
Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

Md Mainul Islam¹

¹Assistant Professor
Department of History
Brahmananda Kesbab Chandra College
Barrackpore,Kolkata,West Bengal
Email:mainul3484@gmail.com

Abstract: *There was something called the 'intellectual' class of Bengali Muslim society. From the end of the 19th century to the third decade of the 20th century, there was a debate among the intellectuals of Bengali Muslim society. Bengali Muslim intellectuals described the ideal design of society in history. Various tariqas occupy a full place in the social life of Bengali Muslims. The social position of the progressive educated Muslim intellectual society, on the other hand, is the existence of completely opposite Maulanas of the anti-intellectual educated society. Bengali Muslim intellectuals sought to transform Arabic-Iranian Muslim culture into Bengali Muslim culture. The intellectual community mainly emerged from the educated middle class. In the context of the positive changes in education in the Bengali Muslim society, an intellectual class emerged among the Muslims of Bengal.*

Keywords: *Bengal, Intellectual, Muslim Society, Marxist, Middle Age, Progressive etc.*

Date of Submission: 26-10-2022

Date of Acceptance: 3-11-2022

Introduction

An intellectual is a person who engages in critical thinking, research, and reflection about the reality of society and proposes solutions for society's normative problems. Coming from the

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

world of culture, either as a creator or as a mediator, the intellectual participates in politics to defend a concrete proposition or denounce an injustice, usually by either rejecting, producing, or extending an ideology and by defending a system of values. Marx's philosophy is perfectly capable of sustaining the view that our intellectual activities find their highest culmination in culture, communication, and aesthetics, where some distinction from immediate needs has been established. The intellectual community led the revolutionary reform movement in various countries of the world. Russian writer Boborykin first used the term. According to Lenin, 'intellectuals ...all educated people, the members of the liberal professions, the brain worker, as the English call them, as distinct from manual workers.'¹ The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) has widely and rightly been seen as making a significant contribution to the Marxist understanding of the role of intellectuals. As we have seen, for Marx and Engels, the philosophy of the intellectuals would develop its critical potential the more it could interrogate its conditions of existence. Gramsci argued that it needed to develop critical awareness by a) not accepting ideas and value systems passively from the dominant institutions in society and b) overcoming its fragmented and disparate character and developing itself as a systematic and coherent worldview in the way traditional philosophers have had the time to do with their own more 'rarefied' systems. He identified two types of intellectuals. The first was what he called the traditional intellectuals, which he defined rather ambiguously in both historical terms and social-ideological terms. These intellectuals are 'traditional' when compared to his other main category organic intellectuals. Gramsci's 'organic intellectual' can emerge from any level in society.² His work is social analysis. Through literature, he can bring out the feelings and thoughts of society's neglected, neglected strata.³

The word 'intellectual' has been used as an adjective in Bengal since the late 19th century. The word 'intellectual' is common in early 20th century Bengal. A class of Bengalis wants to identify themselves as intellectuals.⁴ Intertwined with this trend are a complex social history, the spread of education, modernism and progressivism, subjugation, political crisis, and struggle. The educated middle class of any social status can lead the nation through another identity called intellectuals. Bengali intellectuals were in crisis in the political tension and ideological conflict of the 20th century. There was something called the 'intellectual' class of Bengali Muslim society. The inter-relationship between religion and society was strong and intense among Bengali Muslims. These two aspects formed a structure in terms of

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

inter-relationships. In the 19th century, social stratification in Bengali Muslim society began to become increasingly complex.⁵ From the end of the 19th century to the third decade of the 20th century, there was a debate among the intellectuals of the Bengali Muslim society, where a special idea of Islam was created. Various tariqas occupy a full place in the social life of Bengali Muslims. These are religious political vocational associations. There is a Patron Pir, who is the guardian of this circle. One of the characteristics of these tarikas is the relationship of apprentices with their masters.⁶ As the specialization of tarikas intensified, a variety of institutions developed within different strata of society based on rank. From the Middle Ages to the end of the 19th century, intellectuals in Muslim society referred to the Alim class. They practiced knowledge, which knowledge was based on scriptures of course. Bengali Muslim intellectuals described the ideal design of society in history. Various tariqas occupy a full place in the social life of Bengali Muslims.

