

EDUCATION IN COLONIAL BENGAL: A STUDY IN  
SELECTED DISTRICTS OF EASTERN BENGAL (1854-1947)

*Thesis submitted to the University of North Bengal for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy (Arts) in History*

Submitted by:

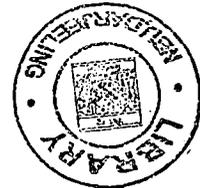
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(Sponsored by the Government of India Scholarship Scheme, 2002-03)

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## Certificate

This is to certify that Md. Anowarul Islam, Research Scholar (ICCR), Department of History, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling has been conducting research under my supervision for the last three years. He has ~~been~~ completed his thesis entitled "*Education in Colonial Bengal (1854-1947)*" to my satisfaction. The scholar has fulfilled the requirements of the regulations relating to the nature and prescribed period of research work. He may be permitted to submit his dissertation for Ph.D. degree.

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**Declaration**

I do hereby solemnly declare that the thesis entitled "**Education in Colonial Bengal: A Study in Selected Districts of Eastern Bengal (1854-1947)**", is the out come of my research work pursued under Indian Government Scholarship Scheme 2002-03. I have accomplished this study as an Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) sponsored research scholar in the Department of History, North Bengal University under the supervision of Dr. Chhanda Chakrabarty, Professor of History, North Bengal University, India.

I would like to inform that this thesis or any part of it has not been submitted before any University or Institution for the Ph.D. or any other degree or award.

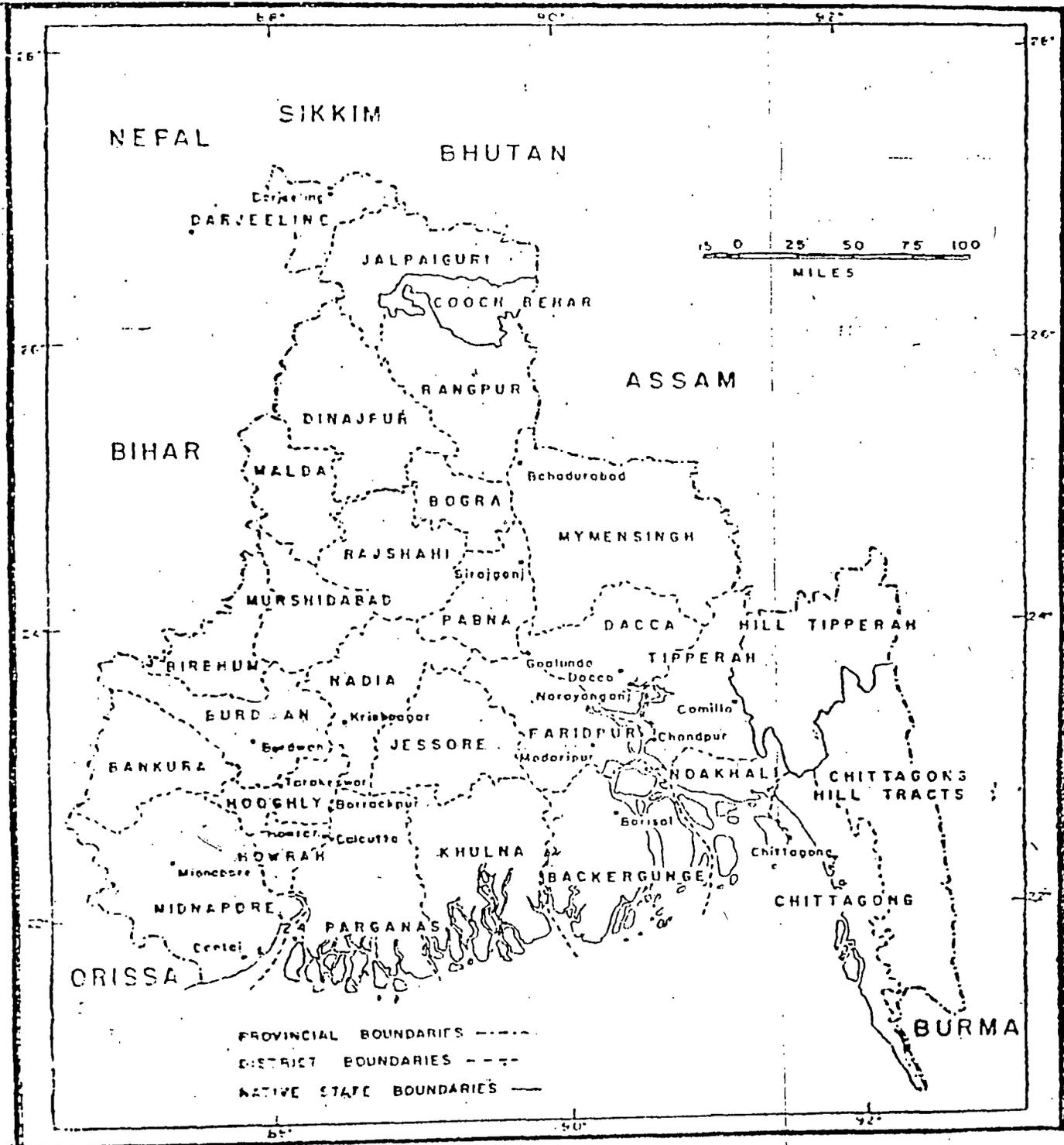
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(Md. A. Islam)

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# BENGAL, 1912-1947



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Md. Anowarul Islam.

## Abbreviations

B.A.=	Bachelor of Arts
B.H.S.=	Bangladesh Historical Studies
B.L. =	Bachelor of Law
BPP =	<i>Bengal Past and Present</i>
B.S. =	Bengali Year
C.R. =	<i>Calcutta Review</i>
F.A. =	First Arts
I.B.S. =	Institute of Bangladesh Studies
J.A.S.B. =	<i>Journal of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh (Hum)</i>
I.E.S.H.R. =	<i>Indian Economic and Social History Review</i>
J.E.A.H.A.=	<i>Journal of the East Pakistan Historical Association</i>
J.H.R.=	<i>Journal of Historical Research</i>
J.I.B.S.=	<i>Journal of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies</i>
ISKON=	International Society for Krishna Consciousness
M.R.=	<i>Modern Review</i>
Q.R.H.S.=	<i>Quarterly Review of Historical Studies</i>
T.J.=	<i>The Teacher's Journal</i>

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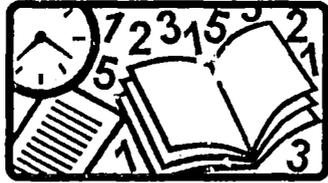
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## Chapter : 1



## Introduction

## Chapter : I Introduction

### I. Statement of the Research Problem:

The proposed study "Education in colonial Bengal: A study in Selected Districts of Eastern Bengal (1854-1947)" is an attempt to investigate the history of education in colonial Bengal at local level during the above mentioned time frame. The problem that is proposed to be examined in this thesis is designed within the framework of the research paradigm namely anti-colonial discourse or post colonial discourse. Colonialism is much more than political control or colonial policies. It is best seen as a structure within which colonial interests and policies, colonial state and administrative institutes, colonial culture and society, colonial ideas and ideologies each have a fair share. When the British conquered India they were introduced to a new world, both in extent and character. Confronted with problems and unprecedented issues the British masters tried to comprehend them in their own way with the hope of strengthening control over their conquest. India, as a colony, underwent fundamental transformation: the old economy, social formation and structures were uprooted to make way for a structured colonial society. Three pieces of parliamentary legislations, the Regulating Act of 1773, Pitt's India Act of 1784 and the charter Act of 1793, limited the power of the East India Company. By 1813 when another charter Act was passed the Company had lost most of its political and economic powers, the real power being wielded by the British capitalist class as a whole.

By then it was clearly realized that the country could not be exploited in the new way within its existing economic, political, administrative and socio-cultural setting. This pattern therefore had to be shattered and transformed all along the line. Radical changes in the economic and administrative fields were introduced. Meanwhile colonial ideology underwent a major change. All talk of training the Indians for self government (generated by liberal imperial ideology among several British statesmen and administrators) was given up. The aim of British rule was declared to be a permanent "trusteeship" over India, and Indians were declared as permanently immature, a "child" people needing British control and guidance. Geography, race, climate, history, religion, culture and social organization were cited as factors which made Indians permanently unfit for self government. The British, therefore, was to exercise benevolent despotism over them for centuries to come. The corrupt Indians were to be uplifted by the upright and morally superior British. They were to be ruled to civilization and morality so that the primitive backward inferior oriental society would finally be transformed in Europe's image. Against this background I intend to make an in depth study of the impact of education on social, political, economic and religion lives of certain districts <sup>namely Rajshahi, Patna and Kangpur</sup> of Eastern Bengal between 1854 and 1947.

Colonialism being itself a cultural project of control its affirmation came through various processes, including cultural technologies of rule in which English education was to become a firm tool. Lord William Bentinck's Resolution of March &. 1835 stated that the funds appropriated to education would be best employed in English education alone. English education was thus introduced both with the administrative purpose of manning

the new vastly expanded administration and creating an overall climate of change and development and thereby generate a culture of loyalty to the rulers. This policy of cultural subversiveness was often undertaken in a very subtle manner. The nineteenth century colonial administrators used English studies for the ideological pacification and reformation of a potentially rebellious Indian population. In the scheme of education introduced by the British the students were taught not only English literature but the inherent superiority of the English race over the lesser Indian species. No opportunity was missed to affirm the superlative values of white civilization. The active domination of the Indian world by the British informed metropolitan culture in several ways, even the dynamics of everyday life. The imperial motif was woven into the structure of popular culture, fiction and the rhetoric of history, philosophy and geography. Ideas of unequal races and cultures was transmuted in classroom teaching and were part of the curriculum and pedagogy which aimed at colonial subject making.

The Indian reaction to the new structural forces released by colonial interest had several facets. The question of 'mimicry' and 'authenticity' became a dominant theme with reference to which assertive authenticity of the colonized challenged the British policy of subversion. The study proposes to explore and examine critically the role of education in the quest for Indian identity.

The years 1854 and 1947, chosen for the study, are landmarks in the history of India. The former is associated with the introduction of a properly articulated scheme of education from elementary to university level as portrayed in Wood's Despatch. Bengal moreover was placed under a lieutenant governor in this year. This was to lead to important policy

making by the Government, in the field of education. Again 1947 is the year of India's freedom from British rule, it marked the end of an era.

My aim therefore will be to examine the institutions, practices, and ideology of the western education that was introduced in Bengal. The investigation does not seek to be a comprehensive record of the history of education, nor does it even attempt to catalogue, in minute historical fashion, the various educational decisions, acts, and resolutions that led to the development of education: rather it will explore the adaptation of the content of western education to the administrative and political imperatives of British rule. It shall also examine the ways in which these imperatives in turn changed that content with a radically altered significance, enabling the humanistic ideals of enlightenment to coexist with and indeed even support education for social and political control.

## **II. Research Gap & Methodology**

Studies about Bengal under colonial rule have come into fashion recently. Extensive studies have been made on land revenue, cultural & socio economic aspects, political movements etc. The impact of colonial education on society is still comparatively an unexplored area of research and deserves special attention. This study attempts to fill this academic gap.

## **Methodology**

The study is a paradigmatic one where arguments will be framed on the basis of post colonial discourse in which the major research concern would be to explore (i) the colonial design of cultural subversion (ii) colonial subject making (iii) mimicry – hybridity syndrome and (iv) the quest for authenticity.

## **Hypothesis:**

The proposed research will empirically test the truth- falsity of the colonial construct of “ subject” and the colonized’s assertion of authenticity in the geographical locate of certain districts of Eastern Bengal in the time frame already mentioned..

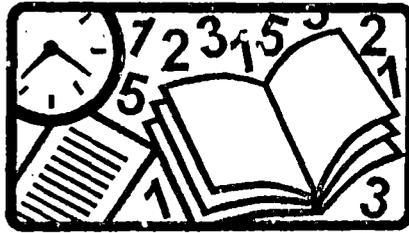
## **IV. Formulation of relevant key questions**

The key questions which my research proposal wish to apply to test the hypothesis are as follows:

1. To what extent western education led to cultural subversive ness and succeeded in colonial subject making.
2. When and how, from a crisis of identity a critique of colonial discourse had emerged leading to assertive authenticity within the frame work of derivative discourse.

3. What was the nature of the authentic discourse. Did it surface in the religious revivalism, or in reaction of elitist, or in subalterns, or in all the above in the districts under study.

## Chapter: 2



## Colonial Physical Setting

## Chapter: 2

### Colonial Physical Setting

The colonial state is a basic part of the colonial structure. The basic character of colonialism and its different stages can be illustrated from the history of colonialism in modern India. This is specially so because historians agree on treating India as a classic colony. The basic character of British rule did not remain the same through its long history of nearly two hundred years. Indian colonialism can be termed as the period of monopoly trade and direct appropriation. The early days of the British power in India were the days of merchant adventurers who traded and plundered indiscriminately.<sup>1</sup> The East India Company and its agents carried off in this way a vast amount of the accumulated wealth of India. The company was a trading concern and its main object was to promote commerce and make profit.<sup>2</sup> During the first period of British rule, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the entire profit went one way – to England. The second period covered the nineteenth century, when India became, at the same time, a great source for raw materials for the factories of England, and a market for British manufactured goods. This was done at the expense of India's progress and economic development. Hence it took only such interest in political and administrative matters as was necessary for the promotion of its commercial interest. Between the economic interests of India and England there was an obvious conflict. Adam Smith had pointed out the harmful effects of the East India Company's rule in India. He remarks: "The government of an exclusive company of merchants is perhaps the worst of all governments for any country whatever. ... It is the interest of the East India Company considered as sovereigns that the European goods which are carried to their Indian

dominions should be sold there as cheaply as possible; and that the Indian goods which are brought from there should be sold there as dear as possible. But the reverse of this is their interest as merchants. As sovereigns their interest is exactly the same with that of the country which they govern. As merchants their interest is directly opposite to that interest."<sup>3</sup>

The British policy in India resulted in the death of Indian cottage industries and the drove the artisans to agriculture and the village; this was pointed out by Karl Marx, in his *The Future Results of British Rule in India*, published 1853. "they destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry, and by leveling all that was great and elevated in the native society. The historic pages of their rule in India reports hardly anything beyond that destruction."<sup>4</sup> The British parliament, however, paid increasing attention to Indian affairs. After the Revolt of 1857, the British Government took direct charge of India. But this made no vital difference in the fundamental policy, for the real power being wielded by the British Government, India was ruled in the interest of British capitalist's class as a whole.

