middle, and the end of a word. But because Bengali does not have any glottal stop, Bengalees tend not to hear the sound and in borrowed words, they realize it as the accompanying vowel, that is, if the accompanying vowel is /u/ the hamza is realized as /u/, if the accompanying vowel is /a/ it is realized as /a/, and if it is /i/ it is realized as /i/.

```
/su ¢ āl/ → /suāl/ (question)

¢/ ustāḍ/ → /ustāḍ/ (professor)

¢/ insān/ → /insān / (man, human being)

¢/ awwal/ → /āwwāl/ (first, foremost, chief, best)

/i ¢ lān/ → /elān/ (announcement)
```

5. Consonants of Classical Arabic

The twenty-eight characters of the Arabic Alphabet all represent consonant sounds. Vowel sounds are represented by some vowel signs.

5.1 Consonant Clustering

The rule that the first consonant of a morpheme in initial position should always be followed by a vowel excludes the occurrence of initial clusters in Classical Arabic and it has final clusters only in the pausal form. As Bengali does not have initial or final clusters, there is no problem for Bengalees in this case. But when the final cluster of Arabic is used in loanwords, generally the cluster is broken by the insertion of vowels or by the dropping of one of the consonants. For example:

```
/qalb/ → /kɔlɔb/ (heart)
/đulm/ → /julum/ (injustice)
/hajj/ → /hcj/ (pilgrimage)
```

Impact of Arabic 143

6. Morphology

Arabic loanwords have not caused any marked morphological changes in Bengali, maybe because the two languages belong to two different language families – Arabic being a Semitic language and Bengali an Indo-European. The grammatical process of changing words in Arabic is the changing of vowels and addition of consonants rather than adding suffixes and prefixes which are the processes that Bengali uses.

Most of the Arabic borrowings in Bengali are substantives. In the area of names, the Arabic feminine ending {-a}, which is a form of the feminine ending {-atun}, is maintained. Thus while one of the regular Bengali feminine ending is {-i}, Muslims in their feminine proper names use the ending {-a} for femininity. For example, their use of masculine and the corresponding feminine names are:

Masculine	Feminine
shorif	shorifa
habib	habiba
shahan	shahana
rohim	rohima

But though the suffix $\{-a\}$ is maintained and used as a feminine sign in the names, it is not extended to any other words of Bengali origin to signal femininity. Moreover, the actual Arabic ending $\{-at\}$, $\{-atun\}$ as a feminine symbol is not used at all. The other Arabic ending that is used more extensively is the Arabic *nisba* ending $\{-iyyatun\}$, as only $\{-i\}$. Thus from Arabic comes *Arbi*, from Persia comes *Persi*, from Turkish comes *Turki*, and so on. This has extensive use in Bengali, for example, deš (country) \rightarrow deši \sim diši belonging to the country), and, begun (brinjal) \rightarrow beguni (the color of a brinjal). Arabic substantives followed by the neutral verbs $/k \ Ta/$ "do", or $/h \ Ta/$ "be", or /Takha/ "keep" make verbs. For example:

```
/ǧusl/ → /gosol kɔrā/ (to wash)

/qirāṭ/ → /kirāṭ pɔrā/ (to read)

/hajj/ → /hɔj kɔrā/ (to go on a pilgrimage)

/wuðu/ → /oju kɔrā/ (to do ablution)

/ǧolīz/ → /golīs hɔoā/ (to become dirty)
```

144 Afia Dil

	Labial	Inter- dental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveo- Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Laryngeal
Stop vl. vd.	b		ţ d	ŧ đ	j	k	q	,	¢
Fricative vl. vd.		f th d h		s z	š	ș k z ğ		ķ	h
Trill				r					
Lateral				1					
Nasal	m			n					
Semi- vowel	w			у					

7. Some Semantic Domains of Borrowed Arabic Words

The popular opinion about the borrowed words from Arabic in Bengali places them mostly in the domain of religion, law and administration. But, in reality, that is not the case. The borrowings are deep and wide, and cover much larger domains than just religion, law and administration. In fact, as shown by Dil, ⁵² in the ordinary everyday affairs of life, Muslim Bengalees use Arabic words in abundance. It appears that Arabic has been extensively borrowed by the Muslims in the domains of names, greetings and politeness formulas, wishes and invocations, and many social activities. It must be noted also that many references to time, measures and weights are in Arabic.

7.1 Names and Nicknames

A large number of Arabic loanwords have been accepted by the Bengali Muslims in the area of personal names. Every Bengali Muslim, male or female, has a personal name of either Arabic or Persian origin. Even though the boys and girls may have nicknames given to them which are used to address them in their everyday communication, the Muslim names given to them on the 5th day of their birth are always regarded as the /āšol nām/ (real name). Muslims all over Bengal believe that on the Day of Judgment, when everyone will be called to give an account of themselves, they will be called by their 'real names'. In important legal documents, for example, the certificates of birth or death, marriage registrations, etc., the real names are used. ⁵³ Anyone who hears the

⁵² Dil, Afia, The Hindu and Muslim Dialects of Bengali.

For a detailed study of the Personal names and nicknames of Bengali Muslims, see Dil, 1991, pp. 114-17.

Impact of Arabic 145

name of a Bengalee will be able to identify him/her as either a Muslim or Hindu. The most important Arabic name used for a Muslim boy is Muhammad – the name of the Prophet. Ahmad is another one of the Prophet's names that is also quite popular. In Bangladesh, Muhammad can form the part of a boy's name initially, medially or finally. But unlike in some parts of the world where boys can be called Muhammad, among the Bengalees, no boy will be addressed only as Muhammad. This is considered disrespectful to the Prophet.

Other Arabic names also of Islamic origin, comprise the ninetynine names of God (e.g., Rahman, Raheem, Lateef), and the names of other prophets mentioned in the Qur'an (Ibrahim, Musa, Yusuf), names of the first four caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Osman, Ali), companions of the Prophet (Bilal, Khalid), names of holy days, holy months, holy festivals are also used. For example, babies born during Ramadan (Ramzan), the month of fasting, may be called /rɔmjan ali/ or /rɔmjan mia/; boys born on Juma (Friday), the holy day of the week, may be called /jummɔn ali/ or variations of it, persons born on the festival days may be named /iqi mia/ or /iqi bibi/.

It appears that nicknames are generally made out of the "real names" through some well-regulated principles followed by everybody. For example:

Real Name	Nickname		
Shamsul Islam	Shamu		
Nurul Islam	Nuru		
Hasan Alam	Hashu		

After the creation of Bangladesh, it appears that Bengali Muslims have started giving Bengali names to their children. But they are only nicknames. Their real names are still of Arabic or Persian origin. For example, the present researcher asked the name of a Bangladeshi boy and he gave his nickname as "Rumni" and when asked what his real name was, he said it was "Abdur Rahman" – a real Arabic name.

7.2 Greetings and Politeness Formulas

Greetings and politeness formulas are important parts of the linguistic behavior of a people. Hindus and Muslims of Bengal show striking difference in their usage. It is remarkable that though the two communities have lived side by side for about twelve centuries, they have not been able to evolve a common greeting formula.

146 Afia Dil

For greetings, Muslims all over the world use the standard Arabic initiator formula /'ās sālāmu 'ālāikum/ (peace be upon you) and the expected greeting in return is the formula /wā'ālāikumus sālām/ (peace be upon you too). The variants of the greeting are /sālām/ or /selām/ which is one of the uses of the intitial /s/ by the Muslims even though Bengali does not have any initial /s/. Other greetings used by Muslims are /īd mubārɔk/ used generally during the days preceding the /'id/ which are Muslim religious festivals. As a leave-taking formula Muslims also use the Arabic phrase /fī āmānillā/ (may you be in the protection of Allah). For goodbye the Bengali formula used is /khuḍā hāfez/ or /Allāh hāfez/ (may God be your savior).

To express happiness over anything for oneself or for other people, Muslims invariably use the Arabic formula /'dulilla/ (praise be to God). If one has occasion to praise somebody for something one says /māšāllā / (with the grace of God).

A Muslim is required to say *Bismillah* (In the name of God) for everything that he/she is going to say or do, so much so that it becomes a second nature with him/her. When a Muslim hears good news he says *Alhamdulillah* (Praise be to God). In many cases this becomes a reply to the enquiry "How are you?" with the implication that "I am fine, thanks be to God". When he sneezes he says *alhamdulillah*, when he sees something beautiful or extra special he says *subhanallah* (Glory be to God), and when he is ashamed of something he says *astagfirullah* (May God forgive). In more sophisticated families when children take leave from friends or parents they leave with *fiamanillah* (May you be in the protection of God). If somebody dies, the hearer of the news recites *inna lillahe wa inna ilaihe rajiun* (Certainly we belong to God and certainly to Him we return). When guests are seated for dinner, a Muslim will say /bismillā korūn/ meaning (please start eating in the name of God).

While planning to do something in the future, a Muslim will invariably add /inšallah/ (If God wills). When somebody sneezes, it is polite for a Muslim to say /ālhamḍulillāh/ (praise be to God) and a more sophisticated Muslim will also say /yā ārhāmkomullāh/ (may God have mercy).

If a Bengali Muslim wants to express his disapproval of anything he himself or someone else might have done, he expresses it by saying /āsṭāgphirullā/ (may God forgive). Sometimes he might say the whole formula for emphasis /āsṭāgphirullā rābbi min kulli jāmbeo wāṭūbu ilāihe/ (may God forgive). This

Impact of Arabic 147

does not have to be for any religious lapse, it can be anything and the expression /āsṭāgphirullā/ covers asking forgiveness of God if one has done anything wrong anywhere.

Just as a Muslim will expresses his wonder and admiration of something by saying /subhānāllā/ (God be praised for His glory) to express disgust for something he will say /nāujubillā/ (We seek protection of God).

On hearing about the death of a person a Muslim says /innā lillāhi wā innā ilāihi rājiūn/ (Certainly from God we come and certainly we return to God).

When one hears something unbelievable and unpleasant at the same time, a Muslim will say /lā hāolā wālā kuoṭāillā billā/ (There is no fear and strength except in God). This is also used in its short form /lā hāola/ (no fear).

n order to repent for something or to say that one is sorry for anything that should not have been done, it is very common for a Muslim to say /taubā/ (I repent).

The Muslims refer to their elders as /murrubi/ (my benefactor) rather than the Bengali Hindu term /gurujon/. They ask for forgiveness by saying /māph korun/ (forgive me) rather than the Sanskrit term /khɔmā korun/.

/jālāṭn korishnā/ (Do not bother me) is often used by Muslims if they are irritated by somebody. This is also an Arabic word combination: /jālā/ (exile) and /wātān/ (home, motherland) making /jālāṭn/ (to vex somebody). It is a frequently used expression.