The interrelationship between religion and society was strong and intense among Bengali Muslims. In the nineteenth century, the social stratification in Bengali Muslim society began to become increasingly complex. From the end of the nineteenth century to the third decade of the twentieth century, the debate among the intellectuals of the Bengali Muslim society created a special ideology of Islam. The wave of Mohammadi, Faraji, Ahle Hadith movements in the socio-political strata of Bengali Muslim society aimed to give importance to society on the basic teachings of Islam in Bengali Muslim society.⁷ The intellectuals of this period could not create the ideal design for Faraji or Mohammadi movement. A religious movement skeptical of Western culture to introduce pure Islam. The influence of the Alim class can be seen on the criteria of the integrity of intellect, development of personality, and idealism in all religions.⁸ The ideal design in Bengali Muslim society could not be created by the intellectuals of this period. Socio-political level of Bengali Muslim society Mohammadi, Faraji, Ahle Hadith movement that arose was aimed at giving importance to the society on the fundamental teachings of Islam in Bengali Muslim society. The supporters of the movement were the common people of rural Bengal. Among them were farmers, weavers, and oil communities. The aim of this movement was to achieve social and economic reforms inspired by the peasant movement. The Mohammadi movement spread both in urban and rural areas. The Ahle -Hadith movement was mainly confined to the educated classes in the cities. Its aim was to judge life and religion in the light of reason and verify it.

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

Based on these movements Bengali Muslims tried to reform society. But the movements were mainly conducted around two main issues- 1) Taqleed i.e. incorporating Islamic jurisprudence into the religion without judging anything in the light of Quran. 2) The other is Ijtihad i.e. introducing a new type of research in the field of Islam especially the Sunnah of Hadith. The Faraji movement emphasized Taqleed whereas the Mohammadi movement accepted ijthihad. The difference between Mohammadi and Aile hadith centered on the interpretation of ijthihad.⁹ The goal of Faraji's development was to reform the Muslim society based on the fundamental ideology of Islam and eliminate various anti-Islamic activities in the superstitious Muslim society. The movement imposed bans on what was called sherk and bidar, such as Pir Puja, Kabar Puja, Tazia Tola, etc.¹⁰ The Ao movement wanted to return to the purity of Islam, but by accepting Taqleed. Adhering to Islamic jurisprudence, the movement did not judge and interpret the Sunnah. The movement did not raise any questions about the rational role of the individual in religion and social life. The movement emphasized religious duty. But accepted conventional tolerance. Emphasizing equality, this movement sought to remove all forms of social distance and racism from society.¹¹

In the Muhammadan movement, not the Qur'an or the Sunnah, but the ideals set by the life of Prophet Muhammad, therefore, can only be followed. Like the Farazis, the Muhammadans were opposed to Shirk and Bidar. This movement took the form of a mass movement in Muslim society in Bengal. At the center of the Faraji, the movement was monotheism and conventional taqlid. In that regard, the Mohammadi movement emphasized that everything should be verified and judged in the light of Hazrat Muhammad's personal tradition and ijthihad. While the Farazis of the British Raj considered it not valid to offer Eid or Jummah prayers, the followers of the Mohammadi movement used to offer Jummah and Eid prayers.¹² At the political level, this movement compromised with the British government. The Ahl al-Hadith movement expanded the scope of individual freedom and reason. According to them, every believer can follow his own interpretation of the Qur'an and traditions. The followers of Ahl al-Hadith completely reject the talk of people with supernatural powers. Therefore, their movement can be called a reasonable academic movement. In this way, the movements of Islamic revival in Bengal played an important role like Puritanism in creating commercial consciousness by relaxing the frame of religious consciousness in the agricultural Muslim society.¹³ This motivation came based on the

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

demands of various Muslim groups based on occupation-based economic and social religious justice.¹⁴ Since this time, the social position of the progressive educated Muslim intellectual society, on the other hand, is the existence of completely opposite Maulanas of the anti-intellectual educated society. It can be noticed from this time.