India could not be exploited in the new way within its existing political, economic, administrative and socio-cultural setting. Therefore, the existing setting was necessitated to be replaced and transformed all along British requirements. India was thrown upon to British capitalists to develop tea, coffee and indigo plantations, trade, transport, mining and modern industries in India. The British Government extended maximum help to these capitalists.<sup>5</sup> Karl Marx's remark, "the British in East India accepted from their predecessors the department of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works" is of much significance.<sup>6</sup> Cambell himself, greatly influenced as he was

by the prejudices of the East India Company, was obliged to avow, "that the great mass of the Indian people possesses a great industrial energy, is well fitted to accumulate capital, and remarkable for a mathematical clearness of head, and talent for figures and exact sciences."<sup>7</sup> From the above account it is evident that colonialism entered India and exercised its control with a view to monopolise trade and destroy the local trade and industry. Lord Clive had described the city of Murshidabad in Bengal in 1757 as a city "as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London, with this difference, that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than in the last".<sup>8</sup> No district of Bengal suffered more profoundly from the transition from Mughal to English rule than did Murshidabad.<sup>9</sup> During the British era Rajshahi was the most unwieldy and extensive Zamindari of Bengal or perhaps in India. "The Zamindari of Rajshahi" wrote Warren Hastings in 1786, "the second in rank in Bengal and yielding an annual revenue of about twenty five lakhs of rupees, has risen to its present magnitude during the course of the last eighty years by accumulating the property of a great number of dispossessed zamindars, although the ancestors of the present possessor had not, by inheritance, a right to the property of a single village within the whole zamindars".<sup>10</sup> According to J. Grants, it produced "at least four fifths of all silk, raw or manufactured, used in or exported from the effeminate luxurious Empire of Hindustan".<sup>11</sup> L.S.S. O'Malley wrote that the Permanent Settlement proved the ruin of the estate.<sup>12</sup>

This chapter will focus on the physical feature of the area under study under the colonial time frame. The cultural character of colonialism in India during different stages, its changing character and the reasons thereof shall also be examined.

## II

During British rule in India, the districts were the basic units of administration. In 1772, Warren Hasting's administrative plan was divided with a district as the unit. The territory of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was divided into a number of districts. In each district, an English servant of the Company was appointed as collector who was to be responsible for the collection of land revenue.<sup>13</sup> In the regulation districts, as distinguished from the non-regulation ones, which had a special type of administration,<sup>14</sup> there were, as far as the Bengal Presidency was concerned, at first two district officers, the judge-magistrate with judicial, magisterial and police powers, and the collector with fiscal powers only. But under Regulation IV of 1821 collectors of land revenue could, in certain cases, be empowered to perform the duties of a magistrate or joint magistrate, and likewise magistrates and joint magistrates could be employed in the collection of revenue.<sup>15</sup> Further, by a regulation of 1831<sup>16</sup> civil judges were invested with the duties of sessions, and were thus relieved of their magisterial functions which were transferred to the collectors.<sup>17</sup> The offices of magistrate and collector continued to be in the same hands till 1837 when they were separated again. Thus in 1858 there were in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa 25 Magistrates, 25 Collectors, 3 Magistrates and Collectors, 8 joint Magistrates and Deputy Collectors holding independent charge of districts, and 1 Magistrate and Jail Superintendent.<sup>18</sup> They were all members of the covenanted service. But Regulation IX of 1833 provided for the recruitment of uncovenanted Deputy Collectors in Bengal, for which Indians were declared eligible.<sup>19</sup>

Nineteenth century Bengal Presidency included within its boundary the regions of Bengal proper, Bihar and Orissa.<sup>20</sup> The Lieutenant – Governor was directly responsible to the government with the assistance of provincial secretariat.<sup>21</sup>

Bengal proper included the five Bengali speaking divisions of Burdwan, Presidency, Rajshahi, Dacca and Chittagong with an area of 77,521 square miles lying astride the tropic of cancer.<sup>22</sup> It contains tracts of very different physical features, including the alluvial plains of the *Ganges* and the *Brahmaputra* and the deltas of those rivers. In historical times, the rivers have been natural arteries of communication and transportation and they have defined Bengals physical and ancient cultural sub regions- *Varendra*, the *Bhagirati- Hooghly* basin, *Vanga*, *Samata* and *Harikela*. *Varendra* included the territories now constituting the districts of Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Dinajpur and Rangpur. The *Bhagirati – Hooghly* basin included several ancient cultural sub regions which correspond to the modern districts of Midnapur, Howrah, Hooghly, Burdwan, Birbhum, and Murshidabad. Ancient *Vanga*, or Central Bengal, included the area corresponding to the modern districts of Dhaka, Faridpur, Jessore, Bakerganj, Khulna, Nadia, and 24 Parganas. *Samatata*, included the hilly region east of the Meghna river in the south eastern delta, corresponding to modern Comilla, Noakhali, and Chittagong. Ancient *Harikela* included the territories of modern Mymensingh and Sylhet.<sup>23</sup> Physically, the most distinctive feature of the province is its network of rivers, the *Ganges* and the *Brahmaputra*, with their effluents and distributaries. These rivers furnish an admirable and cheap means of transport; they contain an inexhaustible supply of fish and they bring down vast quantities of fertilizing silt, which they distribute over the surface of the delta. Great marshes or *bils* are often found within the enclosures thus formed by the high

banks of rivers. The natural tendency of these swamps is to fill up; in the rainy season the rivers drain into them and deposit their silt, and decayed vegetable matter also gradually accumulates.<sup>24</sup>

The population of Bengal proper grew rapidly. In 1901 it was 41,259,982;<sup>25</sup> by 1931 it had become 50,114,002.<sup>26</sup> The two most important communities were the Hindus and the Muslims, besides a relatively small number of Christians, Buddhists and Jains. In Bengal, the Muslims were in a majority forming about 51% of the population in 1901. They were numerous in the fertile eastern districts of the province (Dhaka, Chittagong and Rajshahi division) and by 1931 their number increased to 54% of the population. The Hindus, who were mostly concentrated in the western and central parts of the province i.e. Presidency and Burdwan division, formed about 46% of the population in 1901; by 1931, though their number increased, their percentage in proportion to population further decreased forming only about 43% of the total population.<sup>27</sup> The majority of the Muslim population in Bengal was converts.

But a small minority of the community could claim descendant from outsiders who came as traders and invaders.<sup>28</sup> This small minority of people regarded themselves as superior to the converted Muslims. By virtue of their close relations with the ruling and trading class they were usually landlords and were mostly absentee having no contact whatsoever with the masses. The members of the aristocracy were urban based, educated, professional and non Bengalis, the masses were rural, illiterate and deeply rooted to the soil and professionally speaking, they were, like the low caste Hindus, poor agriculturists and artisans.<sup>29</sup> Their language, culture, social status and economic position were far below those of the upper class Muslims. It was these aristocrats who took the lead in

educating and awakening the Muslim people and dominated Muslim politics in Bengal till the partition of Bengal in 1947.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, socially and economically the Hindus were divided into four broad caste divisions – Brahmin, Kayastha, Vaishya and Shudra. Among the backward classes came the Mahisya, Namasudra and Rajbangshis. Demographically the Mahisya formed the largest Hindu caste and were confined practically to western Bengal. The Namasudras, who fall under the category of untouchables, formed the second largest caste and were numerous in Eastern Bengal. The Rajbangshis with their concentration in northern Bengal came third in number.<sup>31</sup>

#### **(a) Rajshahi:**

Rajshahi is a district in the south-west of the Rajshahi division. The district lies between 24°6' and 25°13' north latitude 88°2' east longitude.<sup>32</sup> In the British period the head quarters were at Rampur Boalia on the northern bank of the *Ganges* which is known as the *Padma* in this portion of its course.<sup>33</sup> The Ganges from a natural boundary to the south and southwest. This great river separates Rajshahi from the districts of Nadia and Murshidabad. The other contiguous districts are Dinajpur and Bogra on the north, Bogra and Pabna on the east and Malda on the west.<sup>34</sup> The name Rajshahi is commonly believed to mean the royal territory, and it is a popular, but mistaken idea that the district was given this designation because it was the abode of many Rajas. The origin of the name is doubtful, but one plausible hypothesis is that it dates back to the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when this part of the country was ruled over by Raja Kans or Ganesh, the Hindu chief of Bhaturia. The Raja having ousted the Mohammedan Governor of Gaur,

became king of Bengal, and, according to Professor Bloehman, was consequently known as Raja Shah; hence name Rajshahi.<sup>35</sup>

The old district records of British administration used several spellings of Rajshahi such as Rajeshy, Rajeshey, Rajeshahy, Rajeshaye, Radshy, Radshi, Radshahy, Radshye, Radshay, Radshaye, Radshahye, Raudshehi Raujishy, Raujeshahy, Raujshahy Raajshahy, Raajshiey Rajshahy and Rajshy.<sup>36</sup> When the British took over the revenue administration of Bengal, Rajshahi formed a very big zamindari, or private estate, belonging to the Natore Raja, who was alone responsible for the payment of the land revenue. The average annual demand in the four years 1766-70 was Rs. 27, 02,000 (*sicca*), but the figure had fallen to Rs 22,86,000 (*sicca*) in 1778-79, during the time of the celebrated Rani Bhawani.<sup>37</sup> Rajshahi held the position of being the second zamindari in Bengal.<sup>38</sup> It had an area of nearly 13,000 sq.miles and included the districts of major part of northern Bengal and some portion of the district of Murshidabad, Nadia, Jessore, Birbhum, and even Burdwan. But unfortunately the permanent settlement proved the ruin of the estate.<sup>39</sup>

Up to the time of the Permanent Settlement in 1793, Rajshahi formed the largest and one of the most important administrative divisions of Bengal. It could scarcely be called a district, for it corresponded with the great zamindari of Rajshahi, which was estimated in 1786 to comprise an area of 12,909 square miles: in other words, it was about several times the size of the present district. On the north of the Ganges is included the greater portion of the districts of Rajshahi, Maldah, Bogra and Pabna; on the south it included a large and important subdivision called *Nij Chakla* Rajshahi, which stretched across the districts of Murshidabad, Nadia and Jessore as far as the borders of Birbhum and

Burdwan. So extensive was this territory that it was found impossible for it to be administered efficiently by a single collector with two assistants, one stationed at Muradabagh in Murshidabad and the other at the local head quarters of Natore. Rajshahi district was established in 1772. Malda, Bogra and Pabna districts were carved out of it in different phases from 1793 to 1947.<sup>40</sup>

The first change took place in 1793, when the Government made a general redistribution of Bengal districts. The extensive tract lying south of the Ganges was then taken from the parent district and divided among the adjoining jurisdictions of Murshidabad, Nadia and Jessore. This transfer left Rajshahi with the irregular triangle lying at the confluence of the *Ganges* and the *Brahmaputra* with those two rivers as its natural boundaries. But the prevalence of crime in the remoter parts of the district made further reductions necessary. It was realised that the collector of Rajshahi was unable to exercise proper control over the most distant parts of his jurisdiction and that the district was too large for one central authority. In the year of 1813 the two thanas which had been hitherto parts of Rajshahi, viz., Rohanpur and Chapai were formed into a separate district of Malda. But when Bengal was divided in 1947 five thanas viz., Bholahat, Nachole, Gomastapur, Shibganj and Nawabganj of the former Malda district became part of Rajshahi.<sup>41</sup> In 1821 four thanas namely Adamdighi, Naokila, Sherpur and Bogra, were separated from Rajshahi, and, together with two thanas from Rangpur and three from Dinajpur, formed into the present district of Bogra. Again in 1832 the district of Pabna was constituted in a similar way by the separation of the five thanas of Shahzadpur, Khetupara, Raiganj, Mathura and Pabna from Rajshahi, and of four others from Jessore.

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Natore was the head quarter of Rajshahi district until 1825. But the district head quarter was shifted to Rampur Boalia due to the unhealthy climate of Natore area. M. Nurrunnabi remarks, " This resulted in the influx of European officers, lawyers, businessmen and men of other professions. The Rajas and Zamindars of Puthia, Dublahati, Dighapatiya, Bolihar and others often came to this town erected their own bungalows to reside here with the object of supervising their own property and also to keep close contact with the government offices."<sup>42</sup>

The subdivision of Natore was then formed; and the Naogaon subdivision was created in 1877. Before the partition of India in 1947, Rajshahi district was divided into three subdivisions. The average density of population was 566 per square mile. The following table shows the name of the Subdivisions, area in square miles and population.

Table: I

Area and Population in Rajshahi district in 1911

Subdivision	Area in Square miles	Population in 1911
Rajshahi Sadar	824	564224
Naogaon	860	517405
Natore	864	398258

( Source: L.S.S. O' Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Rajshahi*. Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.. 1916, p.128.)

There were altogether 14 thanas (revenue units) in the district with 20 police stations (investigating centres) as shown below.

Table: II

## Thanas in Rajshahi district in 1911

Sadar		Natore		Naogaon	
Thana	Police Stations	Thana	Police Stations	Thana	Police Stations
Bagmara	Bagmara	Baraigram	Baraigram	Mahadebpur	Mahadebpur
Boalia	Boalia Naohata Paba	Lalpur	Lalpur Walia	Manda	Manda
Charghat	Charghat Rajapur	Natore	Natore Bagatipara	Naogaon	Naogaon Badalgachi Nandanali
Godagari	Godagari	Singra	Singra Nondigram	Panchupur	Panchupur
Puthia	Puthia Durgapur				
Tanor	Tanor Mohanpur Khurd				

( Source: L.S.S. O' Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers, Rajshahi*, Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot., 1916. p.128.)

Rajshahi district board consisted of twenty-three members, of whom five were ex officio, eleven were elected and seven government appointed. The district magistrate was ex officio Chairman of the board. The income of the board had been steadily rising, from Rs. 1,26, 000 to 2,33,000 in 1910-11.<sup>43</sup> Thus the board maintained three middle vernacular schools (at Basudebpur, Dharail, and Gangor); three upper primary schools ( Berahmapur, Chakgauri, and Isabpur), and one hundred ninety seven lower primary

schools. It also gave grants in aid to twenty middle schools, sixty four upper primary schools, four hundred thirty six lower primary schools and twelve other schools, such as *tols*, *madrasas* and *maktabs*. In addition to these, it maintained the Diamond Jubilee Industrial School at Rampur Boalia. It also allotted building grants for primary schools from a special Government grant, with the help of which thirty two upper primary and two hundred five lower primary schools were provided with buildings. It maintained eight dispensaries and also gave scholarships tenable at the Campbell Medical School in Calcutta and at the Dacca Medical School.<sup>44</sup>

Like other district of Bengal it mainly depended on agriculture. The predominance of agriculture in the economic life of the district is very clearly brought out by the returns of occupations made at the census of 1911. This reports show that 1,170,000 persons or 79% of the population were supported by agriculture.<sup>45</sup> Of those who derived their livelihood from agriculture, 164,000 lived on income derived from rent of agricultural land. They consisted of landlords and their families. No less than 340,000 persons worked as cultivators maintaining 740,000 dependants, who were permanently employed in cultivation and as field labourers.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, there was a large agricultural population in this district.

From the agricultural point of view physical factors always placed considerable restrictions on the extent of crop cultivation in Bengal. The land of Rajshahi is not uniform. The district is divided into three parts with different characteristics. The first is known *Barind*. This is a tract of comparatively high land, which, starting from near Godagari, stretches north wards along the western boundary and then bending to the east stretches along the whole of the north of the district. The soil is hard and less friable; and

it is of yellowish to red hue, but is in places yellowish to red. It is undulating, with gentle and gradual slopes, admirably adapted for rice cultivation.

The second region is a riparian tract along the Ganges: it consists of the thanas of Rampur Boalia, Charghat and Lalpur. It has a grey sandy soil, on which a variety of crops are grown. The level is relatively high, the land sloping down northward from the Ganges.