The Eid-ul-Fitr, the day after the month of Ramadan (fasting) and Eid-ul-Azha celebrating the sacrifice of his son by Prophet Abraham as well as the birthday of Prophet Muhammad are celebrated by every Muslim in Bengal. The *Shab-e-Baraat* (The Night of Illumination of the 15th of Shaban in Muslim calendar) is especially celebrated with prayers and illumination. *Lailatul Qadr* in the month of Ramadan is celebrated with all-night prayers. The martyrdom of Imam Husain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad is especially observed with great solemnity and ceremonies. Thus through a large number of sayings, use of words, prayers, customs and habits a Muslim's mind is made to accept Arabic as his very special language and Arabic culture is looked upon as his own culture. Use of Arabic becomes to him a social symbol of prestige and sophistication. But even though a Bengali Muslim says all these and other Arabic words and phrases, his pronunciation of them differs substantially from the original Arabic, and the semantic realization also is changed in many cases.

148 Afia Dil

7.3 Wishes and Invocations

Wishes and invocations expressed by a people are definite indicators of their aspirations. In Bengali culture, if anybody goes to see a newborn child (going to visit a newborn child is a social "must") or if a child is presented to an elderly person, the latter will always say a little prayer.

How do the Muslims pray for their children? What do they invoke? What do they ask their children to be like? Muslims do not invoke the prophets or tell their children to be like any of them. The most common wish for them is that they maintain their faith: /Allah tomār īmān thik rākhūn/ (May God keep your faith right).

For more emphasis, Muslims use Arabic terms rather than Bengali terms. For example, the Bengali term for a stupid person is /bokā/ but the stronger term used by the Muslims is /āh>mm>k/ for the Arabic (/ahmaq/). A person who flatters others to gain his way up is called a /kh2er khā/, a combination of Arabic and Persian. For a man of dirty nature and habits the word /khɔbiš/ for Arabic /kabith/ is used; a lazy man is /kāhil/, a nonbeliever is a /kāfer/, a noisy child is reprimanded as Arabic /dɔjjāl/ or its Bengali variation /dɔrjāl/; a cheat is a /fɔkkɔr/; a flatterer is Bengali /mošāheb/ for Arabic /musāhib/; and an evil person is a /šaytān/ for Arabic /šaytān/; an educationally brilliant and good conversationalist boy is a /fajil/ for Arabic /faðil/. Ordinary sorrow is referred to as /dukkho/ but a very heavy sorrow and grief is /gom/ for Arabic /gam/. An ordinary fault of a person is /doš/, but a serious shortcoming is /ti/ or /gɔlɔd/ for Arabic /galat/; anger is /rag/ in Bengali but /goššā/ for Arabic /gussa/ has a strong connotation; strength is /šokti/ or /jor/, but /tāqat/ (Arabic /tāqat) is more intense. A big thing is /boro/ but a huge one is /ālišān/, which is a combination of two Arabic words /'āli/ and /šān/. A devout Muslim is called a /musulli/. If he is learned in religious matters he is an /ālem/ or a /māolānā/.

In other words, to call a person "good" or to praise a person for his good deeds or good manners a Bengali Muslim generally uses Arabic terms. To call a person "bad" also he uses Arabic terms. A learned man is /ālem/ rather than /biḍḍān/; a noble man is /šorīf/ (for Arabic /šarīf/) rather than /mɔhot/; a capable man is /kābil/ (for Arabic /qābil/) rather than /kājer/. The Bengali term for human nature is /šɔbhāb/, but if one wants to emphasize the ill nature of a person, it is referred to as /khāichhɔt/ or /khāslɔt/ (for Arabic /k̃aslat/) or /aḍɔt/ for (Arabic /³āḍat/); ordinary service is /šebā/ but real devoted service is

Impact of Arabic 149

referred to as /khiḍmɔṭ/ for (Arabic /kiḍmaṭ/); and, a modest and polite person would refer to himself as /khaḍem/ for Arabic /k̄āḍim/ (a person who serves) to respected elders. Ordinary work is /kāj/ in Bengali but /āmɔl/ (for Arabic /ʾamal/) is used for continuous adherence to something; to emphasize a point he says /ālbaṭ/ (certainly) for Arabic /albaṭṭāh/. Muslims also use the Arabic vocative particle /ya/ in their speech.

7.4 Kinship Terms

In the area of kinship there is a series of Arabic terms that Muslims use. Five of the most frequently used terms are the names for the mother /āmmā/ (Arabic /umm/), the father /ābbā/ (Arabic /ābun/), the mother's sister /khālā/ and her husband /khālū/ (Arabic /khāl/), and the husband /khɔšɔm/ for Arabic /kaṣam/. Besides these, many other kinship terms have Arabic words appended to them. For example, the term /āmmā/ from Arabic /umm/ is appended to terms for father's sister, father's brother's wife, mother's brother's wife, as well as mother's sister. An interesting fact is that the term used for husband by the Muslims is /khɔšom/, which in Arabic has the meaning of an adversary or opponent. In a recent book by Humayun Ahmad Sankhanil Karagar the author uses the Muslim kinship terms /khālā, nānā, āpā/ and the real names in his book also are Arabic though all the nicknames are Bengali in origin.

7.5 Time, Measures, and Weights

Muslims refer to time as /wākt/, which in Arabic is /waqt/. This is one of the examples where Muslims use a final consonant cluster. Final consonant clusters are not used in Colloquial Bengali. The use of /t̄arīk/ for Arabic /t̄arīk/ (date) is very common in Bengali and it is used by both the communities. The year is referred to as /šon/ for Arabic /sana/ and a long period of time is referred to as /muḍḍat/ for Arabic /muḍḍat/. The term used for weight is /ojon/ from Arabic /wazn/.

7.6 Food

In the area of food, there are many words that have been borrowed by the Bengalis mostly used by Bengali Muslims. A famous Muslim dish all over the world is the preparation called /hāluwā/ (Arabic /halwā/) which can be prepared from a number of ingredients like carrots, pumpkins, lentils, wheat flour, and farina. /kāliā/ from Arabic /qālia/ is also a favorite Muslim dish.

7.7 Business

In the field of business a sizeable number of words used are of Arabic origin. For example, a surveyor is /amin/, the capital invested is /āšol/ (Arabic /aṣal/); a measurer is /kɔyāl/ (Arabic /kayyāl/); an agent is a /ḍālāl/; a meat packer and seller is /kɔṣāi/ (Arabic /qaṣṣāb/); a tailor is a /khɔlifā/ (Arabic /k̆alīfah/); a memo is a /rokā/ (Arabic /ruqʾā/); people who engrave on gold and silver are known as /nakāši/ (Arabic /naqqāš/). Of these /kɔšāi/ and /khɔlifā/ are meant to refer only to Muslims workers.

7.8 Place Names

It is notable that the place names in Bengal are more Persian than Arabic. There are many villages and cities that have Persian suffixes with their names. For example, some of the very common suffixes used for the names of cities and villages are {-bad}, {-pur}, {-ganj}, e.g., najimabad, karimpur, and karimganj. But some names are Arabic in origin. The modern city Jessore is a derivation from an Arabic root. One of the meanings is a bridge. The place Jessore is full of rivers and therefore was in need of a large number of bridges for communication. But people are divided in their opinion regarding this name. According to one group the name Jessore was prevalent in pre-Arabic days. In Chittagong, however, where a large number of Arab traders settled down, there are some Arabic names that are still in use. For example, Alkaran, Sulek Bahar (sulukul bahar), Bakulia, Sarardi, etc. In the city of Dhaka, there are many names of streets and areas which are Arabic. They have been there for a long time – the Islampur Road, Nababpur Road, Mirpur Area, etc.

8. Conclusion

Arabic language is a major language of the world and is known for its rich literary heritage since the Middle Ages like Greek and Latin. It is the national language of a number of nation-states of Northern Africa, Arabian Peninsula, Middle East and is spoken today by over two hundred and twenty million native and non-native speakers. It is one of the six official languages of the United Nations. It was in the 7th century that it became the language of the Qur'an and it was taken to many parts of the world by the Arab conquerors of a vast Muslim Empire. Today it is the religious language of over one billion Muslim men, women and children around the world. It is the liturgical language of nearly sixty Muslim nation-states of the world. The original Qur'anic texts are recited every day by the Muslims in Arabic in daily prayers and Arabic alphabet

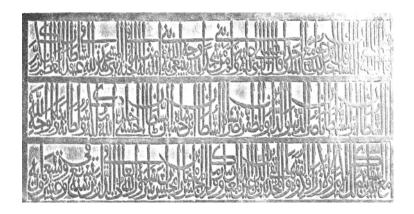
Impact of Arabic 151

is used for reading the Qur'an. In a number of languages of these countries Arabic alphabet has been adopted with some modifications. As a result it has exercised tremendous influence on the languages and cultures of several countries as remote as Indonesia, Indo-China. It has greatly influenced multinational languages like Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish and Persian. For example, more than thirty percent of the Persian language vocabulary is of Arabic origin. (Chejne, 1969: 4) A number of words in European languages are of Arabic origin, for example, such common words in English as admiral, alcohol, alkali, algebra, aresenal, cipher, coffee, lemon, rice, sugar. Some languages called hybrid languages have been the result of such mixtures, for example, Maltese, the language of Malta, which is a mixture of Arabic and Italian.

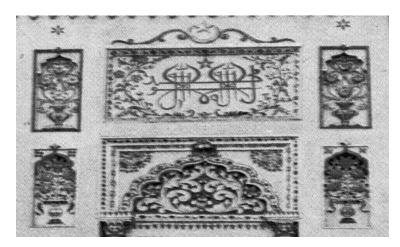
Bengali language as shown in this essay has been in direct contact with Arabic long before the advent of Islam in the region. The Chittagong bay area extending along the eastern Bengal (present-day Bangladesh) was an important center of sea routes used by Arab traders along the Arabian sea going back to the pre-Christian era. Muslim saints and later the Muslim conquerors of the region introduced Arabic as the religious language and both directly and through the Perso-Arabic literary and cultural tradition Bengali came under major influence as shown in this essay at the phonetic, phonemic, morphological, semantic and cultural levels. It is a field demanding many more research studies especially in the cultural field, for example, the very high quality of Arabic calligraphic art and architecture as shown by the two specimens on this page.

Bangladesh as an interculturally dynamic nation-state for its pioneering role in the development of "Mother Languages and Other Languages" since 2000 at the United Nations level, with a large Muslim population has given Arabic a prominent place in its educational and cultural life. In view of the very close relationship of Bangladesh with the Arabic-speaking nation-states it appears that the impact of Arabic on Bengali language will become an increasingly rewarding subject of study and research by national and international scholars.

152 Afia Dil



1. Arabic calligraphic inscription of Sultan Nusrat Shah (1522 A.D.), Sonargaon, Dhaka. Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka. 16"x47".