The intellectual community mainly emerged from the educated middle class. In the context of the positive changes in education in the Bengali Muslim society, an intellectual class emerged among the Muslims of Bengal. At this time, Nawab Amir Ali Khan Bahadur Nawab Abdul Latif and Syed Amir Ali played a major role in increasing interest in western education in Muslim society. In the late 19th century, a renaissance began to improve Muslim society through educational reforms. After 1870, it can be seen that with the spread of modern education in the Bengali Muslim society and the emergence of an educated society, social workers, political leaders, poets, writers, teachers, journalists, etc. emerged from the class, which led Bengali Muslims to self-reliance. The emergence of a modern-minded middle class can be seen in the Muslim society of Bengal in the latter half of the 19th century. Their thoughts and actions brought about important changes in the Muslim society of Bengal. An important part of this new middle class is the intelligentsia. They played a significant role in the transitional crisis of Bengali Muslim society. There has not been much extensive discussion of 'intellectuals' as an important part of contemporary Muslim society. Researchers have not emphasized this point too much. However, several types of research have been completed on the social history of Bengali Muslims in the context of the 19th century. The beginning of the 20th century saw important changes in the society and politics of Bengal. Events like the Partitio of Bengal, the Swadeshi Movement and the Abolition of Bengal affected the Hindu Muslim community in Bengal. During this time Muslim society changes. The elite lost the leadership to the emerging middle class.

In this section, we will discuss how middle-class Bengali Muslim intellectuals sought to transform Arabic-Iranian Muslim culture into Bengali Muslim culture. The predominance of Islamic classical practice along with the Arabic-Persian tradition of Muslim culture made Bengali Muslims ambitious for self-establishment in the late nineteenth century.¹⁵ Some powerful Muslim writers and social reformers emerged in the late 19th century. The main subject of their writings was Muslim society and culture. These Muslim writers wrote in favor of Islam in their writings against Christian missionaries and Hindu nationalism. Islam was their source of inspiration. Their writings awakened the Muslim society of that time. The

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

conflict of identity started when Bengali and Muslim identities emerged in these writings. Between 1880 and 1920, about 40 Muslim writers were introduced to the field of literature. These authors emphasize the history, theology, biographies and essays of the Muslim community. Munsif Mohammad Riaz Uddin Ahmed, Pandit Riaz Uddin Mashhadi, Maulvi Merazuddin, Munsif Mohammad Meherullah, Mirza Mohammad Yusuf Ali, Sheikh Abdur Rahim, Kavi Mozammel Haque, Mohammad Moniruzzaman Islamabadi, the influence of the reform movement in the writings of writers like Ismail Hussain Sirazi and Maulana Akram Khan emphasized the primitive purity of Islam. The division into separate political entities during the partition of Bengal in 1905 made the influence of distinct cultural consciousness evident in the writings of Bengali Muslims.¹⁶

A significant section of the Bengali Muslim middle class began to practice independent literature in the early twentieth century. Against this controversial background, Muslim intellectual activity in 1911 saw an attempt to practice a 'separate literature'. Biographical literature and the expression of Islamic thought in the cultural life of Bengali Muslims have been recorded in various Muslim-edited journals.¹⁷ At this time three types of intellectual ideologies can be seen in the writings of Bengali Muslims. The first is religious, the second ideological and the third secular. Cultural traditions tend to express these three types of views side by side. Bengali Muslim intellectuals in the 20th century can be divided into two groups. One group was pro-independence and the other group was pro-coordination. The Bengali Muslim middle class followed two paths in its search for self-identity in language, literature, culture and nationality, etc. One group believed in nationalism based on religion, the other group was in favor of assimilation without religion.¹⁸ However, the syncretists could not agree in all cases. . Design was being created in the atmosphere of many events in society at that time. But none of the followers could fully determine the direction of that design. That is why the place of intellectuals in Bengali Muslim society was narrow. These Muslim intellectuals expressed their discontent in Bengali Muslim society. They built a new kind of Muslimness culturally and politically based on this discontent of the society.¹⁹

Some personalities such as those who have contributed to the study of the social and cultural history of Bengali Muslims in a particular time and place. The dynamism of contemporary Muslim society is palpable through literary practice and recorded in various Muslim-edited periodicals. Thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Muslims of Bengal formed a distinct community in their cultural life. Some other notable people who took the

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

welfare of society as a vow of life in the next generation are Sheikh Abdul Rahim, Mohammad Shahidullah, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat, Qazi Abdul Wadud, Ismail Hossain Sirazi, Mohammad Wazed Ali, Syed Emdad Ali, Qazi Imdadul Haque, Mozaffar Ahmed, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Mujibur Rahman Khan, Abul Kalam Shamsuddin, Nazir Ahmad Chowdhury, Khairul Anam Khan, Fazlul Haque, Md. Abdul Hakim, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Abul Mansoor Ahmed, Mohammad Waliullah, Habibullah Bahar etc. The influence of modern reformism can be seen in the works of these writers. There is no conflict between Islam and science, or as they proudly discuss Islam's contribution to human civilization, they analyze the communal principles of Islam and provide mystical explanations for many of Islam's miracles.