The remaining thanas Naogaon, Baghmara, Puthia, Panchupur, Natore, Singhra and Baraigram and some portions of the Gangetic thanas constitute the third area, whose characteristic features are marshes and swamps (*bils*), which in the rainy season often form large winding lakes. The rivers have high banks fringed with villages beyond which the land slopes away to cultivated paddy fields or perennial marsh.<sup>47</sup>

The districts of Rajshahi carried on trade and commerce. The English had a Commercial Resident at Boalia, and their trade in the Rajshahi silk was very extensive. The town of Rampur Boalia itself had been an "important trade center".<sup>48</sup> Wazifa Ahmed remarks that "trade and commerce developed and expanded to a great extent during the colonial rule, particularly in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to the expansion of the communication system specially the Rail communication."<sup>49</sup>

### **(b) Pabna:**

The district of Pabna, which forms the south east corner of the Rajshahi division, is situated between 23°48' and 24°47' north latitude, and between 89°02' and 89°50' east longitude. At the time of survey and settlement operations in the years 1920 to 1929, the total area of Pabna was 1442 square miles.<sup>50</sup> The districts of Bogra bound it on the north,

while the Ganges in the south separates it from the districts of Faridpur and Kushtia. The mighty Jamuna runs along its eastern border separating it from the districts of Mymensingh, and Dacca and on the west it has a common boundary with the district of Rajshahi.<sup>51</sup>

The origin of the name "Pabna" is not found in history. There are different views about the origin of the name of the district of Pabna. Cuningham, a renowned archaeologist, conjectured that the name Pabna might have been derived from the old kingdom Pundra or Pundrabardan, the country of pods, whose capital was at Mahasthangarh in the adjoining district of Bogra, but it has not received general acceptance of the scholars.<sup>52</sup>

Many folk assertions have locally taken roots and branches in search of the origin of the name of Pabna. One of these is that the area was named Pabna after a notorious dacoit of that time.<sup>53</sup> A statement by Radha Raman Saha in his *History of Pabna* strongly contradicts such views because he found, on search, nobody by this name was on the list of robbers of this district. It is probable that the region of Pabna got its name from *Pabnee* one of the confluent streams of the river Ganges flowing by the south of this land.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps this may be acceptable, because the district is intersected by rivers of varying magnitude. During the rainy season, consequent upon the rise of the rivers, and spreading of the spill water over the countryside, the villages stand out as small islands in a wide sea and present the spectacle of a certain quiet beauty. The *Ganges* and the *Jamuna* have special features here, in the district of Pabna. Lovant Fraser, mentions book enthusiastically about the charms of the rivers of this part of the country.<sup>55</sup> The impression of Sir Joseph Hooker while travelling along the *Ganges* and passing by Pabna made his

way up the *Jamuna* about clay coloured and turbid water and yearly changes of its course is interesting.<sup>56</sup> In 1632, Mughal Emperor Shahjahan on the way towards Dhaka by river through Chalan Bil, under the campaign against the Portuguese pirates, made a stopover in Potajia, a river-port near Shahjadpur.<sup>57</sup>

When the East India Company acquired the district in 1765 under the grant of *Diwani* it mainly included the land of *Bheturia Chak* (a sub division) of the great Rajshahi Zamindari which was a division comprising of parts of the districts of Malda, Rajshahi and Bogra and also some parts of the Zamindaris of Bardebaju and Kamri. At the time of the Permanent Settlement the greater part of it was included in the district of Rajshahi. It owed its creation as a separate charge in 1828 mostly to the prevalence of dacoities which were common in this area as in other parts of Bengal due to paucity of responsible officers of the government, the inefficiency of the police and the convenience or active abatement of the local Zamindars. Dacoits or *wandos* roamed about the country in large groups and consequently lawlessness and disturbed condition prevailed in the country at that time. Dacoity had long been prevalent specially in the neighbourhood of the *Chalanbeel* where the exploits of three bandit chiefs viz. Rama, Shyma and Beni Roy were still remembered. Many folk assertions have locally mentioned about the bandit chiefs of Chalanbeel.<sup>58</sup> In view of the necessity for establishing law and order in the district of Pabna and for ensuring security of life and property among its inhabitants, a Joint Magistracy was appointed temporarily at Pabna in 1828.<sup>59</sup> But Pabna district, when first formed in 1832, was placed under a Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector; and it was not until the year 1859 that a full Magistrate and collector was placed in charge. Since that date, numerous changes have taken place in the limits of the jurisdiction of the

district officers. The district of Pabna is bound on the north by the district of Bogra, on the east by the river *Brahmaputra* or *Jamuna* which separates it from the districts of Mymensingh and Dhaka, on the south by the river *Padma* or *Ganges* which separates it from the districts of Faridpur and Kushtia, and on the district of Rajshahi.<sup>60</sup> The jurisdiction of the district had undergone many alterations involving a considerable reduction in area in the passage of time. The Sirajgang thana was separated from Mymensingh and added to Pabna from 1855. The most important change was the transfer, in 1862-63, of the large subdivision of Kushtia from Pabna to Nadia. On the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1871, Pangsa thana was transferred from Pabna to the Goalanda Subdivision of Faridpur district; and Kumarkhali thana to the Kushtia Subdivision of Nadia.<sup>61</sup> Thus the river *Padma* was made the southern boundary of the district. In 1875 Raigang was transferred back to Pabna from Bogra and in 1879 a separate judgeship for the districts of Pabna and Bogra was created. The district was divided into two sub division and several police stations. The names of the subdivisions and number of thanas within each are shown below:

Table: III

## Area and Police Stations in Pabna district in 1931

Subdivision	Police Station	Area in Square miles
Pabna	Pabna Chatmohar Sujanagar Algharia, Sara Faridpur Santhia Bera	875
Sirajgang	Serajgang Chauhali Ullapara Rayganj Shahzadpur Kamarkhanda Kazipur Taras	943

(Source: *Bengal District Gazetteer, B Volume, Pabna District Statistics, 1921-1922 to 1930-1931, Table: I*)

In 1872-73 agrarian trouble, originating in the Yusufshai parganas of the Sirajgang subdivision broke out in the district. The unrest was caused by the efforts of the Zamindars to enhance rent beyond legal limits and to prevent the tenants from acquiring occupancy rights under the Act X of 1859.<sup>62</sup> The actual rental of the estates in the disturbed *pargana* had not been raised for some years, but the Zamindars were in the habit of realizing heavy ceases of various sorts, which had gone on for so long that it was scarcely clear what portion of their collections was rent and what illegal ceases.<sup>63</sup> The *ryots* refused to pay the enhanced rents and challenged the zamindars in the courts. The struggle gradually spread through Pabna and then to the other districts of Eastern Bengal.<sup>64</sup> In 1885, therefore, a more comprehensive Tenancy Act (The Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885) was passed defining rights of the *raiyats* for protection of their interests. The Bengal Tenancy Act was amended substantially in 1928 and 1938.<sup>65</sup>

**(c) Rangpur:**

The district of Rangpur in the Rajshahi division of the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam is situated between 25°3' and 26°19' north latitude and 88°44' and 89°53' east longitude.<sup>66</sup> The districts of Jalpaiguri and the Cooch Behar State bound it on the north, while the Brahmaputra river in the east separates it from the Goalpara by the Garo Hills and Mymensingh. The mighty Brahmaputra runs along its eastern border separating it from the districts of Mymensingh, and Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri on the west. On the south it has also a common boundary with the district of Bogra.<sup>67</sup> It contains a total area, as returned by the Boundary Commissioner in November 1874, of 3411.54 square miles. At

the time of Buchanan Hamilton's survey in 1809, the total area of Rangpur was 7400 square miles which included, besides other tracts, the whole of the district of Goalpara. In the following years several transfers of land took place e.g., Goalpara was returned to Assam so that at the time of the revenue survey of Rangpur the area was found to be 2,054, 183 acres, or 4615.91 square miles. Since 1869-70, however, the large *chaklas* of Boda, Baikunthapur, and Patgram had been annexed to the District of Jalpaiguri, and certain *parganas* formerly transferred to Bogra had been reannexed to Rangpur.<sup>68</sup> The jurisdiction of the district has undergone many alterations involving a considerable reduction in area in the passage of time. Rangamati and Dhubri, formerly included in the district under the name of North Rangpur, were detached to form the new district of Goalpara and placed under the adjacent province of Assam.<sup>69</sup> Gobindaganj thana was transferred to Bogra, on the formation of that district in 1821, but the greater portion of it was retransferred to Rangpur in 1871. The three thanas of Fakirganj, Boda and Sanysikata were transferred to the newly created district of Jalpaiguri in 1869. The thana of Patgram was also separated from Rangpur and added to Jalpaiguri in April 1870.<sup>70</sup> Rangpur town was turned into a municipality in 1869. Till 1947 the district was divided into four subdivisions which again divided into several police stations. The census report of 1872 disclosed a total population of 2,149,972 but in the year 1931 its total population was 2 594 786.<sup>71</sup> The names of the subdivisions and number of thanas within each are shown below:

Table: IV

## Area and Police Stations in Rangpur district in 1931

Subdivision	Police Station	Area in Square miles
Sadar	Pirgacha, Kaunia, Kotwali, Gangachara, Badarganj, Mithapukur, Pirganj, Kaliganj, Hatibhandha	1,151
Nilphamari	Dimla, Domar, Jaldhaka, Kishoreganj, Nilphamari, Saidpur	639
Kurigaon	Lalmonirhat, Fulbari, Kurigaon, Nageshwari, Bhurangamari, Ulipur, Rahumari, Chilmari	917
Gaibandha	Gobindaganj, Palashbari, Shaghata, Gaibnada, Fulchari, Sadullapur, Sundarganj	789

(Source: *Bengal District Gazetteer, B Volume, Rangpur District Statistics, 1921-1922 to 1930-1931*, Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1933 Table: I, p. 2)

There are different views about the origin of the name of the district of Rangpur. Various endeavours were made from time to time but no unanimous conclusion has yet been reached. Historians hold different opinion in this respect. The generally accepted derivation of the name Rangpur is *ranga*; and *pur*, place; that is, the place of pleasure or the abode of bliss. J. A. Vas wrote that, "Raja Bhagadatta, the mythological king of Kamrup, whose feats are recorded in the Mahabharata, possessed a country residence here on the banks of the Ghaghat. Parghana Pairaband, which lies seven miles south of Rangpur, is said to be named after Pairavati, a daughter of Bhagadatta."<sup>72</sup> J.A. Vas suggested that Rangpur is derived from *ranga* which means a joke or jest. It will not be out of context to mention here a familiar Bengali proverb, that runs in this manner: "Range Rase Bharpur, Tar nam Rangpur." Again the name of Rangpur is commonly

believed to mean colour, which was used for the dyeing industry.<sup>73</sup> Dr. Nihar Ranjan Roy was of opinion that the name might have been derived from the red soil area called '*ranga*' and the entire district has gradually come to be known as 'Rangpur'.<sup>74</sup>

It contains tracts of very different physical features, including the alluvial plains of the great rivers the Brahmaputra, Tista Karatoya and Dharla. Besides these main channels, the whole district is intersected by a network of watercourses, forming cross lines of communication between the great rivers. Owing to the number of the channels, their frequent changes of course, and the varying names of the same stream in different places, it would be hopeless to attempt a detailed description of all the rivers in the district.<sup>75</sup>

The ethnic origin of the people this district could be divided into two classes Aryans and aboriginal tribes or races.<sup>76</sup> Hunter wrote that 'the first class consists of settlers from Bengal or other parts of India, who by the ride of conquest or desire of trade and employment have immigrated into the district and permanently settled there. These settlers are of various religions and sects, consisting of Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Muhammadans.... The characteristic features of these people- flat faces, broad noses, and high cheek -bones- clearly show that they belong to the Mongolian race. They were the indigenous inhabitants of Rangpur, who founded the last local dynasty previous to the irruption of the Muhammadans; and the marked Mongol physiognomy of the people is unmistakable in the portion of the district bordering on Kuch ( Koch) Behar.'<sup>77</sup> In 1931 census compilation for Rangpur the number of ethnical divisions of the people is given below:

Table: V

## Caste, Tribe, Race or Social Group of Rangpur District 1931

Ethnical Division	Number of People
Rajbangshi	44,4974
Namasudra	36,319
Baishnab	31,274

(Source: *Bengal District Gazetteer, B Volume, Rangpur District Statistics, 1921-1922 to 1930-1931*. Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1933 Table: I, p. 6)

During the early period of the company's rule the *Fakir-Sannyasi* movement broke out in Rangpur. In the 1780s the district was infested with *dacoits* or *bandits*. 'A set of lawless banditti', wrote the council in 1773, "known under the name of *Sanyasis* or *Fakires*, have long infested these countries; and, under pretence of religions pilgrimage, have been accustomed to traverse the chief part of Bengal, begging, stealing, and plundering wherever they go, and as it best suits their convenience to practice. In 1784 we find that Swaruppur was infested by a herd of dacoits who had carried off 600 women and hanged a *Fakir* who dared to complain against them. Ensign Duncanson was despatched against them; he defeated them and rescued many of their captives. In 1787, Lieutenant Brenan was employed against a noted dacoit leader, Bhawnai Pathak, in this quarter. Brenan observed the complicity of the zamindars with these dacoits, with the following remarks:

I did not imagine that it was a matter of any importance to know that the principal zamindars in most parts of these districts, and I believe, I may venture to add, in most parts of the country too, have always a banditti ready to let loose

on such of their unfortunate neighbours as have any property worth seizing on, and in accomplishing which even the lives of the unhappy sufferers are seldom spared. The zamindars commit these outrages in the most perfect security, as there is no reward offered to detect them; and from the nature of independence of the dacoits on them it cannot be effected without bribery.<sup>78</sup>

According to Bipan Chandra, displaced peasants and demobilized soldiers of Bengal led by religious monks and dispossessed zamindars were the first to rise up in the Sanyasi rebellion.<sup>79</sup> This was led by Bhawani Pathak with another Fakir Majnu Shah and a female Debi Chaudhurani who had a large number of boats at her disposal and a big force of *barkandazs* in her pay.<sup>80</sup> Her title of Chaudhurani would imply that she was a zamindar. This character was developed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in his famous novels *Annada Math* and *Debi Chudhurani*. Disturbance in this part of the country in the first quarter of the nineteenth century is graphically described by Mr. E. Strachey, 3<sup>rd</sup> Judge of Circuit, in a letter addressed by him in 1808 to the *Nizamat Adalat* at Murishabad. The *Sanyasis*, practiced oppression on the zamindars and their officers, whom they captured and confined until their demands were satisfied.<sup>81</sup>

## Notes & References:

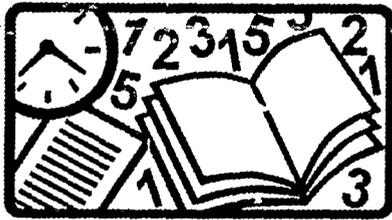
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## Chapter: 3



## Cultural Reconstruction and Subject Making

## Chapter: 3

### Cultural Reconstruction and Subject Making

This chapter focuses on the nature of colonialism and its characteristic behavior in colonial India, which was conditioned by the imperial role founded on the myth of Britain's racial and cultural superiority and moulded by the colonial ethos. Generally, colonialism can be defined as the total system of imperialist domination over a pre-capitalist country. Salem Stephen says: "It is by definition trans-historical, and it is used in relation to a very different kind of cultural oppression and economic control."<sup>1</sup> The rhetoric of power based on the destiny of the British as a governing race generated an imperial mystique that provided an image of the ideal ruler and offered him a role to play. The brave, daring and masculine Englishman – "the man who knew how to command." – That was the heroic ideal to be projected before the savage and uncivilised native.<sup>2</sup> Colonialism almost invariably implies a relation of structural domination and a suppression, often violent, of the heterogeneity of the subject in question.<sup>3</sup> Colonialism being itself a cultural project of control its affirmation came through various processes, including cultural technologies of rule in which English education was to become a firm tool. The word 'subject making' as used in this study means construction of a category of the colonised subservient to the British way of life or British policy. Education thus became an instrument of subject making.