2. Arabic kalima "La ila illaha Muhammad Rasul Allah" inscription, Sitara Masjid, Armanitola, Dhaka, 18^{th} century A.D. Armanitola, Dhaka,

TAHIRID-ABBASID RELATIONS (821-873)

Md. Abul Kalam Azad*

Introduction

The Tahirid-Abbasid relation deserves an in-depth study in the history of the Abbasid caliphate. The Abbasid caliphate- one of the longest-lived dynasties of Islam witnessed a good number of independent regional dynasties and their territorial expanse from the very beginning of its foundation in 750 to the downfall in 1258. The Umayyads shut the door of Muslim Spain to the Abbasids and established the first independent regional dynasty there in 756 in the west of the Abbasid caliphate. After nearly seventy years of the establishment of the independent Umayyad power in Spain, the Tahirids established the first quasi-independent dynastic rule in Persia in 821, though the Kharijites, the Idrisids and the Aghlabids of Ifriqia or North Africa and Morocco rose to the status of independent regional dynasties soon after 756. However, with the establishment of the Tahirid state "on Iranian soil" as stated by B. Spuler, "the political rebirth of the Persian nation began." Here, the significant point is that with the rise of the Tahirid dynasty there began 50 plus years' of complex relations between the Tahirids and the Abbasids.³ The relations ended with cordiality and continued till 913 even after the fall of the

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Tarikh al-rasul wa'l-muluk-the History of al-Tabari, The Crisis of the Abbasid Caliphate, Vol. XXXV, Translated and annotated by George Saliba, State University of New York Press, USA, 1985, p. 26; Although the Tahirids had full control over the area, they ruled on behalf of the central authority and recognized the Abbasid Caliphs as their supreme soverign.

² R.N. Frye, (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 4, First published-1975, Cambridge University Press, Printed in Great Britain, p. 90.

Initially Tahirid-Abbasid relations began with cooperation but soon was turned to hostile during Tahir-the founder of the Tahirid dynasty, followed by cordial relations during Talha's and Ali's time, and then followed by mistrust and suspicion during Abdullah's time, still dominated by mistrust but co-operative during Tahir's time resulted in cordial relations that lasted till 873.

154 Abul Kalam Azad

Tahirid power in Khurasan in 873. This paper is a humble attempt to throw light on the Tahirid attitude toward the Abbasid caliphate, followed by a critical analysis of the Tahirid-Abbasid relations.

The Tahirids and their early services towards the Abbasid family and the Caliphate

The Tahirids were Persian in origin, but culturally highly Arabicized. According to Stanley Lane-Poole and P.K. Hitti, Tahir was a descendant of a Persian slave. 4 But the Sunni Tahirids claimed that they were the descendant of the Persian legendary hero Rustam. They also attempted to link their origin with the Arab Qurayish by claiming their descent from Arab poet Di'bil ibn Ali, who himself was a genuine Khuzai stock, once in pre-Islamic period controlled the holy city Makka. By doing so, the Tahirids actually made an attempt to connect themselves with the Persian Emperors on the one hand, and with the then Arab noble tribe Qurayish on the other.⁵ However and whatever the motives were behind the above claims, the important point is that the Tahirids rendered valuable services to the cause of the Abbasids even before the establishment of the Abbasid caliphate. As regards the early services of the Tahirids towards the Abbasid family historians are of opinion that the Tahirids supported and served the Abbasids in two ways: first they lent their support to the anti-Umayyad propaganda of Abu Muslim, and then to the new regime of the Abbasids which in 749 emerged from that upheaval. Towards the end of the 7th century, Ruzaiq, the ancestor of the Tahirid dynasty, was a mawla or client of the governor of Sistan Talha ibn Abdullah al-Khuzai. Ruzaiq's son and Tahir's grandfather Musab ibn Ruzaiq played vital role in the Abbasid revolution in Khurasan. There he acted as secretary to the Abbasid dai or propagandist Sulaiman ibn Kathir al-Khuzai. The governorship for the early Tahirids in the eastern Khurasan was the ultimate reward for these services. Musab was given the governorship of Phushang (Bushang) and Heart. He served as governor of Pushang during the reign of Caliph al Mahdi in 776-77. In subsequent years both Musab's son and grandson al-Husain (814-15) and Tahir succeeded at Pushang. The services contributed much to the victory of al-Mamun over his

Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Mohammadan Dynasties*, Archibald Constable and Company, India 1925, P. 128; Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, The Macmillan Press Ltd., Printed in China, Tenth Edition, 1970, 15th reprint, 1993, p. 461.

⁵ The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4, Op. cit., p. 92.

brother al-Amin in 813. They continued their support for the caliphate to the last quarter of the 9th century.

The 9th century ushered in a new era for the Tahirid family in general, and for Tahir ibn Husain in particular. In 809-10, the one-eyed Tahir joined the general Harthama ibn Ayan in operation against Rafi ibn al-Laith, a grandson of the last Umayyad governor of Khurasan Nasr ibn Sayyar. Tahir ended that mission with a grand success. In the following year he was made commander of the army by al-Mamun. Tahir was assigned to confront al-Amin's forces at Hamadan, which was under Amin's commander Ali ibn Isa ibn Mahan. In the conflict that ensued between the two rival forces, Tahir won victory, while Ali ibn Isa ibn Mahan was defeated and killed. In this battle, Tahir cut a man in two with his left hand and won the nickname from al-Mamun "Dhu'l-Yaminain"-meaning "the man with two right hands" or "the ambidexter". 6 A contemporary poet also described Tahir as the warrior "minus one eye, plus an extra right arm." Indeed, Tahir ibn Husain proved his skill and prowess as general by perfectly using spies and deploying and leading forces to victory. Later on, the heroic feat that Tahir showed in defeating al-Amin's army in 813, paved the way for al-Mamun to access the throne of the Abbasid caliphate. Thus, Tahir emerged as one of the architects of al-Mamun's triumph.

It is known that al-Mamun's victory over his brother al-Amin was chiefly due to the supreme effort of Tahir. Therefore, it was quite natural on the part of caliph al-Mamun to give high positions to Tahir. But as the caliph remained in Marv after his victory over al-Amin, Tahir at the head of his loyal Khurasanian forces seemed to be undisputed figure with his control on Baghdad and western Persia. Tahir created a congenial atmosphere in Baghdad in 819 for the caliph who came to the city in that year. But very soon Tahir was appointed governor of al-Jazira and Syria, with the specific charge of combating a local Arab chief Nasr ibn Sabath al-Uqali, who had taken to arms and raised a revolt of pro-Aminid elements taking the advantage of the civil war that took place between al-Mamun and al-Amin. In these years from the time of Mamun's arrival in Baghdad until the end of June 821 Tahir also held other offices including *shahib al-shurta*, in Baghdad, and the financial administrator of the Sawad province of Iraq, the fertile and prosperous agricultural region of central Iraq with his office and residence at Raqqa on the Euphrates. His other principal

⁶ Philip K. Hitti, Op. cit., p. 461.

156 Abul Kalam Azad

roles seem to have been that of mediator between the Baghdadis and the caliph during these years.

When the caliph al-Mamun came to Baghdad in 819 he suppressed a Shia revolt in Kufa. Immediately the caliph attempted to co-opt them by announcing one of their leaders-a respectable Alid- Ali ibn Musa ibn Jafar al-Rida, as heir-apparent and taking himself the title "Imam". The caliph also adopted green as the colour of Royal dress. Undoubtedly, the caliph's favour towards Shi`ite party alienated the members of his own family as well as the Sunni Muslims of Baghdad. Even Tahir strongly opposed al-Mamuns's Shiʿite gesture. But Tahir himself played instrumental role in persuading Mamun to abandon the green of the Alids as the colour of court dress and return to the traditional black of the Abbasids which ultimately met with popular appreciation all over Baghdad. Thus, the Abbasid's grievances were redressed. Tahir also arranged the reconciliation between the caliph al-Mamun and Fadl ibn Rabi. In this way, Tahir strengthened his power and position in Baghdad and at the same time he was rendering his duties to the caliphate before being appointed the governor of Khurasan in 821.

Establishment of the Tahirid dynasty in Persia

Obviously, the caliph al-Mamun gratefully recognized the services of the Tahirids and amply rewarded them by assigning important positions of the caliphate. But al-Mamun was farsighted enough to keep the influential Tahirids away from their native home in Khurasan for some time. Although the caliph firmly believed that after his withdrawal from Marv to Baghdad in 819 Tahirid presence was much needed in those troublesome regions to suppress the risings of the Kharijites and the neo-Mazdakite which demanded closer attention for pacification. However, the reason for which the caliph kept the Tahirid away from Khurasan and sent their leader Tahir to the western part of the caliphate is obvious: supposedly to restore order in Syria in fact, to remove him from the centre of affairs. Actually, the caliph al-Mamun considered Tahir as a threat that might endanger the caliphate. When Baghdad fell to Harthama and Tahir, Tahir's close associates slew the captive al-Amin in 813. This was not

M. A. Shaban, *Islamic History: A New Interpretation*, A.D. 750-1055 (A.H. 132-448), vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, London 1976, p. 52.

⁸ Akbar Shah Najeebabdi, *History of Islam*, vol. 2, Darussalam, p. 419.

⁹ Hugh Kennedy, The Early Abbasid Caliphate: A Political History, Croom Helm, London 1986, p. 151.

undisclosed to al-Mamun. Some historians are of opinion that al-Mamun later came to hold Tahir responsible for his brother's murder. Considering this backdrop and Tahir's growing power in Baghdad, al-Mamun kept Tahir away from Khurasan by putting important duties of the western part of the caliphate on him.

Tahir was also an ambitious general. He was not satisfied with his position at Baghdad. He was keen to become the governor of his own province Khurasan and seriously considered moving to that place. His intention was reflected in his own words so strongly. Ibn Khallikan relates that when someone said to Tahir "May you well enjoy the rank which you now hold and which none of your rivals in Khurasan have ever reached." To this Tahir replied: "That is what I am unable to enjoy since I cannot see the old women of Pushang climbing up to the roofs of the houses that they may get sight of me as I pass by." History records that it took little time to fulfill his desire. At one stage the caliph al-Mamun lost his confidence in Tahir and this quickened the latter's transfer from the west to the east in Khurasan. A well-known story that goes: One day al-Mamun, on seeing Tahir, was reminded of his brother Amin who was killed by Tahir, and burst into tears. This did not go unnoticed of Tahir. Indeed, this created some suspicion in the mind of Tahir. When Tahir made out of the cause of caliph's weeping he fully realized that the caliph conceived a violent hatred against him. Fearing that the caliph had turned against him, Tahir decided to stay no longer in the western part of the caliphate and tried to get transfer to Khurasan. 11 In his effort he got the help from caliph's vizier Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid. At that time the caliphal vizier was considering to remove the governor of Khurasan. According to some scholars, Tahir secured the governorship of Khurasan by a piece of unpleasant intrigue played by the vizier. 12 The vizier sought the help of the caliph to remove Ghassan ibn Abbad, a protégé and kinsman of the previous vizier al-Hasan ibn Sahl from the governorship of Khurasan and advised the caliph to appoint Tahir instead. Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid who had considerable influence with the Tahirids- an influence almost equal to theirs in their own regions also placed himself as the guarantor for Tahir's good behavior. The

¹⁰ Ibn Khallikan, De Slane, trans. p. 650, quoted by Amir Hasan Siddiqi, *Caliphate and Kingship in Medieval Persia*, Ripon Printing Press, Lahore, March 1942, p. 19.