20

At the same time, various sects and practices of Muslims were debated as to whether they were in complete agreement with Islam. The role of the Bengali intellectual community in the spread of Muslim education in the first quarter of the 20th century is undeniable. From the beginning of the 20th century, Muslim writers, journalists and politicians encouraged Muslims to study Arabic and Persian as well as English. Yet there was disagreement among intellectuals about the nature, methods and medium of Muslim education. A large section of Muslim intellectuals termed madrasa education as unnecessary, traditional and unscientific. In favor of reforming the Muslim education system, replacing Arabic-Persian in the mother tongue Bengali and closing all new and old madrasas in school-college education. A large section of Muslim intellectuals tried to shape public opinion in favor of the spread of modern education in Muslim society. A large section of Bengali Muslim intellectuals expressed their strong support for modern and up-to-date education.

While there was consensus among Muslim intellectuals about the need for education, there was disagreement among them about the type and medium of education. As a result, it was not possible to formulate and implement a proper educational policy for Bengali Muslims. At that time, religious education was more popular in Bengali Muslim society than secular modern education. Bengali Muslims first emphasized religious education, then moral education and finally worldly education. A large section of Muslim intellectuals wanted to build public opinion in favor of the spread of modern education in Muslim society. Many consider madrasa education unnecessary and unscientific and favor its abandonment. But it did not have much effect on the conservative society. Madrasah education and English education continue in parallel in Muslim society. Education was a major topic of discussion

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

among Muslim intellectuals in Muslim-run journals. In terms of social status, the influence of religious education was much greater in elite and educated Muslim families than in Hindu families. Before teaching Bengali, English, Mathematics, etc., it was compulsory for Muslim students to study the Qur'an and learn the rules of prayer.

The role of the intellectual community of Bengal in the spread of Muslim education in the first half of the twentieth century is undeniable. A large section of Muslim intellectuals tried to form public opinion in favor of spreading modern education in Muslim society. From the beginning of the twentieth century, Muslim writers, journalists and politicians encouraged Muslims to learn Arabic and Persian as well as English. A large section of Bengali Muslim intellectuals expressed their strong support for modern and up-to-date education. Nevertheless, there was disagreement among the intellectuals about the nature of Muslim education, the education system, women's education, etc. In the field of education, Muslim intellectuals helped to change the traditional way of thinking of Muslims. In the contemporary period of independence, an educated and socially conscious Muslim middle class emerged in Bengal.

Although there was a consensus among Muslim intellectuals about the necessity of education, there was disagreement among them about the type of education and the medium of instruction. As a result, it has not been possible to formulate and implement a proper education policy for Bengali Muslims. At that time religious education was more popular in Bengali Muslim society than secular modern education. Bengali Muslims first gave importance to religious education, then to moral education and finally to secular education.²¹ A large section of Muslim intellectuals sought to build public opinion in favor of the spread of modern education in Muslim society. Many consider madrasa education to be unnecessary and unscientific and are in favor of giving it up. But it did not have much impact on conservative society. Madrasa education and English education continued in parallel in Muslim society. The subject of education was a major topic of discussion among Muslim intellectuals in Muslim-run journals. In terms of social status, the influence of religious education was much greater in aristocratic and educated Muslim families than in Hindu families. Before teaching Bengali, English, Maths, etc. to Muslim students, it was compulsory to study the Qur'an and learn the rules of prayers.