## II

The question of originality and its lack seems to haunt much of the work on colonialism and the postcolonial condition at the current juncture.<sup>4</sup> The preoccupation with originality

and secondariness has of course a history, one that is frequently rehearsed. Its origin can be traced back to Macaulay's notorious "Minutes on English Education" of 1835, that the learned Indian should be allowed to absorb English culture and that "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect" was to be created.<sup>5</sup> In the politics of identifying 'authentic' natives, several strands of the word 'identification' are at stake: e.g., how do we identify the native? how do we identify with it? how do we construct the native's identity? what processes of identification are involved?

In many critical discourses, the image is implicitly the place where battles are fought and strategies of resistance negotiated.<sup>6</sup> Frantz Fanon in his book titled *Black Skin, White Masks* writes on the conflictual economies of colonialism and racism: "For the black man there is only one destiny, and it is white".<sup>7</sup> Fanon, elaborating on the necessity of violence in the native's formation, asks 'What does the black man want?' Homi K. Bhabha's argument is that 'the black man wants the objectifying confrontation with otherness'. He indicates that the criticism of the history of colonialism via the problematic of the natives identification can in fact lead to an understanding of the larger problems of otherness that do not necessarily emerge exclusively in anticolonial discourse.<sup>8</sup> Rey Chow's essay 'Where Have All the Natives Gone?' intervenes in one of the most heated discussions in contemporary post colonial theory: the 'native' as silent object or speaking subject. He writes, "it needs to be rethought as that which bears witness to its own demolition – in a form that is at once image and gaze, but gaze that exceeds the moment of colonization."<sup>9</sup> Chow insists on the commodification of the 'native' but attempts to steer a path between the 'native' and the native as 'the site of authenticity and true knowledge'.<sup>10</sup> She argues that the native is an 'indifferent defiled image'.<sup>11</sup> In the final analysis the British

construction of the native man and woman boils down to state of uni-generality composed of the following characteristics: the native man is, physically weak and inactive, coward, extremely crooked and utterly dishonest, while the native woman is illiterate, a repository of superstitions, devoid of self-confidence and depended on men folk.

Edward Said, in his *'Orientalism'*, explored the political implications of the above colonial construct of the oriental society. Said stresses over the point that the urgency for a moral support for the continuation of the colonizer as induced to them to fabricate a view of the oriental society which they propagated as empirical truth. D. Maya finds 'these white men reaching across the barriers of culture to establish enduring relationships with Indians. This was made possible by an enrichment of mind achieved through eager curiosity to explore Indian culture, literature and religion'.<sup>12</sup> The position of Said is empirically supported by his random sampling of some important intellectual branches of British in India particularly in the assembling of data in the census reports, anthropological reports and district gazetteers. The British imperialists in India mainly represented a cross section of the British bureaucracy that formed the administrative machinery of the Raj in the post-mutiny era. But their observations on the state of society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to morals was derogatory. Charles Grant recorded his conviction that conquest has been made in Indian interest as "the means not merely of displaying a government unequalled in India for administrative justice, kindness and moderation, not merely of increasing the security of the subjects and prosperity of the country, but of advancing social happiness, of ameliorating the moral state of man, and of extending a superior light".<sup>13</sup> The British historian James Mill avoided justifying conquest, but stressed the possibility of compensation for "the people of India, for the miseries of that misgovernment which they had so long endured".<sup>14</sup>

Kipling's India, in *Kim*, has a quality of performance and inevitability that belongs not just to that wonderful novel but to British India, its history, administrators, and apologists and, no less important, to the India fought for by Indian nationalists as their country to be won back. By giving an account of this series of pressures and counter pressures in Kipling's India, we understand the process of Imperialism itself as the great work of art engages them, and of later anti-imperialist resistance.<sup>15</sup> *Kim* is as unique in Rudyard Kipling's life and career as it is in English literature. It appeared in 1901, twelve years after Kipling had left India, the place of his birth and the country with which his name will always be associated. Rudyard Kipling's importance in the definition, imagination, the formulation of what India was to the British empire in its mature phase, just before the whole edifice began to spilt and crack, is undeniable. *Kim* was written not just from the dominating viewpoint of a white man in a colonial possession but from the perspective of a massive colonial system whose economy, functioning, and history had acquired the status of a virtual fact of nature.<sup>16</sup> Those works of literature whose manifest subject is empire, have an inherently untidy, even unwieldy aspect in so fraught, so densely charged a political setting. Every novelist and every critic or theorist of European novel notes its institutional character. Imperialism and myths of the Whiteman's superiority was propagated by writers like Kipling. He had generated a dream of empire and an illusion of sacrifice that provided the inspiration to come to India. From the Indian perspective, the imperialist role can only be described, as Benita Parry has aptly termed it, as an instance of "superb insolence", blind "ethnocentricity" and "total egocentricity".<sup>17</sup> E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* is a masterpiece and it is laid in India about 1920 and it deals with tension between the natives and the British. The Britisher's, as masters enjoyed life but their arrogance and contempt for the Indians had alienated them. The Britisher's had a

deep conviction that they belonged to a superior race and must not mix with the Indians who were inferior to them. England is to be a 'king' of the globe, a sceptred isle, a source of light' for all the world, its youth were to be colonists whose first aim was to advance the power of England.<sup>18</sup> Ronny Heaslop; one of the characters of *A Passage to India* represents the young British official and he felt his main business in India was to maintain peace for the safety of the British Empire. He could sacrifice his own interests for the sake of the British rule. He was content to live like all other Englishmen scattered in different parts of the empire.

The application of those theories were amply projected in the case of Bengal where the British established themselves as the rulers and the process of westernization took place with complete political authority. The British had conducted the forces of cultural penetration in a very subtle and intelligent way. The British political officers while reflecting on the ways of the Indians in their writings, revealed their inimical attitude of contempt for an inferior and conquered people. The European views of the Bengalis, as cowards, physically weak and without any courage were almost unanimous. In a book writing in 1792 Charls Grants painted the Bengalis in the blackest colour dishonest and corrupt. This describe them as inferior to the most backward classes in Europe. Later in 1813 the Marquis of Hastings referred to the Bengalis as leading almost an animal life. The historian Mill expressed a similar view in 1818 will Maccaulay too drew a dark and dismal picture of the Bengalis in his own inimitable style.<sup>19</sup> The Collector in the District Census Report of 1891 recorded the following remarks "the people of Rajshahi are steeped in lethargy, from which they cannot be awakened: owing to the fertility of the soil, the people of this district are not, so far as I can ascertain, driven to the necessity of seeking occupation elsewhere".<sup>20</sup> He further says "they remain contented with their homes, even though their homes may be situated in a very hotbed of malaria".<sup>21</sup> The

country, as the British found, was divided into different races, sects and religions. Writing about the Mohammadans, W. Crooke in *Imperial Gazetteer of India* vol. I, the Hidayatis i.e. the progressive class and the Behadaytis i.e. the conservative class. So was the caste ridden Hindu society. The British regarded both the Hindus and Muslims as two separate communities having different cultures, traditions, religion, economic system, laws of inheritance etc. The European officials believed that all Indians were untrustworthy and criminals at heart. *A State Paper* written in 1772, run "[natives] are not, like the robbers in England, individuals driven to such desperate courses by sudden want. They are robbers by profession, and even by birth. They are formed into regular communities, and their families subsists by the spoils which they bring home to them".<sup>22</sup> E.M. Froster in his *A Passage to India* spoke of "a minor incident had ignited the spark of racialism".<sup>23</sup> Dr. Mouatt, the Director of Public Instructions, was reported to have said at a prize distribution meeting that "Indians were liars".<sup>24</sup> This incident was the theme of the editorial *The Statesmans* entitled "Colonial Logic" which published in 1876: The D.P.I was reported to have said that "if a single Englishman who can conscientiously affirm that he believed the native to be his equal, either morally, socially, physically, or, in fact, in any one way that it is possible for one man to be the equal of another." he is wrong for the native is inferior to the European in everything."<sup>25</sup>

The British viewed racial antagonism with different heritage and history, without desiring to understand the other. They conceived the native as "internally fragmented, heterogeneous. a mosaic of languages and ethnicities".<sup>26</sup> H. Risley's *The People of India*, threw light on this aspect: "we must not forget that India is not yet a nation; we must not forget that it is a congeries of races, which are not always friendly to each other:

we must not forget the ancient hate, the ancient clashing of caste and creeds which still hold India under their vice like grip."<sup>27</sup>

They further viewed that they have no common language. In 1911, 220 languages (including 38 minor dialects) spoken by 313 millions, were recorded.<sup>28</sup> Risley believed that "though the linguistic jealousies of Hindus and Muhamadans as to the script and vocabulary of the language will not readily be appeased".<sup>29</sup> The British claimed that the English language was to be the unifying force. Risley dreamed of future when English would "become the *lingua franca* of the three hundred millions who inhabit the Indian empire."<sup>30</sup>

The British were critical about native culture; it was not a unified one. The conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims and a constant lack of trust between these communities featured in a very prominent way in their writings. In the series of lectures published under the title, "*The Expansion of England*" Sir John Seeley spoke of religion as "the strongest and most important of the elements which go to constitute nationality", but this was not so in India where religion divided people.<sup>31</sup> His general proposition as to the influence of religion upon nationality seems, to lose sight of the historical fact that while community of religion strengthens and consolidates national sentiment, religious differences create distinct types within a nation and tend to perpetuate separate and antagonistic interests. Another observation of Sir Henry Cotton, who points out that "it is impossible to be blind to the general character of the relations between Hindus and Muhammadans; to the jealousy which exists and manifests itself so frequently, even under British rule, in local outbursts of popular fanaticism; and religious friction which occasionally accompanies the celebration of the *Ram Lila* or the *Bakr Id* or the *Muharram*."<sup>32</sup>

Cromer says, " Orientals were conceived by the west as ' subject races' and their government as the government of subject races".<sup>33</sup> H. Risley in his *The People of India* attempted to classify the races of India on the basis of anthropometry; the existing population represented a mixture of various races that had amalgamated within the historical period.<sup>34</sup> H. Conrad similarly used colonial accounts of ' lazy natives'.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, it is cohesiveness but fragmented in nature. The orient was almost totally ignorant of west. Their basic arguments was that oriental society was not a monolith and a mosaic of ethnic and cultural fragments.

### III

Edward Said's splendidly written *culture & Imperialism* provides an analysis that ' all cultures tend to make representations of foreign cultures the better to master or in some way control them'.<sup>36</sup> Because it requires the study of western knowledge or representations of the non- European world to a study of both those representations and the political power they express. For example, nineteenth centuries do not merely reproduce the outlying territories. Said wrote ' they work them out, or animate them, using narrative technique and historical and exploratory attitudes and positive ideas of the sort provided by thinkers ... these developed and accented the essentialist positions European culture proclaiming that Europeans should rule, non- Europeans be ruled. And Europeans did rule'.<sup>37</sup> In the system of education designed for India, students were taught not only English literature but also the inherent superiority of the English race. Contributors to the emerging science of ethnographic observation, as described by George Stocking, carried with them scrupulous tools of analysis and also an array of images, notions, quasi-scientific concepts about barbarism, primitivism, and civilisation; in the nascent discipline of anthropology, Darwinism, Christianity, legal history, linguistics, and the lore of intrepid

travellers mingled in bewildering combination, none of which wavered, however, when it came to affirming the superlative values of white i.e., English civilisation.<sup>38</sup>

The domination is not inert, but informs metropolitan cultures in many ways: ' the imperial motif woven into the structures of popular culture, fiction, and the rhetoric of history, philosophy, and geography. In a very important work *Masks of Conquest Literary Study and British Rule in India*, Gauri Viswanathan provides an analysis the system of British education in India, whose ideology derives from Macaulay and Bentinck, is seen to be permeated with ideas about unequal races and cultures that were transmitted in the classroom. They were part of the curriculum and pedagogy. It might even have been the condition of possibility for colonial domination. And denationalising, the tenor of which went to magnify British power and to lower and degrade Indian men and manners.<sup>39</sup>

The historical writings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by contemporary Englishmen e.g. James Mill's six volumes, Thronton's six volumes *History of the British Empire in India*, Beveridge's *Comprehensive History of India* (1867), Trotter's *History of the British Empire in India* (1866) as well as some advanced books written by Meadows Taylor ( 1870), Colonel G.B. Malleon (1890), Sir Alfred Lyall ( 1894), V.A. Smith (1919), P.E. Roberts ( 1921), and Thomson and Garratt (1934), were tinged by the spirit of imperialism which they inherited as a legacy from the British rule in India during the preceding century. V.A. Smith's *Oxford History of India* (1919) on a smaller scale, and *The Cambridge History of India*, Vols. V (1929) and VI (1932), furnish the most typical example of such historical work. As R.C. Majumder was pointed out, they were products of men who honestly believed in the doctrine, ' my country, right or wrong', - and used the medium of history to defend British imperialism which had by that time come in for a good deal of criticism both in

India and abroad. The Cambridge History of India. Vols V-VI, the last great historical work on modern India written by British historians, looks at India purely from the standpoint of British officials and statesmen. Its attention was mainly directed to, and its interest was primarily concerned with, the British dominion and British administration. While minute details are given on these points, the story of Indians, as such, is almost completely ignored.<sup>40</sup> There was, besides, the over-powering sense of racial superiority which made even some eminent Englishmen, including Governors-General and British Cabinet Ministers look upon the Indians as little better than animals or primitive savages.<sup>41</sup> It is therefore scarcely a matter of surprise that the British historians during British rule, would give a picture of Indian history, which suffered, to a very large degree, from distortion and suppression of truth, biased judgement, and wrong inference, wherever the British prestige was likely to be damaged by a narration of actual events. Some modern British historians of India, while have admitted the truth of this charge, Edward Thomson in his *The Other* ... published in 1926 describe how 'the English with the pompous, cold blooded religiously of the Raj at its worst, saw Indians and their history as barbaric, uncivilized, inhuman.'<sup>42</sup> They describe British Indian history as the 'worst patch in current scholarship.'<sup>43</sup>

#### IV

The word 'mimicry' in the extract sense in which Homi K. Bhabha speaks of it. His work on the unstable economies of identity production in colonial discourse allows us a way of reading and that can throw into question the grounds of the entire imperial enterprise.<sup>44</sup> The process of 'mimicry' became a part of the 'cultural subversion' of the colonized, with the acceptance of their education and culture. In the very process of its enunciation, Homi Bhabha spots what he calls 'ambivalence', 'hybridization' and 'mimicry'.<sup>45</sup> He has

sought an entry into questions of originality and repetition through Lacanian psychoanalysis and Derridean deconstruction. But where Fanon sees the command to mimic as a subjective death sentence.<sup>46</sup> Bhabha plays with the deconstructive possibilities of that colonial stereotype.<sup>47</sup> In their debates, Parama Roy remarks:

Even if one concedes (as I do not) that there is a more historically persuasive Fanon that exists apart from the one Bhabha gives us, it seems to me that critical work can proceed only through such violent "translations"; what fascinates me more is something that Gates notes, albeit censoriously: Bhabha's obvious anguish and impatience with Fanon's "failures" to sustain "his most radical theoretical insights".<sup>48</sup>

The position held by Parama Roy has a strong element of generality because it has been universalised by the 'mimicry' theory *Black Skin, White Mask* of Fanon and later by a subtle refinement being brought into it by Homi K. Bhabha. For, Bhabha observes a double-edged effect of 'mimicry'. He theorizes 'colonial mimicry as the representation of a partial presence that disrupts the colonizers narcissism and subjects Englishmen to profound strain. Bhabha believes that ambivalence occurs at the site of colonial dominance. He writes "in the ambivalent world of 'not white / not quite' the founding objects of the Western world become the erratic, eccentric, accidental objects troves of the colonial discourse - the part-objects of presence".<sup>49</sup>

In an almost identical combative refrain Franz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak Chakraborty, Homi K. Bhabha, Padmini Mungia, Gauri Viswanathan, etc., ploughed through the archaeology of colonial cultural subversiveness. The underpin behind the new spurt of anti colonial confabulation is that the colonizers 'cultural' response or reaction to the 'culture' of the colonised has been held to be 'colonial construct'. The ambivalence that under grids the

procedure of colonial mimicry produces simultaneous and incommensurable effects, reestablishing English and Indian identities as part of the same operation. The model of identity formation proffered by the trope of the mimic man has been, it should be noted, subject to some friendly criticism. Feminists, while sympathetic to theorisations of colonial mimicry, have pointed to the gendered provenance of this figure and have noted Bhabha's silence about crucial feminist theorizations of mimicry.<sup>50</sup> Benita Parry's arguments "the tropes of 'mimicry', 'sly civility', and 'hybridity' that Bhabha deploys to stage what he identifies as the ambivalence of colonial discourses are all derived from the colonial production of an educated class of natives".<sup>51</sup> He notes that the nature of colonial discourse actively encourages the cloaking of subalternity and class identity, its aim being "to substitute metonymically educated colonial for the native as such".<sup>52</sup> None of this, of course, is meant to suggest that the work currently available on colonial mimicry and identification disallows any engagement with questions of sexuality, gender, religion and class.<sup>53</sup>

There were three different cultural markers by which the cerebral act called 'mimicry' can be distinguished.<sup>54</sup> The 'White Nabob' is the mytoneme of the first act of white 'mimicry' in India in which the whites in the initial phase of their India experience willfully subverted their culture by the imitation of the Indian cultural elitism. The second phase of white 'mimicry' is typified by Anthony Firinghi, Woodroof, etc., and in their modern incarnation through the ISKON movement. Richard Burton's mimicry being the third certainly came as a sequel to the *Masks of Empire Conquest Literary Study and British Rule in India* by Gauri Viswanathan. His espionaging in colonial interest placed together cultural paradigm upon indigenosity and authenticity.

Bhabha's formulation of the inherent ambivalence of colonial discourse and its hybridized effects is traversed by related preoccupations and anxieties the necessity for impersonating the native or the fear of going native. Based on Richard Burton's *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al Madina and Maccah* (1855) as text Parama Roy argues that Burton seeks to resignify rather than imitate, native identity, so that the native, in order to have access to a subject position as a native, can only do so modeling himself after Burton.<sup>55</sup> In 1843 Richard Burton was appointed regimental interpreter and was ordered, with the 18<sup>th</sup> Bombay Native Infantry, to Sind. Burton was to stay in Sind and serve under Sir Charles Naiper, who had been appointed governor of the Province, until 1849. Since he had by this time already qualified as an interpreter in Hindustani and Gujrati, he soon hired a Persian *munshi* to teach him Persian, Arabic and Sindhi.<sup>56</sup> By 1852, conceived of his pilgrimage to Mecca and he wrote an extraordinary two volume travel book, the *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al Madina and Maccah*. Now the subject of positions need to be foregrounded in a reading of Burton's work, and Homi K. Bhabha's work on the unstable economics of identity production in colonial discourse allows us a way of reading Burton's impersonations. Parama Roy admits, "Bhabha locates in mimicry the site of an ambivalence and uncertainty that can throw into question the grounds of the entire imperial enterprise. He draws our attention to the subversive or at least the destabilizing potential of the move that reproduces asymmetrical difference under the sign of assimilation/ sameness; the mimic man, the subject in process, functions as a supplementary instance that, far from (only) stabilizing the imperialist self, (also) interrupts its coherence through defamiliarization."<sup>57</sup> Parama Roy tends to induce an adage to the theoretical posturing of Homi K. Bhabha on formulation of the inherent ambivalence of colonial discourse and its hybridized effects. Speaking about 'The theories of mimic formation' Bhabha says:

Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference.<sup>58</sup>

On the basis of the postcolonial discourse mentioned above I intend to situate the desire of the British for the reformatory process. According to the western concept, pre colonial administrative structure namely economic, social, legal and educational etc. was desired to be reconstructed. Because the 'mimics' identified the British metropolitan culture with modernity and the indigenous one as traditional. The term of modernisation was not only confined to the social forum it was as well extended to administrative reforms. In this regard the elite ( Roy Bhadur , Khan Bhadur etc.) who were fully influenced by the British metropolitan culture played important role to transform the indigenous culture of the state. At the same time they remained a bit selfish in the process of transformation. They segregated themselves as a separate class of their own and for the continuation of their identity they felt the presence of the British necessary. They helped the British to save their interest by ruling the country. Thus, the 'mimics' desired the continuation of the British domination and control in the state. They exceeded the bounds of Macaulay's puppet like 'class of interpreters'. The following chapters mainly emphasise the application of cultural project through education, as education is another major component of identity and representation.

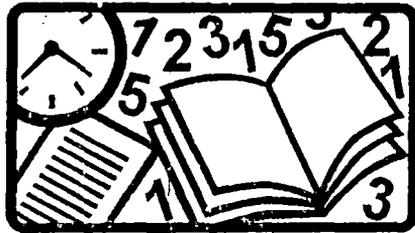
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- <sup>20</sup> . Malley, L. S.S. O'. *Ibid*. p.52.
- <sup>21</sup> . L.S.S. O'Malley, *Ibid*. p. 52.
- <sup>22</sup> . Letter from the Committee of Circuit to the Council of Fort William, Dated Cossimbazaar, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1772.

- <sup>23</sup> . Sen, Dr. S. E. M. *Froster A Passage to India (A Critical Evaluation)*. New Delhi: 2001, p.47.
- <sup>24</sup> . *The Hindu Patriot*, 30 September 1858.
- <sup>25</sup> . *The Statesman*, 28 September 1876.
- <sup>26</sup> . Aijaz, Ahmed., *In theory – Classes, Nations Literatures*. Delhi: 1992, pp. 74-75.
- <sup>27</sup> . Risley, H., *The People of India*, 1915 reprint, Delhi: 1969, pp.283-284.
- <sup>28</sup> . *Report of the Census of India, 1911*, Vol. I, p. 321.
- <sup>29</sup> . Risley, H. *Ibid*, p. 289.
- <sup>30</sup> . Risley, H. *Ibid*, p. 289.
- <sup>31</sup> . Seeley, Sir John., *The Expansion of England*” Quoted in Risley, *Ibid*, p. 291.
- <sup>32</sup> . Cotton, Henry., *New India*, p. 228, quoted in Risley, *Ibid*, p. 292.
- <sup>33</sup> . Cromer, *Political and Literary Essays*, p. 35.
- <sup>34</sup> . Risley, H. *Ibid*, p. xvii, and see more. G. Grierson. *Linguistic Survey of India*, vol. IX, part. II, 1908, p.324.
- <sup>35</sup> . Said, Edward., *Ibid*, p. 203.
- <sup>36</sup> . Said, Edward., *Ibid*, p. 120.
- <sup>37</sup> . Said, Edward., *Ibid*, p. 120.
- <sup>38</sup> . Gould, Stephen Jay., *The Mismeasure of Man*. New York: 1981.
- <sup>39</sup> . Viswanathan, Gauri *Masks of Conquest Literary Study and British Rule in India*, p. 134. And Education Commission, *Report by the Bombay Provincial Committee*, Calcutta : 1884, p. 235.
- <sup>40</sup> . Majumder R.C. (edited), *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance Part I*, Mumbai: 2002, pp. xxiii-xxiv.
- <sup>41</sup> . Majumder, R.C., *Ibid*, p. xxv.
- <sup>42</sup> . Thomson, Edward ., *The Other Side of the Medal*, 1926 reprint, Westport: 1974, p.26.
- <sup>43</sup> . Thomson, Edward and G. Garrat, *Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India*, Macmillan : 1934, p.?
- <sup>44</sup> . Bhabha, Homi K. “ Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse”, *In the Location of Culture*, London: 1993.
- <sup>45</sup> . Bhabha, Homi K. ‘ Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authenticity Under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817’, *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1), 1985, pp. 144-65.
- <sup>46</sup> . For Fanon’s comment see, Henry Louis Gates Jr., “ Critical Fanonism”, *Critical Inquiry*, 17, spring 1991, pp. 457-70.
- <sup>47</sup> . Roy, Parana *Indian Traffic Identities in Question in Colonial and Post Colonial India*, New Delhi: 1991, p. 1.
- <sup>48</sup> . Roy, Parana *Ibid*, p. 177.
- <sup>49</sup> . Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. New York: 1994, p. 92.

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- <sup>50</sup> . London. Bette " Of Mimicry and English Men: E.M. Forster and the Performance of Masculinity", in *A Passage to India* , edited Tony Davies and Nigel Wood, *Theory in Practice Series*, England: 1994.
- <sup>51</sup> . Quoted in Jenny Sharpe, " Figures of Colonial Resistance", *Modern Fiction Studies*, 35 : Spring 1989, p. 138.
- <sup>52</sup> . Sarpe, Jenny *Ibid*. p. 139.
- <sup>53</sup> . Roy, Parama *Ibid*, p. 4.
- <sup>54</sup> . Roy Choudhury, Tapas'K. ' Culture of the Colonised and its Colonial Constructs', *The Eastern Anthropology*, 54: 1 (2001), pp. 76-77.
- <sup>55</sup> . Roy Parama. *Ibid*, pp. 17-40.
- <sup>56</sup> . Burton, Isabel *The Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton*, Vol. 1, London: 1893.
- <sup>57</sup> . Roy Parama, *Ibid*, p.26
- <sup>58</sup> . Bhabha Homi K., *Ibid*, p. 86.

## Chapter: 4



### **Religion, Gender, the Disprivileged and Colonial Education**

## Chapter: 4

### Religion, Gender, the Disprivileged and Colonial Education

Colonial interest in Bengal was more economical, cultural and political. For the realization of these objectives the British created pro-British elite and through these elite British interests were intended to be achieved. They viewed that the native culture was not a unified culture, but a fragmented one and this was highlighted to prove that oriental culture and religion were inferior to occidental in all respects. In 1792, Charles Grant submitted a treatise to the Court of Directors. His 'observations' give a dark picture of the Indian society. As already discussed in the preceding chapter the British viewed the Orientals as backward, degenerate, uncivilized, savage, retarded, incapable of acquiring values of enlightenment, irrational, illogical, skeptic, inveterate liars, lethargic, suspicious, unnatural, orthodox, uncultured etc. With avowed objectives of cultural transformation, the political officers involved themselves in the reformative venture. The main cultural claim of the British during the colonial period was that Orientals everywhere were so fragmented, so heterogeneous, with such a mosaic of languages and ethnicities that it needed a centralizing language, a centralizing dynamic to introduce elements of cohesiveness. Therefore, only English language could unify the fragmented elements.<sup>1</sup> The English that was exported as a comparatively homogenous language, and imposed as an alien but official language wherever feasible throughout the Empire, became a diverse and heterogeneous range of hybrid languages, or contact languages. The language remains the chief site of cultural struggle; a different hegemonic practice of

imperialism is analysed by Gauri Viswanathan in her *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. Viswanathan argues in the case of the Raj that the identity of the colonizer is split between its actual and ideal selves, between the active participant in conquest, commerce and discipline and the more exalted image of the Englishman as *producer* of the knowledge that empowers him to conquer, appropriate, and manage in the first place.<sup>2</sup> English thus was to become the obvious means of assimilating the conquered people to their rulers.<sup>3</sup>

During the early period of its administration the East India Company did not regard the promotion of education among the natives of India as part of its duty or concern. As a commercial company its main object was profit by trade.<sup>4</sup> If territorial acquisitions were made, it was more in the nature of investment of capital than laying the foundations of Imperial dominion having for its object the progress, prosperity and enlightenment of its subjects.<sup>5</sup> English Education made its appearance in India, albeit indirectly, with a crucial act in Indian educational history: the passing of the Charter Act in 1813. Gauri Viswanathan remarks that "this act, renewing the East India Company's charter for a twenty year period, produced two major changes in Britain's relationship with her colony: one was the assumption of a new responsibility toward native education, and the other was a relaxation of controls over missionary activity in India."<sup>6</sup> At the beginning of the 19th century Indian education was at very low ebb. William Adam conducted inquiries in Bengal for the Government from 1835 to 1838 and submitted three reports on the indigenous education system. These reports are probably the best authority for the

state of indigenous education at this period; his second and third reports were the product of painstaking personal investigations in certain districts and *thanas* of Bengal.