¹¹ Amir Hasan Siddiqi, Op. cit., pp. 19-20.

¹² The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4, Op. cit., p. 95.

158 Abul Kalam Azad

vizier made al-Mamun believe that there were political unrest and disturbances in Khurasan since the caliph's coming to Baghdad from Marv in 819 which could not be quelled by anyone but Tahir. Under these circumstances caliph al-Mamun appointed Tahir the governor of all the caliphal lands east of Iraq with its centre at Khurasan at the end of 820. With this new assignment Tahir arrived in the province on September 821 and soon declared independence. Thus, the Tahirid dynasty came into being. Tahir ruled Khurasan only for fourteen months before his death on October/November 822.

Tahir as governor of Khurasan and his relations with al-Mamun

With his appointment in the governorship of Khurasan there started a phase of hostile relations between the Tahirids and the Abbasids. From his first day of arrival in Khurasan Tahir was resolute to become independent.¹⁴ But he was slow and steady in his policy. It took him one year and then he began dropping al-Mamun's name from the Friday sermon or Khutbah. He also started minting coins in 821-2 after his own name and omitted the caliph's name. 15 Historians opine that these actions were virtually declarations of independence from Baghdad. 16 Now, question may arise: What did lead Tahir to do these desperate actions at a time when the Abbasid Caliphate was at its height? What was the reaction of the caliph? How did the caliph deal with this embarrassing situation? If we look back to the events of the meeting that took place in the caliph's court between al-Mamun and Tahir it will be clear that the caliph made up his mind to appoint Tahir as the governor of Khurasan after that meeting at the suggestion of his vizier. Though at the very beginning Tahir was in al-Mamun's good book, finally the caliph lost all faith in Tahir. This became apparent to Tahir when he appealed for transfer from the west to the east through the caliph's vizier; the caliph took no time to forward it. Some historians view that this was

¹³ M.A. Shaban, Op.cit., pp. 47-50; Amir Hasan Siddiqi, Op. cit., p. 20; Hugh Kennedy, Op. cit., p. 166.

¹⁴ Reza Sha'bani (tr. By Mahmoud Farrokhpey), *Iranian History at a Glance*, Center for Cultural-Interanational Studies, Alhoda, UK, p. 152.

Stanley Lane Poole, Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum, Vol. II, (The Coins of the Mohammadan Dynasties of the British Museum, Classes III-X), London 1876, pp. 72-74; Talha mintied copper coins from Bust and Bukhara in 824, Tahir II issued silver coins from Marw in 853 and Muhammad minted copper coins from Bukhara in 867; The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4, Op. cit., p. 95.

¹⁶ The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4, Op. cit., p. 95.

the extreme hostility displayed by the caliph toward Tahir.¹⁷ This enraged Tahir a lot and with this backdrop he started his career in Khurasan with his capital at Marv. Others hold that Tahir had huge influence and strong dynastic support in Khurasan. He also made a strong base for his family in Baghdad. Being an influential figure in the caliphate Tahir had been waiting for the governorship of his native province Khurasan. Once he was made governor there he felt himself so secure that he dropped the caliph's name from the *Khutbah* and currency and became independent.¹⁸ Practically, this brought to an end of the mutually good relations and initiated the hostile relations between the Tahirids and the Abbasids.

Now we will turn our attention to the reactions of the Caliph al-Mamun to the course of actions taken by Tahir. Needless to say, the actions of Tahir in Khurasan were unacceptable to the Caliph and his vizier who was also the guarantor of Tahir's good behavior as stated above. In fact, Tahir's actions threw the caliph into an embarrassed and uneasy situation. Tahir's activities in Khurasan also made the vizier's position very precarious in the Abbasid capital Baghdad. So, unhappy with the situation in Khurasan, both the Caliph and his vizier stood firm for a swift reaction. History records that after Tahir's declaration of independence of Khurasan from Baghdad he was poisoned to death. It is believed that the drama was staged by the Caliph himself from behind the scene with the help of a slave girl who was presented to Tahir by al-Mamun with such instructions. ¹⁹ On the other hand some modern scholars opine that Tahir was poisoned on the orders of the caliphal vizier Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid as he was concerned to vindicate his fidelity to the Caliph now that the man whom he had personally recommended for office had proved rebellious.²⁰ However, with Tahir's death the hostile phase of Tahirid-Abbasid relations came to an end.

Relations between the later Tahirids and the Abbasids

Another phase of the Tahirids-Abbasids relations opened with the death of Tahir-the founder of the Tahirid dynasty in Khurasan. Soon after the death of

¹⁷ Amir Hasan Siddiqi, *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁸ Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. VII, E.J. Brill's, Leiden, 1987, p. 610; Amir Hasan Siddiqi, Op. cit., p. 20.

¹⁹ Amir Hasan Siddiqi, Op. cit., p. 20.

²⁰ The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4, Op. cit., p. 95.

160 Abul Kalam Azad

Tahir in 822, his son Talha assumed command of the army in Khurasan and this was eventually confirmed by the Caliph al-Mamun. It is said that the Caliph al-Mamun at first appointed Abdullah, another son of Tahir. But as Abdullah was preoccupied with the task of combating Nasr-ibn Sabath in al-Jazira, the Caliph finally made Talha his deputy in the east. Here, it is important to note that despite the fact that Tahir's move in Khurasan was equivalent to an open insurrection, the caliph did not object to his son Talha taking over his position. Some observe that Tahir's gesture of rebelliousness was not regarded overseriously by the caliph. That is why, the Caliph did not curtail the power of Tahirid family or he dared not refuse the bestowal of Khurasan on Talha, the son of Tahir when the latter died. Rather the Caliph al-Mamun and after him his successors followed conciliatory policy by appointing Tahir's sons and other members of the Tahirid family in the governorship of Khurasan where they ruled independently in the name of the Abbasid. Now, a question reasonably may arise: Why did Caliph al-Mamun approve Talha or Abdullah while their father betrayed with the Abbasids? According to some scholars, after the sudden death of Tahir a rumor started to fill the air that the Caliph and his vizier had hands in the killing of Tahir. The appointment of Talha in his father's place was perhaps intended to hush up the suspicions and remove that rumour.²¹ It seems that on the advice of his vizier Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid the Caliph confirmed the appointment of Tahir's son with the same arrangements.²² Perhaps, it was the most successful solution the Abbasids ever found to the problem of governing the province. Besides, it was a trademark of al-Mamun that he would penalize a rebel or revolutionary and nothing ever stopped him from destroying him but he never harmed the guilty party's family and relatives. He usually would endear himself to them even more by serving them.23

The Caliph al-Mamun also felt cogent to follow the example his father had set in the case of the Aghlabids in the west.²⁴ While others view that the Abbasids were in a difficult position as the political landscape of the caliphate did not present a happy picture during the last quarter of the 9th century. The caliphal

²¹ Amir Hasan Siddiqi, *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

²² M. A. Shaban, *Op. cit.*, p. 52.

²³ Akbar Shah Najeebabdi, *Op. cit.*, p. 423.

²⁴ J.J. Saunders, A History of Medieval Islam, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, London 1965, p. 118.

authority was beset by difficulties at this time. Particularly Arabian Peninsula and Egypt was not yet fully reconciled to al-Mamun. Nasr ibn Sabath was still at large in al-Jazira and continued creating troubles for the Caliph of Baghdad. In the east Hasan Azarak maintained himself for many years (795-828) in Sistan and in the south-west of present-day Afghanistan, while Mazdakite Babak from Azerbaijan managed to defy the might of the Caliph for more than twenty years (816-838) deep into western Persia. Jibal was also in a chaotic situation. Under the circumstances, the Caliph and his vizier decided to appoint Tahir's son as the successor of Tahir in Khurasan soon after the death of Tahir. Thus by retaining the Tahirids in Khurasan, the Caliph took the line of least resistance and ensured a degree of continuity and stability in the east, while the power of the Tahirids in Baghdad and Iraq continued undiminished.

However, the significant point is that the appointment and approval of Talha as the next ruler of Khurasan from the Tahirid family was the ending point of Tahirid-Abbasid hostile relations and there started some sort of cordial relations between the two dynasties. Meanwhile Talha appeared somewhat obedient and Mamun's vizier Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid seems to have been satisfied with Talha's unflinching loyalty. Talha judiciously gave the vizier a munificent offering of three million dirhams' worth presents while the vizier was in Khurasan on a military expedition soon after the death of Tahir. This loyalty and revenue from Talha proved to be a strong bridge-bond between the Tahirid and the Abbasid. This had a positive result for Talha also. When necessitated Talha sought the caliphal help and that was duly provided with sending army to Khurasan. With the help of the caliphal army the revolt of a dissident member of the Tahirid family, al-Hasan ibn al-Husain ibn Musab was suppressed at the very beginning stage of Talha's assuming office. Talha maintained good relations with the Abbasid till his death in 828.

After Talha's death his brother Ali assumed the office who was then on the spot in Khurasan. He acted as deputy and followed the policy of his predecessor regarding the Tahirid-Abbasid relations for two years until his brother Abdullah, the official Tahirid ruler as recognized by the Caliph, arrived in Khurasan from the western part of the Caliphate where he was assigned to suppress the revolt of Nasr ibn Sabath. Nasr ibn Sabath, a supporter of Amin had maintained himself even after the death of Amin was finally overthrown in

²⁵ The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol. 4, p. 96.

162 Abul Kalam Azad

825 by Abdullah. Abdullah also made another important victory for the Abbasid by driving out the Muslim Spaniards who seized Alexandria in 827 after being exiled by the Umayyad ruler of Spain and created disturbances in Egypt.²⁶ Thus, before his arrival in Khurasan in 830 Abdullah did a great service to the caliphate by restoring the Abbasid authority in the west. Abdullah, the greatest of the Tahirids made Nishapur his new capital. During his fifteen years' of reign (830-45) Abdullah was undisputed master in central and eastern Iran. Although like his father Abdullah had been high in al-Mamun's favour, yet Abdullah had a strong disrespect and hatred for the Abbasids.²⁷ This was due to al-Mamun's alleged involvement in the killing of his father Tahir. But Abdullah never allowed it to let out or reflect in his deeds. In those years Abdullah also retained the long-established interests of his family in Iraq. Practically, he followed the policy of circumspection and non-provocation in his dealings with the Abbasid Caliphs. It is stated that al-Mamun's successor al-Mutasim (833-42) also bore hatred about Abdullah because of a slight he had experienced at court from Abdullah during al-Mamun's reign. This led al-Mutasim to try secretly to poison Abdullah in the one hand, and to encourage a certain Afshin Haider about Khurasan on the other. But either of the caliph's attempts did not come true. Contrarily, despite the Caliph's ill-feeling about Abdullah and his secret attempts against him al-Mutasim had a high regard for Abdullah chiefly due to the latter's capabilities and prowess. On this very background al-Mutasim spent no time to confirm Abdullah in his governorship in Khurasan soon after his accession.