A persistent ambivalence in the outlook of the Bengali Muslim intelligentsia especially with regard to modern education can partly be explained by its heterogeneous composition

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

towards the close of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, even as the supporters of English education were slowly increasing in number among the Bengali Muslims, a different band of men joined the ranks of its intelligentsia, adding a new dimension to the great debate which was already warming up.²² These new entrants, though most of them traditionally educated were not like their predecessors the old type traditionalists. The main focus of the study is to investigate the role of both conservative and liberal intellectuals in constructing the Muslim identity in colonial Bengal and exploring their role in political culture. It also explores the diverse contrasting approaches that sometimes explicitly and implicitly influenced the selfhood consciousness of Muslims to emerge as a separate nation.

Many of the new generation of Bengali Muslims in the 20th century were English-educated emerging scholars. Many of them are associated with literary newspapers. The emerging young Bengali Muslim intellectuals were drawn to the potential of Muslim society. As a result, a new perspective was introduced in Bengali Muslim thought under the leadership of the emerging young Bengali Muslim intellectuals from the second decade of the century instead of the elite Muslims who had been in the leadership until now. A section of these educated Bengali Muslims was able to make quite a noise in the newspapers.²³ In the last decade of the 19th century, a section of Bengali Muslim writers saw this association with the Bengali language and literature.²⁴ From the second decade of the 20th century, it became another religion of Bengali Muslim literature. Improvement, reform, change of country, society, nation-state, etc. are exclusively subject to news literature. The rise and fall of leadership and the establishment of nation-state communities depended a lot on the promotion of news literature.

The efforts of Bengali Muslims to publish newspapers in the Bengali language started in the late nineteenth century. Before this several weekly-monthly magazines were published, but their life span was not long. The first Muslim-edited newspaper 'Samachar Savarajendra' was published in 1831 under the editorship of Sheikh Alimullah. Mir Musharraf Hossain published two monthly and fortnightly magazines named 'Azijun Nahar' in 1874 and 'Hitakari' in 1890. Bengali Muslims made a real attempt to publish newspapers in the Bengali language from the period of publication of 'Sudhakar' in 1889. This paper was published in 1889 as a weekly paper. The editors of this newspaper were Sheikh Abdur Rahim and Md. Rayazuddin Ahmed. The patrons of the newspaper were Shamsul Huda, Sirajul Islam,

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

Zamindar Hasan Ali, Nawab Mir Mohammad Ali and S.N Banerjee. The outlook of this journal was liberal and secular. Several budding Muslim writers emerged during this period. Notable among them were Munsif Mohammad Rayazuddin Ahmed, Pandit Rayazuddin Mashhadi, Maulvi Merazuddin, Munshi Mohammad Meherullah, Mirza Mohammad Yusuf Ali, Sheikh Abdur Rahim and poet Mozammel Haque. They understood that Bengali Muslims want a Bengali weekly newspaper to express their grievances and grievances. As a result of their efforts 'Sudhakar' was published. Their social philanthropy will be forever remembered in the history of Bengal.

Muslim journalists make a valuable contribution to awakening Muslim society during the discussion period. Journalists who rose to prominence in the late 19th century were 'Akhbar Islamia', editor Mohammad Naimuddin, 'Islam Preacher', editor Mohammad Reaz Uddin Ahmad, 'Mihir and Sudhakar' and 'Hafez', editor Sheikh Abdur Rahim, editor of the Kohinoor newspaper. AKM Roshan Ali and others. In 1895, the English newspaper 'Muslim Chronicle' edited by Abdul Hamid exerted considerable influence in Muslim society as the mouthpiece of educated Muslims. In the early 20th century, Maulana Moniruzzaman Islamabadi and Maulana Akram Khan entered the world of newspapers with 'Soltan' and 'Mohammadi'. In 1906, Mujibur Rahman launched a weekly English newspaper called 'The Muslim'. This magazine will be forever remembered by the Muslim community for expressing nationalist thoughts and the demands of the Muslim community. Basically, they were the pioneers of journalism in Muslim society. They characterized Muslim journalism by their devotion and ideals. On 4th September 1911, the Bengali Muslim Literary Society was established under the editorship of Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah.