The establishment of the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1823 was a significant step in the learning among the people of this country.<sup>7</sup> The committee was established to 'exercise superintendence over all government institutions'. Its functions were to: reorganized the Calcutta Madrassah and the Benaras Sanskrit College; established two more Oriental Colleges at Agra and Delhi; undertook the printing and publication of Sanskrit and Arabic books on a large scale; and employed oriental scholars to translate English books containing useful knowledge into the Oriental classical languages. Soon a strong difference of opinion arose among the Committee over the future education policy of the country. Those who favoured the continuation of oriental learning in the schools were known as the Orientalists while the advocates of modern education through English came to be known as the Anglicists. The controversy was resolved by Bentinck following Macaulay's famous Minute of 1835, in favour of western learning through the medium of English.<sup>8</sup> This minute strongly came out in support of the Anglicists and the filtration theory.<sup>9</sup>

In 1844, Lord Hardinge passed a Resolution that made provisions for the employment of educated Indians in the high posts. He declared:

Preference shall be given in the selection of candidates for public employment to those who have been educated in the institutions thus established and especially to those who have distinguished themselves their in by more than ordinary degree of merit and attachment.<sup>10</sup>

This is an example of how education was adopted to the political and administrative imperatives of British rule. Earlier, Auckland had proposed to establish a comprehensive system of combined English and vernacular education comprising the formation of Zillah schools and central colleges.<sup>11</sup> They were to be situated at the chief stations of the Districts and were to be managed by local committees consisting of private persons interested in education, and of the principal officials at each station.<sup>12</sup> The *Bengal Education Report of 1859-60* stated "the collegiate and zillah schools still take rank as the best managed and most efficient in the country, and fully maintain their popularity."<sup>13</sup> Zaheda Ahmad observed "the feature of the process of expansion of higher education in Bengal; it was the spontaneous manner in which colleges grew out of high schools. Hindu College had origin in the Hindu Vidyalaya (1817), and other followed- Hughli (1836), Dhaka College (1841), Jagannath College (1884), Narail College (1886), Brajamohon College (1889), M.C. College (1891), Edward College (1898), Comilla Victoria College (1899)."<sup>14</sup> The idea of getting western education in preference to oriental education began to gain ground in the country.<sup>15</sup> By 1852, there were 59 recognised English institutions.<sup>16</sup> It was officially admitted that in Bengal, education, through the medium of the English language had arrived at a higher point than in any other part of India.<sup>17</sup> The local government's attempt to promote English education in Eastern Bengal was most evident during the period 1905-1911. In 1912 Lord Hardinge noted "since 1906 it has made great strides forward. In that year there were 1,698' collegiate students in Eastern Bengal and Assam, and expenditure on collegiate education was Rs. 1,54,358."<sup>18</sup> It is noted that in Bengal as elsewhere there were three types of secondary schools as follows (i) Middle Vernacular (ii) Middle English and (iii) High English

School. In 1932-33 Bengal had 1,186 High English, 1873 Middle English and only 62 Middle Vernacular Schools. The average annual cost for educating a pupil in a secondary school in 1932-33 was Rs.32.6 and that for maintaining a school Rs. 4,776.2.<sup>19</sup> The table below shows expenditure on these schools-

Table: VI

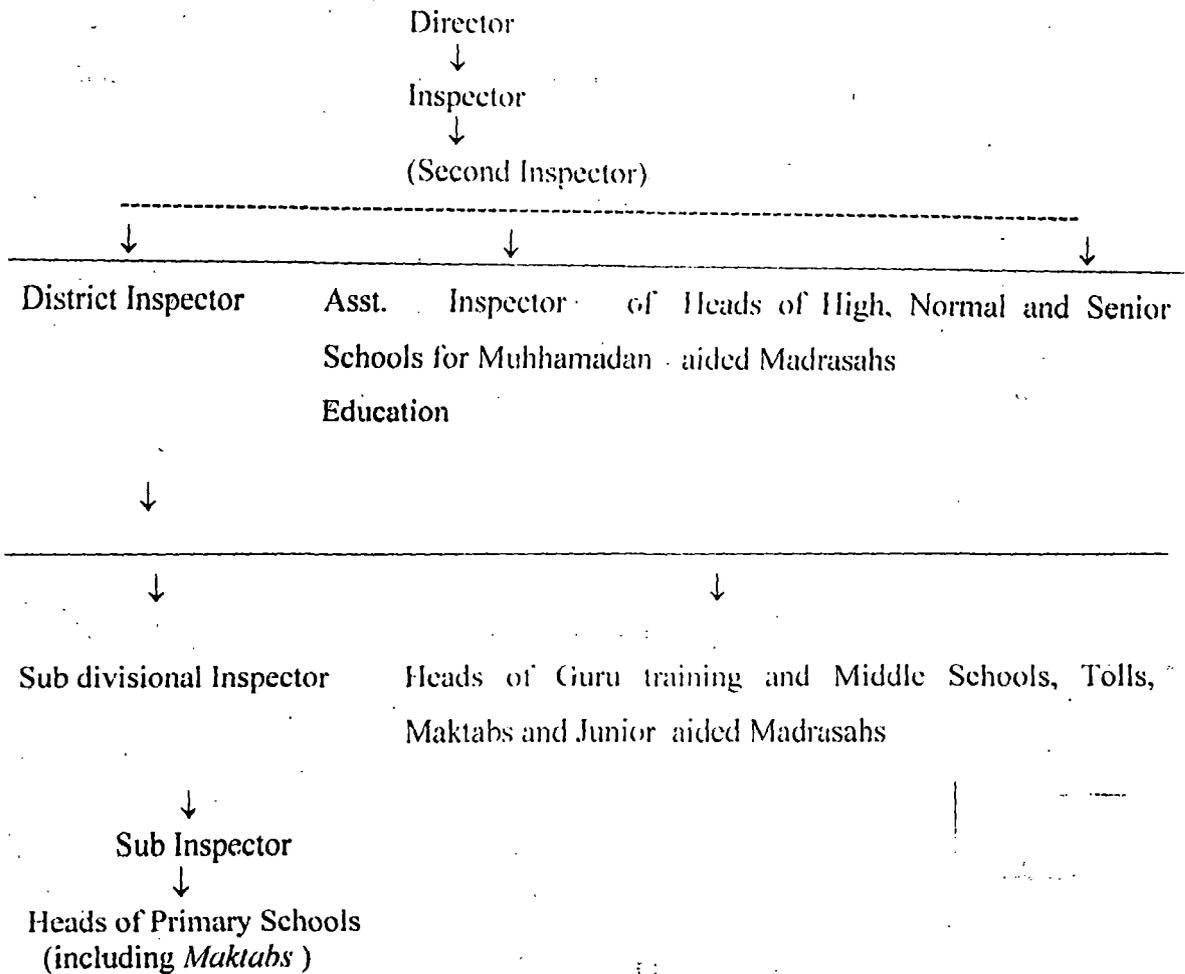
## Expenditure in Secondary Schools in Bengal 1932-33

Name of Source	Rs	Proportion to total
Provincial Revenues	16,58,957	-
Municipal Funds	42,182	16.6
District Funds	3,45,757	-
Fees	84,73,408	68.9
Other Sources	17,75,889	14.5

(Source: *The Indian Annual Register*, January - June 1935, vol. 1, p.459)

It will be obvious from these figures that the system of secondary education, was largely financed by private enterprise including the fees collected from the students the Government aid was little compared to it. The educational departments were established under the Despatch of 1854. The Boards and councils were abolished and the Local Committee of Public Instruction was created as a subordinate body of the General Committee of Public Instruction.<sup>20</sup> An Inspector of Schools was to exercise control over all educational matters within his division. The division was divided into circles,

comprising of one, or more districts.<sup>21</sup> The following chart shown the structure of the Bengal Educational Department.



[Source: Government Order No. 3360 Edn., dated The 21<sup>st</sup> November, 1923, and *The Bengal Educational Code*, 1931, p. 25.]

Assistant Sub Inspector, Inspecting Maulivis and Pandits, Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors had general charge over the schools in an administrative division.<sup>22</sup> The Chief educational officer of a district prepared the district boards educational budget estimates in consultation with his subordinate staff.<sup>23</sup> The District Boards in Bengal were constituted by the Bengal Local Self-Government Act III of 1885 and were responsible for the maintenance and management of primary and middle schools under public

management within the district, the construction and repair of all buildings connected therewith, the appointment of all masters and assistant masters thereof, and the payment of the salaries of such masters and assistant masters.<sup>24</sup> Kazi Shahidullah remarks that 'the other educational functions delegated to district boards included the administration of the primary grant, the conduct of the annual examinations of primary schools and granting rewards and the award of lower primary scholarship.'<sup>25</sup>

### **(b) Introduction of English Education: in the three districts**

#### **Rajshahi:**

The growth of English education in Rajshahi was closely associated with the growth and development of Rampur Boalia as a town.<sup>26</sup> The transfer of district headquarters from Natore to Rajshahi in 1825 further augmented the importance of this town. The establishment of various educational institutions here since 1828 was itself an expression of popular support for English education. The gradual and steady development of these institutions made Rajshahi an academic district, a character which it has retained to this day. Primarily the Zamindars or Rajas of Puthia, Dublahati, Dighapatia, Patisar, Bolihar and the growing middle class of this district made liberal grants for the promotion of learning.<sup>27</sup> For example, Raja Bahadur Pramtha Nath Ray of Dighapatia founded the Rajshahi Association and gave a lakh and a half of Rupees in the name of the Association to raise the Rajshahi College to the status of a first grade college. He had also established a girls' school at Dighapatia and another at Rampur Boalia. His eldest son, Pramada Nath Ray had also established a high school at Naokila in the district of Bogra and maintained a High School at Dighapatia.<sup>28</sup> Rai Bahadur Grish Chandra Lahiri of Kasimpur had

established Middle English School at Kasimpur in Naogaon. His son Kedar Prasanna Lahiri gave a donation of Rs. 15,000 for the establishment of an Industrial School at Rampur Boalia in Rajshahi.<sup>29</sup> Maharaja Jagadindra Nath Ray of Natore had maintained a High School in Natore and he was the organiser of the Natore XI cricket team.<sup>30</sup> The Paresb Narayan High School was founded in 1871 by the Zamindar of Puthia. Maharani Sarat Sunduri of Puthia had maintained a boarding house for the students of Rajshahi College. She had established of the Sanskrit College at Rampur Boalia in Rajshahi.<sup>31</sup> While reporting about elementary instruction in Rajshahi Adam divided it under two categories " public and private, according as it was communicated in public schools or private families".<sup>32</sup> In Natore the number of elementary schools for the Hindus was 11 with 192 students. There were also 16 Mohammedan schools with 70 students. The number of Bengali schools at Natore was 10 which imparted instruction to 167 students.<sup>33</sup> Adam spoke of four different stages in a course of Bengali instruction.<sup>34</sup>

♣ At the first stage, covered ten days only. In this stage pupils were taught how to write letters of the alphabet which were demonstrated on the ground by means of small stick or slip of the bamboo. The sand-board was not used in this district.

♣ The second stage covered two and half to four years according to the efficiency of the students. In this stage, the students performed their writings on palm leaf with complete accuracy and perfect ness. Then the student taught to write and read, and by frequent repetition he committed to memory the *Cowrie table* ( Numeration table), *Katha table* ( a land measure table). and the *Ser table*( a dry measure table).

♣ The third stage covered the period of two to three years and the students were taught in the schools in many agricultural accounts; the calculation of the value of daily or monthly labour . There were other forms of commercial account also in common in use, but they were not taught in the schools.

♣ The fourth and last stage of instruction generally includes a period of two years. The accounts briefly and superficially taught in the preceding stage were now taught more thoroughly and at greater length, and this was accompanied by the composition of business letters, petitions, grants, leases, acceptances, notes of hand etc. together with the forms of address belonging to the different grades of rank and station.

Adam spoke of four Persian Schools at Natore which had 23 students and their average age was between four and half to thirteen years: and they left the school at the age verifying from 12 to 17 years. There were eleven Arabic Schools with 42 boys. They started reading at an age verifying from 8 to 18 while the period they spent in the school varied from 1 to 5 years. The course of Persian teaching started with the alphabet and ended with the reading the certain books namely *Pandenameh*, *Amadnamah*, *Gulistan*, *Bostan*, *Joseph and Zolekha*, *Jamj-Ul- Khawnin*, *Insha yar Mahmomed*, *Secandar Nameh*, *Leila and Majnun*, *Ahjad* etc.<sup>35</sup> The teachers were not equipped with sufficient knowledge to impart education. Adam remarks: "Upon the whole the course of Persian instruction, even in its less perfect forms such as are found to exist in this district, has a more comprehensive character and a more liberal tendency than that pursued in the Bengali schools".<sup>36</sup> Adams inquiry revealed that Bengali was widely read by the pupils of this district, as it was the spoken language of both the communities. But Persian in itself had attractions for the educated Muslims. The considerations that lead to the use of Persian, Adam comments, "Persian is studied in this district for its own sake, ... partly with the importance given to it in the Company's courts"<sup>37</sup>

The reports of Buchanan compiled between 1807 and 1814, and of W. Adam, drawn up between 1835 and 1838, speak of considerable number of institutions ( at that time in decaying condition) maintained by rent free grants.<sup>38</sup> Adam cites the case of Qasbah

Bagha in the Rajshahi district of Bengal, where as many as 42 villages constituted one endowment for charitable and educational purposes.<sup>39</sup> At Qasbah Bagha, for example, all the pupils received beside instruction lodging, clothing, food, oil and stationary including what was necessary for copying manuscripts to be used as textbooks.<sup>40</sup> The only public school of Muslim learning in the whole district of Rajshahi, as far as Adam could trace, was situated at Qasbah Bagha in the thana of Bilmariya. That was an endowed institution several hundred years old.<sup>41</sup>

The study Sanskrit in Hindu School in this district was tended with great care. Adam also found two endowments at Basudevpur and at Samaskhalasi bestowed to Srinatha Sarvabhauma and Kalinatha Vachapati respectively.<sup>42</sup> There were also unendowed Hindu Schools of learning in the Natore thana where 39 Pundits were employed, of whom 37 were Brahmans and 2 Vaidya caste. Two brothers belonging to medical profession were of jointly conducted a medical school at Vaidya Belgharia. There were 397 scholars in 38 schools of Hindu learning. The studies embraced in a full course of instruction in general literature and grammar, lexicology, poetry and the drama, and rhetoric, the chief object of the whole being the knowledge of language as an instrument for the communication of ideas.<sup>43</sup> In the thirteen schools of those class there were four different grammars used. *Panini* being taught in six, the *Kalapa* in two, the *Mugdhabodha* in three, and the *Ratnamala* in two.<sup>44</sup>

The higher-class schools in Rajshahi district were three in number, situated at Rampur Boalia, Puthia and Dighapatia. The following table shows the institutions and of students attending them.

Table:VII

## Number of Institution and Scholars in Rajshahi, 1911

Place	Name	Number of Pupils
Rampur Boalia	Maintained by Government	453
	Rajshahi Collegiate School	
Naogaon	Aided by Government	404
	Krishnadhan High School	
Chaugram Dighapatia Dublahati Nator Patisar Puthia Rampur Boalia	Unaided	
	Chaugram High School	163
	Pramatha Nath High School	302
	Haranath High School	211
	Maharajas High School	316
	Maharshis Institution	214
	Paresn Narayan High School	302
	Bholanath Academy	537

Source: L.S.S. O' Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers Rajshahi*, Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot. 1916, p.151.

The Boalia High School established in 1873 a consisted of a college. The school was divided into three main stages such as the primary standard, the Middle and the High. The school came under the control of the Director of Public Instruction, lower Bengal in the year 1836.<sup>45</sup> The number of students in the school was rose since its inception. H.

Sharp, the D.P.I. of Bengal remarked: " I have several times inspected the school. It is a successful institution, with steadily rising numbers, now standing at 283. Since the foundation of the school, the boys have been doing pretty well in different examination."<sup>46</sup>

The total number of middle schools in Rajshahi was thirty six Sixteen of which were aided by the District Board and one ( at Arani) by Government of the remaining nineteen unaided schools, twelve were unrecognised. These schools teach English as a language only, all other subjects being taught in Bengali. These schools did well at the minor scholarship examination, bagging all the three scholarships allotted to the district. Ray Loke Nath Maitra Bahadur, a zamindar of Pabna established a Middle English School in Rajshahi with the object of promoting English education free of cost to the needy and the poor students. The school was, therefore, known as the Loke Nath Free School. The average result of the students of 1st class was good. J.R. Bedford saw that the students read, spell, and explained the meaning of words very well.<sup>47</sup>

Bholanath Academy was another institution in Rajshahi district. Although this Academy was established in the year 1898, its origin may be traced back to an earlier period when it was a primary school. At that time this school was known as " Jadav Pandit s Pathsala".<sup>48</sup> H. Sharp, Director of Public Instruction mentioned that "the school was an unaided and purely managed by private individuals but the school enjoyed the scholarship right."<sup>49</sup> Md. Nurun Nabi remarked: " This was possibly the only school in Bengal which allowed the Muslim boys to prosecute their studies with reduced fees."<sup>50</sup> This was done to enable the financially handicapped Muslim children to be educated.<sup>51</sup> The following table gives class wise rate of tuition fees from the Hindu and the Muslim students:

Table: VIII

## Class Wise Rate of Tuition Fees in Bholanath Academy

Class	Rate for Hindus			Rate for Muslims		
	Rs.	As.	P.	Rs.	As.	P.
1st Class	2	0	0	1	5	0
2nd Class	2	0	0	1	5	0
3rd Class	1	12	0	1	2	6
4th Class	1	8	0	1	0	0
5th Class	1	4	0	1	0	0

Source: S.A. Akanda (edited) *The District of Rajshahi: Its Past and Present*, Rajshahi University, 1981, p. 383.