The hatred and disrespect from both sides helped develop a strong sense of mistrust between the Tahirids and the Abbasids. Particularly, for this reason Abdullah neither visited the caliphal court at Samarrah nor left his territories for any purpose even it be pilgrimage to Makka during his lifetime. The Tahirid ruler had suspected that his absence might provide the Caliph an opportunity to replace him in Khurasan by the caliphal new representatives. Of course, Abdullah's suspicion was not unfounded or illogical. To some historians, after the death of Abdullah in 845 the Abbasid Caliph al-Wathiq was reluctant to continue direct hereditary succession of the line of Tahir ibn al-Husain. Not

²⁶ Carl Brockelmann, *History of the Islamic Peoples*, (tr. by Joel Carmicbael and Moshe Perlmann), Routledge & Kegan Paul, First edition-1948, Reprinted-1982, London, p. 124.

²⁷ The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 4, Op. cit., p. 98.

only that the Caliph appointed Ishaq ibn Ibrahim ibn Musab, a Tahirid from a collateral branch to Khurasan. But it is not clear under which circumstances the Caliph cancelled Ishaq's nomination and finally confirmed Abdullah's son Tahir. Later on, Tahir ibn Abdullah's appointment also confirmed by the successive Abbasid Caliphs: al-Mutawakkil (847-861), al-Muntasir (861-862) and al-Mustain (862-866). However, it is reported that in 845-6 the Caliphal general Wasif suppressed a Kurdish revolt in Jibal and Fars and appointed Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Husain ibn Musab from the collateral branch of Tahirids as governor of Fars. Other members of the Tahirid family from both main and collateral branch continued to hold official posts in Iraq and the central lands of the caliphate. But the main branch of the Tahirid family continued to rule Khurasan uninterruptedly. In 850-1 Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Husain ibn Musab, governor of Fars opposed the appointment of his nephew Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Ibrahim to the governorship of Baghdad, an office to which Muhammad ibn Ishaq further added responsibility for Bahrain, the Yamama, the road across Arabia to Makka and Medina and Fars itself. Muhammad ibn Ishaq therefore ordered the deposition of his uncle from Fars and sent al-Husain ibn Ismail ibn Ibrahim who took the office by killing his uncle. Finally, the quarrel within the Tahirids ended with the intervention of Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Tahir-the brother of the Khurasanian ruler Tahir, who came from Khurasan to take over the Shahib al-Shurta and governorship of Baghdad, Sawad and Fars. He enjoyed the posts until his death in 867.

However, another reason the Tahirids bore a strong sense of hatred against the Abbasids was the latter's involvement in the dynastic quarrel of the first. For that reason, some Abbasid caliphs maintained a safe and distance relations with the Tahirids. Of them, the Caliph Mustain feared most the Khurasanian ruler Tahir ibn Abdullah (845-62), another great ruler of the Tahirids. Tahir's death in 862 was greeted by the Abbasid caliph with great relief who later invited Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Tahir, brother of the deceased Khurasanian ruler to take the office of the governorship of Khurasan leaving Baghdad. The Caliph tried to appoint him depriving son and successor of deceased Tahir. But the Caliph was unsuccessful in his mission as Muhammad ibn Abdullah was reluctant to leave Baghdad. Finally, following Tahir's own wasiya or testamentary disposition the Caliph appointed Tahir's young son Muhammad to Khurasan. At the same time Muhammad ibn Abdullah was reconfirmed as governor of Iraq and the Holy Cities, Military commander of Baghdad and controller of the finances of the Sawad province of Iraq. In 864 Muhammad ibn

164 Abul Kalam Azad

Abdullah ibn Tahir suppressed the revolt of Yahya ibn Umar in the region of Kufa in Iraq. In the following year he tried to help the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustain while he was besieged in Baghdad by Bugha and his Turkish forces. But at the end he gave in and the Caliph had to abdicate in 866 and later was killed in Wasit. Thus, some members of the Tahirids staying at Baghdad were serving the cause of the Abbasids maintaining good relations with the caliphs.

Meanwhile, the Tahirid position in Khurasan began to decay. Particularly from the second quarter of the 9th century their weakness was apparent, mainly because of the dynastic quarrels, maladministration, and opposition from different quarters. Sistan slipped away in 854 to the ayyar leader Saleh ibn Nasr. Tahirid governor Sulaiman ibn Abdullah was defeated and expelled from Ray in 866. Two years later when Muhammad ibn Abdullah-the military commander of Baghdad died, the Abbasid Caliph appointed Sulaiman in that post in addition to the post of the financial controller of the Sawad. In 873, Muhammad ibn Tahir the last Tahirid ruler in Khurasan failed to withstand the final blow of the Saffarid leader Yaqub ibn al-Laith. Yaqub al-Saffar whose was a meteoric rise, extended his power from Sistan to Kabul, Heart, Makran, Kirman, and to Fars and finally occupied Nishapur the seat of the Tahirid dynasty in Khurasan. This marked the end of Tahirid control over Khurasan, although Muhammad's brother al-Husain held out in Mary for sometime longer. Muhammad ibn Tahir fled to Baghdad. Later he was re-appointed as governor of Khurasan by the Caliph al-Mutamid (870-892) but never dared show himself there. At last he was appointed the governor of Baghdad in 883-4 and he held that post until his death in 910. His uncle Ubaidullah ibn Abdullah ibn Tahir held the governorship and Military commander of Baghdad on various occasions under al-Mutazz (866-869) and al-Mutamid before and after the death of Muhammad ibn Tahir. It is obvious that Muhammad ibn Tahir, the last ruler of the Tahirid including Ubaidullah maintained good relations with the Caliph. Ubaidullah once extended his financial support to the Abbasid Caliph.

Tax paid by the Tahirids to the Abbasids

The Tahirids ruled Khurasan for more than fifty years as independent rulers. They also held posts in Baghdad as well as administrators. In both regions they were the maintainers of peace and stability. Along with maintaining peace and order the Tahirids sent the caliph large sums in taxation from Khurasan, probably more than when the area was under tighter control from Baghdad.²⁸

²⁸ Hugh Kennedy, Op. cit., p. 166.

After the death of Tahir the caliphal vizier Ahmad Abi Khalid went to Khurasan with an army to establish Talha firmly as the next ruler of Khurasan and to remove any possible rebellion and disobedience from there. When Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid was returning from Khurasan to the capital Baghdad, Talha presented to him 3,000,000 dirhams in cash and in kinds worth 100,000 dirhams as gift. He gave Ahmad's clerk 500,000 dirhams.²⁹ Turks are reported to have fought with Tahir's forces in the war against al-Amin. In fact, after that incident the Turks appeared as the main force to the Abbasid caliph al-Mutasim. That is why, soon after his accession he stressed the need of forming a strong army with Turkish slaves. In other words, the caliph accelerated the acquisition of Turks once he assumed the office of caliph. But the main flow of the Turks was controlled by the Tahirids. This appeared as the source of the Tahirid influence which also helped developing good relations with the Abbasids. Bosworth stated that a factor contributing to the family's influence, particularly in Khurasan, was control of "traffic from the Central Asian steppes in Turkish slaves, for which demand rose sharply in the course of the 9th century. Tahirid also amassed considerable profit and wealth from the traffic in slaves. However, the Tahirid used to send Turkish slaves to the capital of the Abbasid caliphate when they were on good terms with the Abbasids. Once Abdullah ibn Tahir gathered two thousand Turkish captives in Kabul and then sent them to the caliph as part of the agreed-upon revenue from the province. The total revenue from the land tax (kharaj) of Khurasan and all of the districts and provinces assigned to Abdullah ibn Tahir amounted to 44,846,000 dirhams. Included as well were 13 riding horses, 2000 sheep, 2000 Ghuzz prisoners priced at 600,000 dirhams, 1187 garments of Kundaji cloth, and of iron blades and plates, 1300 items divided into one-half of each kind. Tahir ibn Abdullah sent a gift to al-Mutawakkil upon his accession to the caliphate in 847 that included two thousand slaves of both genders. 30

The Tahirid-Abbasid partnership

Though the Tahirid family exercised sweeping authority, both in Khurasan and in Baghdad, under al-Mamun and his successors there developed a partnership at the initial stage between the Tahirids and the Abbasids regarding the

²⁹ Akbar Shah Najeebabdi, *Op. cit.*, p. 423.

Matthew S. Gordon, The Breaking of A Thousand Sword: A History of the Turkish Military of Samarra (A.H. 200-275/815-889 C.E.), State University of New York Press, 2001, pp. 35-36.

166 Abul Kalam Azad

administration of the caliphate which lasted for few years before the Tahirids had begun to show sign of independence. 31 To some modern scholars, sons and grandsons of Tahir were the real pillars of support for the Abbasid dynasty.³² In fact, the Tahirids made themselves indispensable to the regime at the very beginning chiefly due to their immense contributions and undisputed loyalty to the Abbasids. So, they were not just rulers of Khurasan from 821 onwards but administrators of the other parts of the caliphate as well. When the caliph entered Baghdad in 819 he paid attention to improve his administration by appointing Tahir as officer of the Police Department and City Magistrate of Baghdad. The caliph also appointed Tahir's brother Abu Isa and Saleh the governor of Kufa and Basra respectively.³³ When Tahir left for Khurasan in 821, he did not abandon his responsibilities in Baghdad but handed them over to his son, Abdullah, still only in his mid-twenties. The next year, Abdullah was appointed to lead the wars against the rebels of Syria and Egypt, both of which he eventually brought to a triumphant conclusion. That is, to establish order in the western part of the caliphate, al-Mamun turned to Abdullah ibn Tahir. In 826, he was confirmed as governor of Egypt, Syria and Jazira, a post he held until his brother's death, two years later, led to his transfer to Khurasan. These western provinces of the caliphate then passed out of Tahirid hands, but the family retained control of Baghdad. On his departure for the war in the west, Abdullah left his cousin, Ishaq ibn Ibrahim, in charge of the city and the *shurta*, offices he retained for almost thirty years, until his death in 850. Both as ruler of Baghdad, especially after the transfer of caliphal government to Samarra, and as spokesman for its people, he was one of the great figures. Hugh Kennedy aptly remarks, "It would be wrong, then, to think of the Tahirids as the first of the independent dynasts; they were partners in the Abbasid state and it was a partnership which, though not without strains, served the dynasty well."34 Though Tahir himself had displayed some independence in his immense eastern governorship, his descendants were guarantors of peace and stability in the empire.35 From their capital first at Mary, and then at Nishapur, the Tahirids

³¹ Matthew S. Gordon, Op. cit., p. 35.