Islam preached conservative ideals in 'Akhbar Islamia' (1884), 'Islam Preacher' (1891, 99), 'Nur al Iman' (1900), 'Al Eshlam (1918), Islam Darshan' (1920), 'Taghlib'. (1927), 'Al Muslim' (1928) and 'Maktab' (1930). Newspapers of that time were mostly published for religious purposes. Believers of different doctrines of Islam used the newspaper as a vehicle to propagate their respective doctrines. Published periodicals like 'Hanafi' (1903), 'Ahle Hadith' (1915), 'Albashra' (1921), 'Shariat' (1924), 'Ahmadi' (1925), 'And Hanafi' (1926) as spokespersons of Muslim religious groups. In analyzing the character of these newspapers and magazines, Mohammad Nasiruddin, the editor of Sawgat newspaper, commented, "Most of them were published to propagate Islam. The writers were bound by various restrictions. It was dangerous to propagate free thought or doctrine in that dark age. But some Newspapers

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

showed admirable liberality in social reform and thought. Some of them served as various social, political, and literary mouthpieces. 'Islam Darshan', Anjuman Warezibe Bengali, 'Bengiya Musalman Sahitya Patrika' (1918), Bengali Musalman Sahitya of the Samity, 'Saymavadi' (1923), Anjuman Tarakkiye Qaum, 'Langal' (1925), Sramik Praja Swaraj Dal, 'Ganabani' (1926), Bengali Peasant Sramik Dal, Shikha' (1926), Muslim Sahitya Samaj, 'Moazzin' (1928), of Khademul Enchan Samiti, 'Mohammadi'(1937), acted as spokesperson of Muslim League. Some dailies took a stand for political organizations. Krishak Praja Party, originally the political party of Fazlul Haque propagated ideas. The English newspaper 'Star of India' (1932) and 'Morning News' were mouthpieces of the Muslim League.

The contribution of those newspaper periodicals to the decadent Bengali Muslim society was very important. However, the role of socially conscious people behind the mentioned magazines was important. From their long list, one name is particularly noteworthy - Sheikh Abdur Rahim, Md. Riaz Uddin Ahmed, Maulana Akram Khan, Maulana Moniruzzaman Islamabadi. They took the welfare of society through newspapers as a vow of life. Among the later generation, some other notable people are Ismail Hossain Shirazi, Mohammad Wazed Ali, Syed Emdad Ali, Kazi Imdadul Haque, Mozaffar Ahmed, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Mujibur Rahman Khan, Abul Kalam Shamsuddin, Nazir Ahmad Chowdhury, Khairul Anam Khan, Fazlul Haque. , Md. Abdul Hakim, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Abul Mansoor Ahmed, Mohammad Waliullah, Habibullah Bahar etc.²⁵ The objective of the writers of distinctive Muslims was to promote the Muslim middle class and the Muslim nation to promote the history and religious consciousness of Muslims. It was only through periodicals run by Bengali Muslims that the mind of the Muslim nation was formed. The literary pursuits of the distinctive writers of this period were propaganda. Sometimes they played the role of an orator, sometimes the role of a writer, or sometimes the role of an organizer for the betterment of Bengali Muslim society.

Along with Islamic ideals, many western ideas like nationalism, liberalism, rationalism, Marxism, and feminism greatly influenced modern-educated Muslims from the beginning of the twentieth century. Writings of Mahommed Huq, Ismail Hossain Siraji, Mir Mosharraf Hossain, Syed Emdad Ali, etc cultivated secular ideas and Hindu-Muslim unity among the Muslims. In creative writing, Muhammad Shahidullah, Kazi Abdul Wadud, Kazi Nazrul Islam emphasized on mother tongue Bengali. Almost at the same time appearance of Kazi Nazrul Islam brought a new tide in this direction. With the establishment of Bangiya

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

Sahitya Samiti in 1911, they ushered in a new era to own Bengaliness by throwing away Urdu and cultivating a distinctive form of Bengali literature.²⁶ Secular views have been published in Islam Darshan²⁷, Masik Mohammadi, Moslem Darpan, Saugat²⁸, Shikha²⁹, Dhumketu, Samyavadi and Langal periodicals. However, the seed planted by this liberal-secular group was further nourished by the next generation. In this way, they came forward to emancipate the Muslim mind from the folds of obscurantism and religious fundamentalism. The process was known as the 'emancipation of the intellect' movement. The theory of 'emancipation of the intellect' however 'got a distinct literary form through the writings of several litterateurs. At the same time, divergent opinions simultaneously came to raise the issues relating to communitarian interest under Akram Khan.³⁰ His writings greatly influenced the socio-religious and ideological aspects of society during the third decades of the twentieth century. In this way, these two rival ideologies confused to shape the socio-political culture and failed to find out a clear path to follow collectively. Such conflicting nature of thoughts not only influenced cultural life but also the political spheres largely.