The 'Ganja Society', or the association of ganja growers of Rajshahi district established three higher secondary schools in three circles- Chak Atita High School in Govindapur circle, Kirtipur High School in Kirtipur circle and Chakla High School in Muradpur circle.<sup>52</sup> Between 1924-25 and 1946-47 the annual average grant of the society for secondary education amounted to Rupees 7,134.<sup>53</sup> In addition to its contribution towards the spread of primarily and secondary education, the Ganja society granted scholarships to students of *Ganja Mahal*<sup>54</sup> for obtaining higher education.<sup>55</sup>

The primary schools of the district consisted in 1872-73 of 112 old grant in aid and 113 were set up in 1921 increasing the number to it 672. W.W. Hunter remarks that 'No material difference seems to exist either in the mode of instruction or in the subjects taught in the old and new pathshalas.'<sup>56</sup> There were three training schools situated at Rampur Boalia, Natore and Bandaikhara, at which gurus, or teachers in Primary schools, underwent a course of training.<sup>57</sup>

We cannot deny the importance of Rajshai Collegiate School in the field of technical education. The syllabus covered sub overseer class and 'B' class. They performed brilliantly. The results of 'B' final examination of 1913 showed that 3 out of 4 candidates had passed.<sup>58</sup> The Diamond Jubilee Industrial Institution was established in 1898. The District Board managed this school. There were 40 students studying in three different classes: Sub overseer class, Survey class and Artisan class.<sup>59</sup>

## (ii) Rangpur

The general level of education, during this period of the Rangpur district was very low. A good idea of the state of education in Rangpur district is obtained from the following extract from Adam's Report on Vernacular Education. In contrast to Buchanan, Adam's reports were focused entirely on education and presented a much more detailed and exhaustive survey. Adam found in nine sub-divisions of the district there were 41 schools of Sanskrit learning, containing each from 5 to 25 scholars, who were taught grammar, general literature, rhetoric, logic, law, mythological poems and astronomy, as well as *agama shastra*.<sup>60</sup> The Sanskrit schools of learning in this district were taken great care.<sup>61</sup>

The condition of the Muslims in the field of education however was so desperate. In the *maktabs* the holy Koran, Arabic and sometimes Persians were taught. They were also conducted in mosques or in the house of some comparatively wealthy Muhammadan villager who could afford to keep a Maulvi and to let his neighbours sons come and learn with his children. All the sacred books of the Muhammadans were either in Arabic, Persians or Urdu, so it was essential for Muhammadans to learn something of those languages, if he wished to claim any knowledge of his religion and thereby respect from the society. William Adam verified the records of the Government and reports of the

Qanungoes drawn up in 1823 and found that "In some instances Hindoos [Hindu] are mentioned as teachers of Persian schools, and Mahomedans of Bengalee ones. In these schools the monthly payment for the instruction of one boy is from two to four and eight annas and even one rupee. The number of boys in one school did not exceed twelve, and there was sometimes as small a number as three taught by one master. In this district the boys are described as attending school from their seventh or eighth to their fifteen year."<sup>62</sup> The progress of education in Rangpur district for the years from 1856-57 to 1870-71 showed that the total number of Government and aided schools has increased from 21 with a total 971 pupils, in 1856-57, to 230 with a total of 5361 pupils in 1870-71. The Rangpur Zilla School for the teaching of English was founded in 1832 by the local Zamindar. As part of the government scheme to establish a zilla school in every district, the school was taken over by the government in 1862 and renamed as Rangpur Zilla School. In 1899, the school had 367 students. By 1914, it was able to build 3 hostels – one each for the Brahmans, scheduled caste Hindus and Muslims. In 1874 the zamindars of the district gave two scholarships of Rs.8 and Rs. 10 per month for the best student of this school. <sup>63</sup>The idea was to promote and encourage modern education. It was affiliated to the Calcutta University. Four boys from this school passed the Entrance Examination, some obtained Government Junior Scholarships of second grade. Ever since its establishment, it maintained its reputation as the best school in this district.

There were three high schools with 644 pupils at the three sub divisional head quarters namely Kurigram, Gaibanda, and Nilphamari. Nilphamari aided high school had separate boarding houses for the Hindus and Muhamadans both being aided by Government. The aided school at Tusbandar became a high school only in course of 1872-73. W.W. Hunter

in his statistical reports observed that 'The government grant to this school is £4 per month, the zamindars subscriptions being £14-8s-0d. per month.'<sup>64</sup> There were some unaided schools at Saidpur, Kakina, Ulipur and Tajhat. The Ulipur higher-class school was entirely supported by Maharani Swarnamayi but was also under Government supervision. The other unaided schools were maintained by the zamindars of Kakina,<sup>65</sup> Baharband<sup>66</sup> Tajhat<sup>67</sup> respectively. These amply demonstrate the local interest in promoting and encouraging education. In 1930-31 there were seventy-three middle schools in this district. In some school the medium of instruction was English. The aided vernacular schools were also doing well. The following table shows that the proportion of pupils was also said to be increasing in these schools.

Table: IX

## Number of Institution and Scholars in Rangpur (1921-22 and 1930-31)

Class of Institutions	Number of Institutions 1921-22	Number of Institutions 1930-31	Number of Students 1921-22	Number of Students 1930-31
Colleges	1	1	407	461
High English Schools	20	22	3,843	4,615
Middle English Schools	73	77	4,410	5,496
Middle Vernacular Schools	5	4	229	231
Primary Schools	1838	2,260	52,514	72,230
Technical Schools	1	4	55	160
Training Schools	4	4	173	162
Other Schools	22	98	1,267	4,395

(Source : Bengal District Gazetteer, B Volume, Rangpur District Statistics, 1921-1922 to 1930-31, p. 22 & 23)

It would seem, therefore, that in Rangpur middle schools succeeded in attracting a large percentage of the children were from agriculturists.<sup>68</sup> The lower and upper primary schools in Rangpur district numbered 1009 and the number of pupils was 35220 in 1909-10. The number of new primary schools opened under the orders of Sir George Cambell in September 1872 was 81, which on the March 1873 had a roll of 1595 pupils. The following table of enrolment in primary schools indicated the general progress in primary education for pupils.

Table: X

Enrolment in primary schools in Rangpur in different years

Year	Number of Schools	Number of Pupils
1921	1838	52,514
1922	1958	57,254
1923	2079	62008
1924	2046	61876
1925	1961	61426
1926	2009	65,795
1927	2183	73,971
1928	2275	75,522
1929	2334	76,846
1930	2260	72,230

Source: *Bengal District Gazetteer, B Volume, Rangpur, 1921-30, p.22.*

A noticeable feature in the table is the rapid extension of primary education in this district. The majority of these pupils belonged to the lower classes, and the Muhammadan

pupils out numbered the Hindus.<sup>69</sup> There was one normal school for the training of village teachers. It was established in 1865. W.W. Hunter remarked, " The School has done excellent work, and most of the spread of mass education in the neighbourhood of the civil station may fairly be ascribed to its influence: but there remains a still larger work to be done in the future."<sup>70</sup>

### (iii) Pabna:

During the colonial period the western education started by the native zamindars. Rai Banamali Rai Bahadur of Taras was also a pioneer of educational activities in Pabna district. He was a patron of learning and took particular interest in the establishment of the Pabna Institution and Technical Schools. But the bulk of population in this district of Muslim was backwardness in education. According to the census of 1872, the Muslims formed 69.9% of the district population, but the percentage of pupils attending Government and Aided Schools in 1870-71 was only 10.70%. The following table, showing the proportion of Primary educated pupils in 1931, indicates the pattern of growth between the two communities in this district.

Table: IX

#### Literate People in Pabna district (1931) (completed in Primary education)

Sex	Age difference	Muslims	Hindus	Others
Male	7-13	1117	1439	10
-	14-16	1121	1464	1
-	17-23	2289	3088	28
-	24- above	7306	9508	91
Female	7-13	425	215	02
-	14-16	396	164	04
-	17-23	437	238	11
-	24-above	718	401	22

( Source: *Bengal District Gazetteer, B Volume, Pabna District Statistics, 1921-1922 to 1930-31*, p.16.)

Above table shows that the male student of Hindu was more advanced than Muslims but it is more interesting to us that opposite picture has been seen in case of female students of this said communities. It means female students of Muslims considered as a advanced categories in comparison to Hindu particularly in Primary level. From the beginning or primary levels of education Muslims lagged far behind, their Hindu neighbours. It was more dismal higher education sector. There were only three Muslim graduates up to 1905. L.S.S O'Malley's extract from the Report of the Collector of Pabna in 1870 and 1873 showed the position of Muslim of this district. He concluded "The Muhammadans of Pabna are rapidly declining in position, owing for the most part to their conservative habits, which prevent them from studying English."<sup>71</sup>

Pabna Zilla School founded in 1853 was the first institution for the teaching of English. It was maintained as a Government English School. In 1921, there were 397 pupils on the rolls of this school. In 1898, Babu Gopal Chandra Lahiri founded another school named Pabna Institution which was became Pabna College and later named Pabna Edward College. This name was given in 1911 in order to commemorate the memory of the King Emperor Edward VII. With the help of donation of Rs.50000 given by the Rai Banamali Rai Bahadur and a grant of the same amount from government further improvement of the college was required.<sup>72</sup> The other Middle English Schools and one of the Middle Vernacular Schools for girls were established in 1920-21. The Pabna Government Girls High School was established in 1925. The district of Pabna, slow progress was made in the field of colleges and high English and vernacular schools. For example, in the year 1921-22 there was only one college, 32 high English schools and

1648 primary schools whereas in 1931 there were one college, 32 High schools and 1519 primary schools in the district.<sup>73</sup> During this period, an economic support by the Bengal Government, District Board and Municipality in education was very low ebb.<sup>74</sup> For this reason it was impossible to built up new educational institution at mofassil town, yet the students increased in mathematical way. And the percentage of literacy increased from 27.8% in 1921 to 32.7% in 1931. This district had quite a good number of technical training and traditional institutions. Banamali technical school was established in 1892. Rai Banamali Rai Bahadur founded this technical school. Later on the school was taken over by the Government and renamed Elliot- Banamali Technical School. Then it was managed and maintained by the District Board with the help of a Government grant in aid.<sup>75</sup> The school was divided in classes whose attainments were as follows:

**Apprentice:** Mathematics, Surveying, Drawing, Engineering, Mechanics, Carpentry and Blacksmith and all other subjects lessons were included in the class subjects in this standard.

**Artisan Class:** The syllabus prescribed for this class was manual work for carpentry and blacksmiths work.

**B class:** The course content prescribed for the practical instruction was given to boys of the Zilla School.

A Government weaving school in this district was established in 1915. It was affiliated to the Serampore Weaving Institute.<sup>76</sup>

## II

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century there was quite a number of educated girls among the Hindus and numerous Hindu girls received elementary education in reading and writing at the schools founded in and around Calcutta under auspices of Calcutta Female Juvenile Society, Ladies Society, The Ladies Association and the Serampore Mission.<sup>77</sup> The Christian missionaries of Serampore opened schools for girls. Bethune's contribution towards the establishment of native female education in India had indeed done a great work in the first successful introduction of Native Female Education in India, on a sound and solid foundation.<sup>78</sup> The intellectual society of Bengal was anxious to extend the benefits of primary education to the backward classes including aboriginal tribes and low castes through an exemption of fees, the disparity in the educational progress of the Hindu and Muslim communities as well as of males and female, also attracted the attention of its members. The great figures like Raja Rammohun Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in the nineteenth century felt sympathetic to and spoke for the women of their society.<sup>79</sup> Ram Mohan Roy defended the legal rights of women and pleaded for their right to education and enlightenment.<sup>80</sup> Vidyasagar, working in an official capacity as Inspector of Schools, established over forty girl's schools between 1855 and 1858.<sup>81</sup> But the ill-fated Muslim society of the nineteenth century had not a single man like Ram Mohan Roy or Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar who fought or even thought for the female education of his own community.<sup>82</sup> According to the 1901 census only 400 Muslim women knew English. Apparently even in 1929 female education was still meeting opposition from orthodox religious leaders.<sup>83</sup> The Bengali press *Saogat* drew attention to this problem and suggested ways of overcoming it. *Saogat* wrote, "the

chief impediment to female education are the Mullahs. They think that the diffusion of female education in our society will lead inevitably to its downfall. According to them, once enlightened by education, women will become uncontrollable, their faith in religion will cease, their respect for their husbands will decrease, and instead of being virtuous women they will degenerate into sources of evil. All these fears of the Mullahs are groundless."<sup>84</sup> It was Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain who, after the turn of the century, was to pioneer the emancipation of the Bengali Muslim women through spread of education.<sup>85</sup> Her memorable achievement was the establishment of the Sakhawat Memorial Girls School at Bhagalpur in 1909, which later was shifted to Calcutta in 1911. From that time onwards, Rokeya devoted her full energy to the management and development of her school. Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain published many articles, essays and literary works and criticised the conservatives who were against female education and explained why women ought to be educated. She said in her presidential address to the Bengal Women's Educational Conference, "The only cause of all the distress and misery of the Muslims is their negligence of female education. Our brothers think that they will cross the bridge leading to heaven on the support of a few institutions like the Aligarh University, Dacca University, Calcutta Islamia College and they hope to take their wives and daughters to heaven by putting them in their handbags. But the rule of God, who is the controller of this world, is that every one will have to suffer from the consequences of his own actions. Therefore women without hoping to go to heaven bodily by being put into a box and in a luggage van, should be attentive to their daughters proper education."<sup>86</sup> Things began to improve gradually and *In the Report on the Administration of Bengal, 1884-85*, it was stated that "good progress was made in the development of

education for girls'.<sup>87</sup> It was further said that girl's schools increased from 1,785 to 2,309 and the girls under instruction, including those taught in boys schools increased from 64,883 to 75,770.<sup>88</sup> The picture of the development of education in India during the Victorian Era 1854-1902 was satisfactory. "Education in India under the British Government", says Howell, "was first ignored, then violently and successfully opposed, then conducted on a system now universally admitted to be erroneous and finally placed on its present footing."<sup>89</sup> Female students in educational institutions of Bengal in 1901-02 can be noticed in the following table:

Table: X

Showing Pupils in Secondary Schools for Girls in East Bengal and Assam according to Race or Religion during 1901-02

Race or Religion	English		Vernacular	
	Secondary Number	%	Secondary Number	%
Hindus	108	44.1	615	83.9
Mohammadans	-	-	26	3.6
Native Christians Europeans and Eurasians	117	47.8	88	12.2
Others	20	8.1	4	.5

Source: M. Nurul Quaiyum, *The Bengali Muslim Press and Education of the Muslim Women of Bengal, 1900-1940*, *Journal of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies*, Vol.XIII, 1990, p.60.