³² Robert Fossier (ed.), The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages, 950-1250, vol. II, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 147.

³³ Akbar Shah Najeebabdi, *Op. cit.*, p. 419.

³⁴ Hugh Kennedy, *Op. cit.*, pp.166-167.

³⁵ The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Middle Ages, Op. cit., p. 147.

governed Khurasan, Kirman, the provinces of the Southern Caspian and Transoxiana where they established governors from the Samanid family. The sons of Tahir co-operated with the vizier of Baghdad in 822 in subduing the high valley of Transoxiana, crushed Kharijite rebels in Sistan and then had to struggle against Coptic rebellion and against Zaydite infiltrations into Tabaristan. However, it was al-Mamun who after having been ascended the throne conferred on those who had helped him high positions in the army as well as in the provinces where he sent them as governors, and also allowed them to work their way into central administration. Since both conquest and consolidation of the Abbasid Empire were due to the loyal and valuable services of the Tahirids, they were allowed to play the role of partners in the Empire within the framework of caliphal system. But fundamentally and virtually the Tahirids were independent in Khurasan since 821, and the caliphs were either unable or unwilling to contest them. Yet Tahirid authority was still derived from the caliphs, at least in theory, and the Tahirids can hardly be described as enemies of the Abbasids, Islam, or Arab culture. 36 However, it is obvious that the positive attitude of the Tahirids towards the Abbasids, Islam and Arab culture ultimately won for them the support of the Islamic aristocracy and the bourgeoisie of Khurasan. It is true that the position of the Tahirids was extremely self-reliant and they were even hereditary, but their strength was in fact drawn from the caliphal system of power which they upheld in Iraq and from which they received all kinds of support in Khurasan.³⁷

Conclusion

The Tahirid was the first quasi-independent Persian dynasty of Muslim times. They held more than five decades' (821-873) of unbroken rule in Khurasan. Though nominally vassals of the Abbasid Caliphs, the Tahirids extended their dominion as far as the Indian frontier and ruled the whole region as independent rulers. During this long time they developed both hostile and good relations with the Abbasids. For some practical reasons Tahir ibn Husain-the founder of the Tahirid dynasty initiated hostile relations with the Abbasids. Tahir maintained his policy till his death in 822. His immediate successor Talha was able to strike a balance in terms of the Tahirid relations with the Abbasids. But

³⁶ Elton L. Daniel, *The History of Iran*, Greenwood Press, London 2001, p. 71.

³⁷ G. E. Von Grunebaum (tr. Katherine Watson), Classical Islam: A History 600-1258, George Allen and Unwin LTD, London, p. 106.

168 Abul Kalam Azad

that was not enough to remove the suspicion and mistrust which dominated the Tahirid-Abbasid relations for the later years. However, with the decay of the Tahirids they again developed some sort of cordial relations with the Abbasids which lasted till their downfall in 873 and onwards. Lane-Poole aptly states that the Tahirid rule came to an end with a tamely relation with the Abbasids in 873.

THE SPIRIT OF WATER IN OLD TALES OF JAPAN*

Kayoko Takagi**

Since early ages Japan has had a long tradition of oral literature and one of the relevant exponents of this tradition is the world of popular tales. Many collections of these famous stories have been published in different languages.

As it is already accepted through valuable studies from the experts in literature as well as from the fields of anthropology and psycho-analysis, the popular tales show the profound psyche of the people at the same time as the idiosyncrasy of each culture.

This paper presents two of the 32 stories I have collected and translated into Spanish in the book El espíritu del agua, cuentos tradicionales japoneses (The Spirit of Water, Old Tales of Japan), published by Alianza Editorial in 2009 in Spain. The reason I picked up them among others is that, first, they are the most representative stories of Japanese tradition and, second, I suspect that they show in many ways the cultural roots of other parts of Asia.

Old tales as fantastic literature

El espíritu deua, cuentos tradicionales japoneses (The Spirit of Water, Old Tales of Japan)¹ was published in 2009 as part of the literary collection of Alianza Editorial in Spain. The assignment came to me several years ago for the purpose of selecting and translating the most relevant stories of Japanese popular tales into Spanish in order to meet the long time interest of Spanish readers in this field. The resources are very much varied. Many of them can be found in the collection of six volumes of Nihon no Mukashi banashi (Japanese Old Tales) rewritten by Toshio Ozawa for Fukuinkan Shoten.² Others are picked up from Otogizōshi³ (Collection of Fairly Tales, 14th-16th century) or from Konjaku monogatari (Anthology of Tales from the Past, after 1120).

^{*} Presented at the 13th Monthly Meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh on 5 March 2011.

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¹ El espíritu del agua. Cuentos tradicionales japoneses, Kayoko Takagi, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 2009.

Nihon no Mukashi banashi (Japanese Old Tales), Vol. I-VI, Toshio Ozawa, Fukuinkan Shoten, Tokyo, 2002.

³ Otogizōshi, Trans. by Hiroshi Kuwabara, Kodansha, Tokyo, 1994.

170 Kayoko Takagi

One of the criteria for the selection was to collect the most famous stories framed within the archetypes of Japanese traditional tales. The motifs, the settings, the ways of narration are vast but there are certain groupings that we can trace as similar stories. Unlike some of other collections that include so called myths and legends mixed up with popular tales, I have separated them since they belong to a different range of literature although, as the Brothers Grimm suggested, we can find many elements from myth and legend scattered inside popular tales and fairly tales. Another consideration was also taken in order not to interfere the by a Greco-Irish writer, Lafcadio Hearn, whose collection of ghost stories called *Kwaidan* (*Stories and Studies of Strange Things*, 1903) is an important reference for the genre. In this sense, I have avoided deliberately the stories rewritten by him and aimed to offer the tales as they are transmitted naturally in different regions of Japan.

Lafcadio Hearn lived in Japan during the Enlightenment period of the Meiji Era (after the opening of Japan to the outside world) from 1890 to 1904, and died there, naturalized Japanese as Koizumi Yakumo. His best known book *Kwaidan* became very famous already at that time among English readers, but sixty years later, in 1965 a motion picture was made based on it: *Kwaidan*, directed by Masaki Kobayashi. The film received several important film festival prizes such as Cannes Film Festival or the nomination to the Academy Award as a foreign entry. The film reflected well the atmosphere of the ghost stories Hearn created and contributed to determine a special imagery of the Japanese traditional stories. The avant-garde audiovisual effects applied to the film, yet well in accordance with the taste of Japanese esthetics, surprise the viewers. Hearn rewrote these tales in English using his imagination, which inspired in many ways later generations outside and inside of Japan. This is the legacy borne after Hearn's writings and we can affirm that Hearn's recreation of Japanese old tales served to establish a fixed imagery of old Japan and,

⁴ Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) came to Japan in 1890 as journalist but established there as writer and professor of English literature. Married to a Japanese lady from a samurai family of Shimane prefecture and had 4 children. Glimpses of Unfamilier Japan, Kokoro: Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life, Kwaidan are his major works.

Masaki Kobayashi (1916-1996) is one of the most representative film directors of contemporary Japan. He directed *The Human Condition*, *Seppuku* (1963 Cannes) Festival Jury Special Award), *Kwaidan* (1965 Cannes Festival Jury Special Award), *Samurai Rebellion*, among others.

The Spirit of Water 171

simultaneously, this imagery affected back the Japanese understanding about their own popular tales.

Although this is an interesting phenomenon that we may discuss further, I am not elaborating on this argument here. At this point, it seems to me important that the editor from Alianza Editorial must have had this image of Japanese traditional stories in his mind when he decided to go forward with the project. However, by this collection I wanted to demonstrate the variety and richness of Japanese traditional tales that go beyond Hearn's ghost world.

Now, although we admit the fact that the image of Japanese fantastic stories is coloured by Lafcadio Hearn and, consequently, many readers in foreign countries expect this type of stories from Japan, there are others not touched by him that also attract the attention as powerfully as the latter and even inspire more ancient fantasies of the Japanese culture. Two stories I have chosen precisely belong to this type of stories.

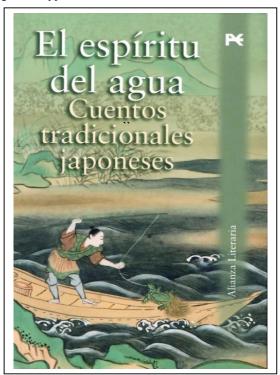


Image 1: Cover of the book, El espíritu del agua. Cuentos tradicionales japoneses

172 Kayoko Takagi

Urashima Tarō

The first tale is called Urashima Tarō⁶ and is considered the oldest story of Japan. We can trace it back because it appears in one of the oldest books of Japan: *Nihon Shoki* o *Nihongi* (The Chronicles of Japan compiled in 720 A.D. under an Imperial order). Many other versions follow this and gradually it was converted into an orally transmittable popular tale.

Let's start with a quick view over the story and see how it develops.

We will use the most popularly known version ⁷ for the purpose of the dissertation. Fortunately, the book was published first in the 1930's by Kodansha International with very nice illustrations, but most outstandingly, the series were edited in bilingual version: Japanese and English.

Japan is an archipelago composed of more than six thousand islands around. Hence, the water plays an important role in the Japanese life, (so much as in Bangladesh). Urashima Tarō is a simple young fisherman living on the coast of the Sea of Japan. He is the only child of an aged couple.

One day, Tarō was out fishing and wishing and dreaming...of the inside world of the sea.

When, to his surprise, as he sat there afloat, a giant sea turtle swam up to his boat.

"Hello there, Urashima Tarō. Come down to the Dragon King's Palace with me!" - the turtle said to Tarō.

He didn't think twice – well why should he? He sat on the back of the sea turtle guide and went deep down under the sea.

The text in rhyme says:

Deep down dove the turtle,

Then down deeper still,

To curtains of seaweed

⁶ Urashima is a toponym, so it could be a family name for the people from the place. Tarō, on the other hand, is equivalent to a common male name such as John or Jim in English

⁷ Urashima and the Kingdom Beneath the Sea, Bilingual book in Japanese and English, Tras: Rulf McCarthy, Ilus: Shiro Kasamatsu, Kodansha International, Tokyo, 1996.

The Spirit of Water 173

That covered a hill,
Then on through the curtains,
To what lay belowA forest of coral
That waved to and fro.

Then on through the forest, and low and behold: The Dragon King's palace, all emerald and gold! And there at the gate, seven beautiful maids Awaited Tarō with their hair up in braids.