Notes & References

- 1 Great Soviet encyclopedia, Vol. 10, New York. 1976, p. 218.
- 2 Gramsci, Antonio, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, New York: International Publishers, 1971, p.56.
- 3 Chowdhury, Supriya, *Bangali Buddhijibi*, Anandabājāra patrikāra śatabarṣa saṅkhyā, 18/03/2022.
- 4 Ghosh, Binay, *Banglar Biddutsamaj*, Kolkata: Deep Prakash, 2019, p.32.
- 5 Dey, Amlendu, *Banglar Buddhijibi o Bichichinatabad*, Dhaka: Jatiya Sahitya Patrika, 2017, p.45.
- 6 Jahangir, Borhanuddin Khan, *Swades and Sahitya*, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, p. 41.
- 7 Ibid, p. 43.
- 8 Islam, Aminul, *Bangali Buddhijibi o Jatiyatabad*, Dhaka: Dibya Prakash, 2015, p.45.

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

- 9 Jahangir, Borhanuddin Khan, *Swades and Sahitya*, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, p. 44.
- 10 Taylor, James, *A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca*, Calcutta, pp. 248-50.
- 11 Wise, James, *Notes on the Races, Castes and Trade of Eastern Bengal*, p. 22.
- 12 Jahangir, Borhanuddin Khan, *Swades and Sahitya*, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, p. 46.
- 13 Khan, Mohammad Akram, 'Problems and Solutions' and 'Mustafa Charit' treatise rationality.
- 14 Gribb, H.A J.H Kramers, E. Leviprovenal, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol-1, Leiden Edition, 1960, p. 277.
- 15 Roy, Goutam, *Atma Parichayer Sandhane Bengali Mussalman*, Kolkata: RB Enterprises, 2020p.12.
- 16 Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi, *The Defining Movements in Bengal, 1929-1947*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018, p.34.
- 17 Mukherjee, S.N., 'Bhadralok in Bengal Language & Literature', *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol XIV, Part II, July-December 1976.
- 18 Lahiri, Pradip Kumar, *Bengali Muslim Thought, 1818-1947 its Liberal and Rational Trends*, New Delhi: K P Bagchi & Company, 1991, p.66.
- 19 Sarkar, Chandi Prasad, *The Bengali Muslims: A Study in Their Politicization (1912-1929)*, Calcutta: K P Bagchi and Company, 1991, p.90.
- 20 Rahman, Habib, *Conflict of Progressivism and Conservatism in Bengali Muslim Society*, Kolkata, Progressive Publishers, 2013, p.22.
- 21 Ahmed Wakil, *The Trend of Bengali Muslim Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, Volume I, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1983, p.19.
- 22 Ahmed Wakil, *The Trend of Bengali Muslim Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, Volume I, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1983, p.44.
- 23 Rahman, Matiur, 'Consultation to Confrontation: A Study of Muslim League in Indian Politics 1906-12', *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, New York, 1976, p. 218.
- 24 De Amalendu, *Roots of Separatism in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, Calcutta: Ratna Prakashan. 1974.
- 25 Ahmed Wakil, 'The Trend of Bengali Muslim Thought in the Nineteenth Century', Volume I, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1983, p. 19.
- 26 Karim, Abdul, *Backwardness of Bengali Muslims in Knowledge Practice*, Bengali Muslim Literary Magazine, 1329 BS., p.6.

Emergence and Development of Bengali Muslim Intelligentsia in the first half of the 20th Century

27 Hakeem, Mohammad Abdul, 'The Hindu Muslim Problem in India', Islam Dorshan, Ashwin, 1331 BS.,p.7.

28 Khan Bahadur Nasir Uddin, 'Islam and Muslims', Saugat Yug in Bengali Literature,p.9.

29 Mamtazuddin Ahmed, Shikha, first year, Chaitra, 1333 BS.,p10.

30 Khan, Akram 'Bengali Muslims in Journalism', Muhammad Eid Issue, 1342 BS, pp. 6-7.