And late in the evening, fair Princess Oto Arose to dance all by herself for Tarō And sang him a song as she tiptoed and twirled:

"You're welcome to stay here in our little world, Down here there's no sorrow, no anger, no fear, No reason to leave – all you've dreamed of is here."

You can't really
blame him for
wanting to stay
He lingered for
many a long,
lazy day,
And soon he lost
all sense of time,
It appears —
The days became weeks,
And then months,
And then years.

But one night our hero sat dozing, and dreamed Of Mother and Father. How lonely they seemed! They scanned the horizon for signs of Tarō, Who'd left to go fishing some three years ago. 174 Kayoko Takagi

The next day Tarō told the princess, his love, He had to go back to the land up above, "It grieves me to think of my parents alone, I'll miss you, but I have a home of my own."

"So be it", she said with a tear in her eyes,
And gave him a gift to remember her by —
A box decorated with ivory and gold,
"Don't lose it," she said, "and you'll never grow old.
Return with it someday to make me your bride.
But don't ever open it —don't look inside!"

The sea turtle left Tarō off at the shore,
Then called out "Farewell" and dove under once more.
"I'm home!" cried Tarō, running up to the land
And straight to the spot where his house used to stand.

Imagine his shock – the house wasn't there!
There wasn't a trace of the place anywhere!
And as he walked on, he kept thinking: "How strange!
I can't believe even the pine trees would change!

At last, around sunset,
he met an old man.
He stopped him and said:
"Tell me where, if you can,
The parents of young
Urashima Tarō
Have moved to —
Their house is gone!
Where did they go?

"What's that? Urashima?" the man said and smiled. "That name's from a legend I heard as a child – The Spirit of Water 175

A boy who rode off on a turtle one day Some three hundred years ago, some people say.

What? Three hundred years ago! How could that be? It didn't make sense – he'd been gone only three.

Al last he remembered
The box in his hand.
"That's it!" he thought,
setting it down on the sand.
He untied the ribbon and lifted the lid...
And that was the last thing Tarō ever did.

He'd thought
the box might hold some clue
to the truth —
But out
flew all three
hundred years
of his youth!
His hair turned snow-white,
And he felt stiff and cold.
That's right —
Young Tarō
was three hundred yours old.

A terrible ending you might have not imagined for a fairy tale. Now, regarding this story, I would like to comment on two points.

Firstly, as I mentioned before, we find a very old version of this tale in *Nihonshoki, The Cronicles of Japan*. There, the turtle is not only an animal that invites him to the Dragon King's Palace into the sea. As soon as it is fished up by Urashima's rod, it changes its figure into a beautiful woman and proposes him a wedding.

The fact that a woman proposes a man first surprises the reader since we do not expect it from an ancient story. However, if we analyze other famous Japanese stories, we can soon recognize that, in many stories, the female character is the

176 Kayoko Takagi

one to move the story and leads the male character, yet, normally she is the one to be deceived at the end (because the man breaks the promise or cannot keep the taboo) and suffers and decides to disappear from this world.

According to Hayao Kawai, a psychoanalyst influenced by Carl Gustav Jung, this shows a strong character of women, that in ancient Japan existed. The princess Oto is a turtle that took one day a poor fisherman and gave him the opportunity to experience his dream come true but, at the same time, she had another plan to bring him back to reality. The concept of the nature identified with the figure of a woman is well represented by the origin of the Japanese religion Shintō. The center of this world and the beginning of the Yamato Empire is the Goddess of the Sun, Amaterasu. Despite the strong image of warrior Emperors in the conquest of new territories, they are always controlled by the supreme power of the Goddess Amaterasu. While in Western culture the Sun is usually identified with a male figure such as Apollo, in Japanese mythology the female gender plays an essential part of its development.

The second element I would like to mention is the human belief in that there is a different world under the sea very much related to a special power of the spirit. In the first book compiled in Japan, *Kojiki* (Ancient Matters of Japan) we read the myth of Umisachi and Yamasachi. They are brother princes: one standing for the fortune from the sea and another for the fortune from the mountain respectively.

One day, the Prince of the Mountain asks his brother to let him use his rod and line. The Prince of the Sea is reluctant but at the end he is persuaded to do so.

Why always this has to happen? The prince of the Mountain enjoys fishing all day until he raises his rod without the hook. A big fish must have swallowed the bait.

He returns home with his head down and asks his brother to forgive him. But, the answer of the Prince of the Sea is a stern no. Greatly embarrassed, he goes to the seashore and cries. Suddenly an old man approaches him and takes him to the Sea King's palace under the sea.

The king hears the story of the prince and gathers all the fishes to the palace to summon. "Is there anyone who knows about the Prince's hook?" Then one of

⁸ Hayao Kawai (1928-2007), Mukashibanashi to Nihonjin no kokoro (The Japanese psyche: major motifs in the fairy tales of Japan), Iwanami, Tokyo, 1997.

The Spirit of Water 177

the subject fishes answers: "There is a gigantic sea bream who has a problem in his throat because it seems he swallowed a bait the other day."

Finally the hook is recovered. Before the Prince leaves the palace, that old man teaches him some magic words in order to face his bother prince hostility. Fortunately or unfortunately, he had to use the words and finally, the Prince of the Mountain becomes the ruler of the sea and the mountain.

As we can see in this myth, men travel into the sea as if we had known how to for a long time. Like Urashima Tarō dreamed of, we have the dream to move as we wish under the sea. The cultures of the countries surrounded by the sea, like Indonesia, the Philippines or Japan share stories very much alike. This is the way the people express their desire and dream and, many times, these stories are derived from a deep heritage of the life that had developed in close touch with the essential elements of the nature for the population.

In Japanese mythology a place called Tokoyo is mentioned. Tokoyo is an eternal world of the motherhood that exists over the ocean. During the construction of the country, a special small god named Sukunabikona comes from there to the land. He is as tiny as an insect and drifts on the waves using a camellia leaf as a boat but is as strong as a giant. After giving an essential help for the establishment of the kingdom he returns again to Tokoyo.

As we can see in this passage, besides the vertical structure of the world we have, like in many mythologies of the world: the heaven, the ground and the underworld; the Japanese mythology includes this horizontal perspective of the world. They always thought there was something spiritual that comes from over the sea horizon and that something was to benefit the people rather than harm them. It was believed that these visits occur usually in the change of the season and so is believed that they are the ones to influence over the nature.

Therefore, the popular festivities in relation to the agricultural activities observe this type of imaginary personality. On his honor dancing and singing are organized and gradually they developed into theatrical forms such as Noh theater or Kabuki theater.

The fact that the prince of the Mountain receives a magical power from someone living inside the sea gives us a clue in this sense. We can consider that Urashima Tarō's story as well as Umisachi and Yamasachi's myth trace the origin of our belief about the spiritual power of water.

178 Kayoko Takagi

Taketori monogatari (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter) or Moon Princess9

The next story is about one popularly known as Moon Princess, although we also have a written version of it, *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter*¹⁰ and it is considered the first fiction work in Japanese literature.

This tale, I should say, is as popular as Urashima Tarō in Japan. The original story was written, we believe, for the first time in Japanese "kana" letters around the end of the 9th century. As you might know, Japanese language did not have letters until it adopted the Chinese ones along through several centuries and gradually they were converted into a very simplified cursive signs that mainly stood for the Japanese phonemes. Since they got these letters, even women who were not supposed to learn Chinese letters started to enjoy writing and reading. We are talking of the 9th century after Christ.

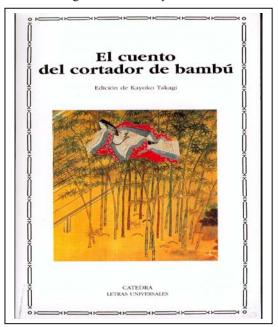


Image 2: Cover of the book. Taketori monogatari, The Tale of the Banboo Cutter.

All the illustrations and rhymed script in English in this chapter are taken from *The Moon Princess* (Kodansha International, Tokyo, 1996) and *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* rewritten by Yasunari Kawabata, translated by Donald Keene and illustrated by Masayuki Miyata (Kodansha International, Tokyo 1998)

Anonimous, considered as the first *monogatari* (narrative fiction story) in Japan.

The Spirit of Water 179

I have translated this tale into Spanish and published in 2004.¹¹ Preceding the translation of the tale, there is a study about the beginning of fiction work in Japanese letters taking this account as the first proof. There, I have focused on the role of the woman in Japanese Classical literature.

At the beginning of fiction stories by 9th & 10th century we can see:

- 1. Women as readers (many stories were created for their entertainment)
- 2. Women as the main characters of the story.

And about a hundred years later, by the beginning of the 11th century, we start to see:

3. Women as authors of fiction stories.

The most famous Japanese classical work, *The Tale of Genji*, was written by Lady Murasaki in Japanese *kana* letters by 1009.

Before the wide usage of kana letters, the historians and anthropologists explain the fact that there were a number of official storytellers in different regions and even in the Imperial Court of Yamato. The majority of them were female. They were called *Kataribe*, a person who tells stories. My hypothesis through the studies consists in identifying the role of these ladies as creators of fiction in Japanese literature. We are talking about their contribution first as storytellers, this is to say, oral literature and later on, as a tradition of the female authors for the written works such as diaries, poems, fiction stories, essays... During the Heian period (VIII-XII) the majority of the important literary works were produced by court ladies who, in my opinion, had followed the activities of storytellers yet now using *kana* letters.

If *Kataribes* played a rather ritual and religious role at the public ceremonies reciting the relevant names and matters for the collective memory, the works of court ladies were kept to themselves or read mainly by themselves. And the purpose of creation turned to more individual instead of collective and started to entertain the readers in a very private circle, especially a female one at the Imperial Court.

Having said this, again, let's look at the *Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* in order to illustrate the above mentioned theory.

¹¹ Kayoko Takagi, El cuento del cortador de bamboo (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter), Editorial Cátedra, Madrid, 2004.

180 Kayoko Takagi

Japanese Nobel prize laureate Yasunari Kawabata rewrote the story in modern Japanese and Prof. Donald Keen of Columbia University, USA, did the translation into English in 1998.

However, for today's purpose I will rather follow the script from the same collection as in the case of Urashima Tarō.

In an ancient
bamboo forest
In the mountains
of Japan.
Lived an aged
Bamboo-cutter
And his wife.
This kind old man...
Once cut down a bamboo glowing
With a light not of this world.
And inside he found a lovely,
Tiny little baby girl.

Every day from that day on, one More bamboo he would behold Shining with a golden light, and It was always full of gold

With the gold they bought their daughter Silk kimono, smooth and fine. Like the moon on deep, still water Did her gentle beauty shine.

In three months she was full grown, with Eyes like stars that glow at night, Lighting up the bamboo forest. And they named her Shining Bright.

Hearing of her dazzling beauty, People came by day and night Just to catch a fleeting glimpse of Lovely Princess Shining Bright. All the young men smiled and sighed: "Ah, to make that girl my bride!"

From the Palace came five suitors, Princes all, to win her hand. But she had no wish to marry. So she told the kind old man: "Ask Prince Kuramochi to bring me Jeweled branches from the tree Growing on a Sacred mountain Far beyond the misty sea.

There's a ball of many colors Treasured by the Dragon King: Tell Prince Otomo that this is All I ask of him to bring.

"In the belly of the swallow Is a perfect cowry shell: Prince Isó shall bring it to me. With the unharmed bird, as well...

And so on ... The bamboo-cutter Gave the five men different tasks. "Shining Bright" he said, "will marry He who brings her what she asks."

All of them thought it was an impossible mission but never gave up the idea of marrying her.

What they pretended was rather to trick the Princess and so, did whatever they could.

For example,

Prince Otomo set out with his Bow to find the Dragon King. Boasting: "Who's afraid of dragons? They shall fell my arrow's string!"

Out at sea he met a storm that Tossed his ship upon the foam. "Please" he cried. "Don't let me die! I'll Hunt no more! I'm going home!"

Prince Iso went to a wise man,
Who said: "listen to me well:
When the swallow lays her eggs – That's
When you'll find the cowry shell."

So his men rigged up a crane, with Which they raised the love-obsessed Prince Iso up to the palace Roof, where swallows made their nest. 182 Kayoko Takagi

When he touched inside the nest something hard and round, He cried "I've got it! Quickly, get me to the ground!"

He came down too quickly, and he Sprained his back and hurt his leg. "Well," he moaned, "at least I've got it! Look! I've got a swallow's egg?

So it went,

The princess never
Wed, but spent
four happy years
With the kind old
couple, till one
Night they found her
shedding tears,
Gazing at the misty moon,
Whispering:

"Too soon! Too soon!!

Upon the inquiry of old parents Shining Bright revealed the secret:

"Mother, Father, there is a secret
That I can no longer keep.
I'm a princess of the City on the Moon.

"On the fifteenth night of August, When the moon is full and bright, People of the Moon are coming, I must leave you on that night!"

Despite the cries of the parents and the protection of a thousand samurais, a flying chariot descended from the sky with the people of the Moon to pick up Shining Bright to the sky. As soon as they put the robe of feathers on her shoulder, she forgot everything of this world. No cares afflict anyone who once put on this robe and, in all tranquility, Shining Bright climbed into her chariot and ascended into the sky, accompanied by a hundred celestial beings.

The story according to the book for the children finishes here. However, the written work from the 9th century gives us another ending.

When all the five suitors failed on their adventure, the Emperor appeared. He paid the visit to old bamboo-cutter's mansion to confirm the beauty of Shining Bright with his own eyes. He invited her to the palace but the stubborn princess didn't accept the offer. Yet she would answer all the love poems sent from the Palace. In this manner, exchanging poems, three years passed by.

When they reported the Emperor the secret of the origin of the princess, he tried to protect her from returning to the world of the Moon, but, human effort cannot combat against the celestial power and Shining Bright ascends to the sky. At the very moment of farewell, the princess leaves him a small bottle of elixir and a poem saving:

Now that the moment has come to put on the robe of feathers, how longingly I recall my lord!

The answering poem from the Emperor says:

What use is it, this elixir of immortality, to one who floats in tears because he cannot meet her again?

The emperor gave the poem and the jar containing the elixir to a messenger with the command that he take them to the summit of the Mount Fuji. He directed that the letter and the jar be placed side by side, set on fire, and be consumed in the flames.

Ever since they burnt the elixir of immortality on the summit, people have called the mountain by the name Fuji, meaning immortal. Even now the smoke is still said to rise into the clouds.

We see here the romantic ending goes across with the geographical and historical features everyone knows. The mount Fuji, a symbol of the country, now obtains the imagery of the love story between the Emperor and the princess Shining Bright. The supreme value of love is stressed by the decision of the Emperor to set in fire the letter and the elixir. He asks what use is the long life if you do not have love.

From the point of view of the typology, we can classify this story as one of the popular tales of a small being such as Tom Thumb. After all, Shining Bright was found inside the bamboo section and grew adult in three months.

184 Kayoko Takagi

On the other hand, we can also classify it into the category of the stories about the love adventures. In a western story of this type, normally a male character should fight against a monster to save the princess. Here, the five suitors pretend to bring the object the princess asked for but all suffer from some adversity and fail in their attempt. The particularity of the story is that none of them achieve the love of the princess and is ridiculed bitterly. Some critics talk about the early realism and sense of satire that are not so common in a frame of a popular tale.

On the contrary, to a sweet image of a western princess, the princess Shining Bright has a strong and determined character and rejects any proposal for marriage. She even asks: "How can I know the sincerity of their heart?" This is surprising if we consider the social conditions of the women in the 9th century. Probably, only in a fictional world a non-human female could talk about her real feelings.

These are the elements exceeding the normal structure of a popular tale and make this tale a special one in comparison to others.

As we can see, *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* offers a number of different themes to be discussed, but today, I'd rather like to focus on the role of Hagoromo, the robe of feathers that celestial creatures put on the princess shoulders in order to take her back to the Moon. It works as a magic object to erase all the memories of this world at the same time as to give a person the power to fly. Without it even a celestial creature could not fly.

Legend of Hagoromo

Reading further about the role of this magical robe we recognize that the imagery of a lady flying in the air with this robe of feather has a long and wide spread tradition over Asia. Thus, many different version of the celestial maiden as popular tale are recorded in the world.

In Japan a direct relationship is found in two books of Fudoki, ones of the oldest compilations describing geography and traditions of regions around the present Kyoto prefecture (8th Century). The stories resemble each other but the beginning is exactly the same.

One clear day, eight heavenly maidens in form of white birds descended from the sky to have a bath in a lake/a shore.

Near lived an old couple without children/ a man.

They see them and steal and hide one of their robes of feather.

All maidens fly away but one who cannot find her robe of feather.

In Japan this imagery turns into a legend and we have a famous work of Noh theater called Hagoromo based on it from the 14th century. 12

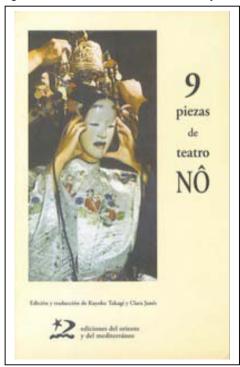


Image 3: Hagoromo in Noh play. (Cover of 9 piezas de teatro Nô.)

The Noh play is based on this legend but instead of telling the story, it is taken for granted and the main feature of the play becomes the celestial dance the maiden performs. The maiden asks the fisherman to return the robe of feather but he refuses because he knows if he gives it back she will fly away. However, seeing the grief of the maiden, finally he accepts to return it but with a condition: to perform for him the famous heavenly dance. The maiden dances flying and fluttering the robe of feather in the wind. The spring scenery of the pine grove in Miho beach looks like a heaven and the maiden's dancing gains

¹² This work by Zeami is included in the publication 9 piezas de teatro Nô (9 works of Noh theater) in Spanish, ediciones del Oriente y del Mediterráneo, Madrid, 2008.

186 Kayoko Takagi

the meaning of a blessing. The maiden flies up to the summit of the mount Fuji until she disappears into the infinite.

Again we reckon the relationship between a flying celestial maiden and the mount Fuji. Thus we can confirm the succession of the imagery that appeared first in a legend, and then as a fiction work at the same time as a popular tale and continued to a piece of Noh play several centuries later.

In the same way, we can cite another very popular story called Crane Maiden. It is well known as *Tsuru no ongaeshi* (Crane's repayment) and we have also the double image of a beautiful woman as a bird. If the celestial maiden is seen as a white bird in the legend, here a Japanese white crane is the main female of the story.

It is a story about a poor wood cutter who finds one day a crane in a trap. He kindly frees her from the trap.

Next day, a beautiful girl calls on his door. Her name is Tsuu (crane).

Without thinking twice, the wood cutter accepts Tsuu as his wife.

Tsuu works hard but their poor situation does not change.

One day, she tells him that she would weave a cloth to sell but asks him not to see her while she is working. She closes up in a room for three days and three nights. Finally she comes out with the most beautiful cloth ever seen.

The wood cutter sells it at a very high price in town, so he asks her to weave it once more.

Tsuu agrees to do so but this time, the curiosity of the wood cutter grows stronger. He peeps into the room where Tsuu is supposed to work. But, alas! What he finds is a crane weaving a cloth pulling out her own feathers!

The crane makes a pitiful cry and flies up to the sky. She flies making three circles over his head and disappears finally in the sky.

Through this sad ending, the melancholic image of a relationship between man and gracious animal is stressed. Moreover, what strikes the most is that this gracious bird is identified with female gender, the gender to be deceived by man's stupidity at the end and, as a consequence, this relationship cannot endure.

The story shows typical Japanese esthetics loved by all the population. In 1949 a famous play writer Junji Kinoshita created a play titled Yūzuru based on this popular tale and Dan Ikuma, another famous composer wrote an opera for this play.

Conclusion

As a brief conclusion, I consider that the interaction among genres such as myth, legend, popular tales and finally a fiction work or theatre play is clear in these cases and we can confirm the fact that the traditional popular stories stand as an important essence of a culture, therefore, tend to serve in many ways as an inspiration for the artistic creations.

As Urashima Tarō's story shows, the one who touched the Dragon King's Palace under water cannot escape from the strong influence of the turtle princess Otohime. In the same way, the suitors of the Moon princess suffer from calamities, mainly because of their own stupidity. The female figure wrapped up with their extraordinary condition dominates man's mind and fate.

The traditional image of Japanese women is quiet, obedient and subjugated to the men oriented society. However, we discover through the history that once there existed a belief in the women's power as the foundation of the Myth. It was more related with a religious thoughts rather than a political power. In this regard, we cannot talk about the matriarchal society from the point of view of the feminist theory, although one can point out the historical fact that there was a female ruler over 30 kingdoms around the 2nd century A.D. called Himiko in Japan. She sent an envoy to the King of Wei in China and got a golden seal as a proof of their alliance. ¹³

Thus, the role the women played in Japanese literature is not a mere matter of letters. Their presence is closely connected with the history and the society. The female literature that flourished during four centuries (8th - 12th centuries) of Heian era in Japan has much to do with it. Since such early age they did not only enjoy reading and listening the stories but also soon became excellent authors.¹⁴

¹³ According to Gishiwajinden (Section about Japanese people in the Chronicles of Wei Dynasty), 280-290 A.D.) of China, Himiko used a shamanistic power to rule the people and was succeeded by her niece at her death. This is the first mention ever about Japan.

Most probably, this is a unique phenomenon in the world literature. We can refer to a number of female authors from this era but some names are especially important: Lady Murasaki (The Tale of Genji); Lady Sei Shonagon (The Pillow book); Lady Izumi (poetry and diary); Michitsuna's mother (The Kagero diary/The gossamer Years).