The progress of Muslim girl's education was not equally satisfactory. Even Muslim women's backwardness in education in comparison with Muslim men can be observed in the following

Table: XI

Showing the number of literate males and females of Muslim Society in 1896

( Per 10.000 of the population)

District	Literate Muslim Males	Literate Muslim Females
Rajshahi	414	03
Pabna	391	03
Rangpur	413	03
Bogra	652	03
Dinajpur	847	07
Malda	405	03
Jalpaiguri	760	18

( Source: *Census of India, 1893*, Vol. III, Calcutta: 1893. )

In that time Muslim women under went a critical situation because they were considered as underdog by the male dominant society. Due to religious superstitions and *parda* system they were bound to stay at home most of the time. They were given a little chance of higher education and they got less employment opportunities. Since 1938 there were no facility of training for the schoolmistress in the primary schools of the districts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur. In 1938, a proposal had been taken for the improvement of

the position to schoolmistress by the standing committee of Rajshahi district primary teachers council. The proposal was to give Guru Training (GT) to the middle English passed girls.<sup>90</sup>

The Government policy towards vernacular education was reiterated in the Despatch of April 7, 1859. The Collectors of Rajshahi and Rangpur remarked that the scholars were too poor to pay even a small school fee or to buy books.<sup>91</sup> The districts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur were the classic example of Muslim backwardness in education.

As in other parts of Eastern Bengal the majority of Muslims belong to the poor cultivating class. Usually, they sent their children to the village mosques to learn the religious texts. As late as 1917, W.W. Hornell, Director of Public Instruction in Bengal, noted the same tendency among the Muslim cultivators and wrote: The successful Moslem cultivator of these parts who desires to educate his son will send him to a madrassah to learn Moslem law, literature, logic, rhetoric and philosophy and to study Hadis and Tafsir."<sup>92</sup> Government officials viewed Muslims backward condition with sympathy and tried to help and encourage them. As part of this policy, the government appointed a special inspector for Muslim education in each division. He inspected all schools under the control of the Inspector with the object of observing the interests of the Muslims.<sup>93</sup> In education Mr. Harnell, the director of Public Instruction, made several recommendations and various facilities were extended to the Muslims for the establishment of High, Middle Primary and Normal Schools for them and also institution of scholarship and studentship from primary to college level. Government accepted these proposals and several special educational facilities were given. The following table shows

the percentage of vacancies in Government Zilla and High Schools of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur district, which were reserved for Muslim pupils.

Table: XII

Percentage of Vacancies of Muslim Students in Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur districts

Name of the District	Name of Institutions	Percentage of Vacancies to be reserved
Rajshahi	Rajshahi Collegiate School	50
Pabna	Pabna Zilla School	50
Rangpur	Rangpur Zilla School	50

Source: Government Order No. 1270, dated the 20th September 1918, & *The Bengal Education Code 1931*, p.206.

At the same time the Mohsin scholarships awarded for the Muslim Pupils of Rajshahi Division were as follows<sup>94</sup>:

Serial no.	Type of Scholarships	Number	Amount per month (Rs.)	Duration (year)	Tenable
1	Senior Scholarships and Stipends	01	10	02	Students passing from Colleges
2	Senior Scholarships and Stipends	06	5	02	Students passing from Colleges
3	Junior Scholarships and Stipends	11	5	02	Students who pass the Matriculation Examinations
4	Senior Stipends	02	5	02	Students only for Rajshahi College
5	Junior Stipends	02	5	02	Students only for

					Rajshahi College
6	School Scholarships	02	5	01	Students only for Collegiate School
7	School Scholarships	02	4	01	Students only for Collegiate School
8	School Scholarships	02	3	01	Students only for Collegiate School
9	School Stipends	25	4	01	All recognised High English Schools in The Rajshahi Division
10	School Stipends	25	3	01	All recognised High English Schools in The Pajshahi Division

Source: *The Bengal Educational Code, 1931*, pp. 315-319.

With these facilities, however the Muslim students in those district steadily progressed. The following table shows the increase of Muslim students of Rajshahi, Pabna & Rangpur district from 1921 to 1941.

Table: XIII

Increase in the Percentage of Muslim Students in Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur district (1921-41)

District	1921	1931	1941
Rajshahi	5.35	6.58	13.22
Pabna	6.57	5.87	11.20
Rangpur	5.77	5.74	12.68

( Source: *Encyclopaedia of Bangladesh, Vol.11, p.236.*)

Replying to a question in the Bengal Legislative Council, A.K. Fazlul Huq, Minister in Charge of the Bengal Education Department stated " Government have recently provided larger funds for grants-in-aid to high and middle schools run by Muslims."<sup>95</sup>

The large number of backward classes and aboriginal tribes residing in Bengal. By the Government were addressed as the 'depressed classes or backward classes'.<sup>96</sup> We found more differentiation between lower and higher caste people both of Hindu and Muslim in terms of their occupations. From the census of 1901 onwards the British started classifying castes on the basis of 'social precedence as recognised by public opinion'. Rajbangshi, Chamar, Dhoba, muchhi, Namasudra, Santal, Jalia (Muslim by religion), Kalu (Muslim by religion) in everywhere in the Rajshahi division in Bengal. British Government had been Published a list of backward classes in 1923. This list was divided into two broad divisions, such as A and B. Aboriginal tribes had under the category of 'A' and aboriginal race had the category of 'B'. The following list gives a complete statement of the castes and tribes in Bengal which were regarded as backward classes:

Category	Name of castes
A or Aboriginal tribes	Bagdi, Bauri, Bhuinmali, Bhuiya, Bhumij, Chamar, Dhoba, Dosadh, Dom, Hari, Kaora, Chakmas, Garos, Hadis, Hajangs, Koches, Tiparas, Bediyas, Gains, Kaoras, Lodhas, Kora, Mal, Muchi, Munda, Namasudra, Oraon, Pod, Santal, Sunri, Tiyar
B or aboriginal race	Kapalis, Karanis, Dois, Bunnas, Bahalis, Patnis, Jogis or Naths, Mahishyas, Rajbangshis, Mech, Dhasa, Paharia, Matial, Jeoni, Kurui Mahatos, Gonds, Pans, Rajwars, Bagals, Korangas, Lohar, Metia, Khaira, Oilman, Sutradhar, Kharga, Kaloos, Tantis, Dulay, Kahars, Jalias, Chacks, Mugs, Pundarik, Dai, Dhangar, Chain, Kumars, Rohangia.

( Source: G.O. No. 2909 Edn., dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 1923, Quoted from *The Bengal Education Code*, 1931, pp. 321-22.)

If we look into Muslim society in Eastern Bengal we may see that Asraf and Atrah is known as a higher and lower caste. A prominent novelist Kazi Emdadul Haque has been seen in his novel 'Abdullah' that higher caste people of Muslim society played a dominant role during British period. He showed that " Abdullah was deeply shocked by discriminatory treatment that a Sayed Saheb [Abdullah's Father in law] meted out to the students who came from different backgrounds. The Sayed also refused to join in prayers led by an Imam who belonged to *Jolah* group, and openly insulted the Imam."<sup>97</sup> When the British introduced here English medium schools and colleges the upper class made use of them. The backward classes were denied or refused admission in the educational institute. In Malda district for example, it was reported that children of the untouchables were not to be allowed to attend schools.<sup>98</sup> Some difficulty was reported from Nadia in getting their children admitted.<sup>99</sup> Examples were not wanting in Jessore and Rajshahi where children of the untouchables were made to sit separately in the classroom.<sup>100</sup> However Government aid or subsidies from local bodies by societies of social workers were provided for the improvement of the backward classes in Bengal. As regards the schools the Calcutta University Commission remarked: " although children may belong to the lowest classes of Hindu social system or be outside the pale of caste altogether there is no difficulty of their being admitted to primary schools."<sup>101</sup> The policy of Government was, in general, to establish special schools in localities where these tribes or castes were settled in fairly large numbers. In the district of Pabna there were such five schools for namasudras, santals, muchis, and dhobis with 150 pupils.<sup>102</sup> Government privileges included exemption from the payment of fees, the award of special scholarships, the grant of special facilities for the training of aboriginal teachers, and the

grant of liberal aid to mission or other societies, which undertook the work of education. A circular of Government of India in 1916 mentioned that 'hostels for the accommodation of students of the depressed classes were maintained in Calcutta, Dacca and elsewhere under assistance from, or at the entire expense of Government.'<sup>103</sup> Pupils belonging to backward classes and the tribals were eligible for the following scholarships:

Serial no.	Type of Scholarships	Number	Amount per month (Rs.)	Duration (year)	Institution
1.	Graduate Scholarship	01	30	02	University of Calcutta
2.	Graduate Scholarship	01	30	01	University of Dacca
3.	Senior College Scholarship	02	15	02	University of Calcutta
4.	Senior College Scholarship	02	15	02	University of Dacca
5.	Junior College Scholarship	03	10	02	University of Calcutta
6.	Junior College Scholarship	04	10	02	University of Dacca
7.	Middle Scholarship	33	4	04	Any where
8.	Primary Final Scholarship	60	3	02	Any where

Source: G.O. No. 538 Edn., dated 16 February 1923 and G.O. No. 2909 Edn., dated 26 September 1923, and *The Bengal Educational Code 1931*, p. 324.

A board of Santal Education was formed in the districts of Malda, Bankura, Midnapore, Birbhum and Dinajpur. The main purpose of this board was to the dissemination of

education among the Santals. This board was also to control the education of the children of aboriginal tribes in the district of Rangpur. With the District Magistrate as Chairman and the Divisional Inspector of Schools and the Superintendent of the Rangpur Mission as members, it had been empowered to exercise the following powers:

- (a) to transfer grants from one school to another;
- (b) to close undesirable schools and start new ones in their places;
- (c) to work out definite projects for the improvement of individual schools with the approved of the Inspector of Schools;
- (d) to administer the funds placed at their disposal in conformity with the rules and orders of the Department ; and
- (e) to submit an annual report on the progress of education amongst aboriginal.<sup>104</sup>

During 1931 the Hindu Association passed a resolution in Bengal in which it recognised the complete social equality of all castes and emphatically declared that there was no inherent superiority of one caste over the other and supported that it all efforts to remove in equalities.<sup>105</sup> This policy of active encouragement to the disprivilged gave a great fillip to the process of social mobilisation.

In conclusion it may be said that Bentinck followed Macauley's famous Minute of 1835, in favour of western learning through the medium of English. This system was established upon the ruins of the decaying indigenous traditional institutions. This shift in the educational policy of the government encouraged the growth of a network of English schools and colleges in the districts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur of Eastern Bengal. Initiative and patronage came at first from the natives rather than from the Government. Western education was introduced in these districts of Eastern Bengal but as yet there was no uniform government policy. The majority of the institutions were privately

managed, many of them unaided. As a result, this quantities expansion was not accompanied by a corresponding improvement in the quality of instruction offered.

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<sup>28</sup> . Malley, L.S.S. O.. *Ibid*, p. 160.

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<sup>40</sup> . *Adams Third Report*, p.66.

<sup>41</sup> . *Second Report on the State of Education in Bengal District of Rajshahi*, 112.

<sup>42</sup> . The founder of these endowments was Ram Bhawani who was untiring in her zeal to promote learning.

<sup>43</sup> . *Second Report on the State of Education in Bengal District of Rajshahi*, p. 124.

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- <sup>61</sup> . Vas, J.A. *Ibid*, p 131.
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- <sup>63</sup> . *Banglapedia*, p.367.
- <sup>64</sup> . Hunter, W.W., *Ibid*, p. 340.
- <sup>65</sup> . Ram Rudra Chaudhuri, of Kakina, was one of the few zamindars of the district that was a patron of learning. This tradition had been well maintained by his successors and the estate maintains a High School at Kaking and a Middle English School Kailash Ranjan School at Rangpur.
- <sup>66</sup> . The Baharband Zamindar was remembered for their charities and works of public utility. The estate maintained a dispensary and a high school at Ulipur.
- <sup>67</sup> . The largest estate in Rangpur maintained a high school at Tajhat in Mahiganj.
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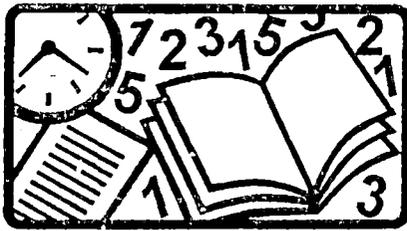
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Chapter: 5



**Missionary and Colonial Administration: A Nexus Religion  
and Colonial Socio- Economic Interest**

## Chapter: 5

### Missionary and Colonial Administration: A Nexus Religion and Colonial Socio- Economic Interest

The introduction of Western ideas and influences had a far-reaching impact on the intellectual, religious and political spheres of Indian society. The role of the missions in this respect had been a very crucial one. More than the Catholics, the Protestant missions dominated the educational scene in India for the most part of the 19th century.<sup>1</sup> The Christian missionaries believed that western education would enable them to break up the fallow ground and protect them from the mischievous consequences of sowing the precious seed of faith among thorns: the secular philanthropist hoped on the other hand that the dissemination of western principles would start it on lines of intellectual and material advance which were approved in the west.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter an attempt is made to describe and analyse the contribution of the Christian missionaries to education in Bengal with a brief history of missionary activities with emphasis on specific nature of cultural subversiveness in missionary enterprises. The missionaries had two objectives in view. One was to educate the rural masses through English education which would help the process of evangelisation and the other was to attract the poor and helpless people towards Christianity.

## II

Christianity in the Indian subcontinent is quite old. The advent of the Portuguese and Christianity in Bengal goes back to the time following the renowned Portuguese

navigator Vasco da Gama's discovering of the sea-route to India and his landing at Calicut in 1498. From 1500 onwards, the Portuguese established their power first in Cranganore, then in Cochin and in Goa. With these traders and commercial opportunists, also came Franciscan, Dominican, Augustinian, and Jesuit missionaries to bring Indian heathens to Christ. From 1517 onwards, Portuguese traders from Goa were traversing the sea-route to Bengal but were not successful in establishing trading posts in this part of India. Only in 1537, were they allowed to settle and open customs houses at Satgaon (near present-day Hooghly) of West Bengal (India) and Chittagong (present-day Bangladesh). In 1577, The Mughal emperor Akbar permitted the Portuguese to build permanent settlements and churches in Bengal. The first Christians in Bengal were the Portuguese themselves. After their intermarriage with local women, their descendants became the first indigenous Christians. Then came the local converts to Christianity from both Hinduism and Islam.

Bengal's contact with the Christian mission started with the coming of Jesuit missionaries like father Antony Vaz and Father Peter Dias in 1576 and later Augustinian Friars in 1580.<sup>3</sup> Much before the arrival of Christianity in Bengal, the Muslim had come to Chittagong and Sylhet as traders. Almost trading on their footsteps came the *aulias* or the holy men with the object of preaching Islam in this region. This was in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Later the Portuguese traders brought Christianity to this country through the port of Chittagong, called the Porto Grande or the great port, in the 16th century; the first church in Bangladesh was built in 1599 at Chandecan (also called Iswaripur or old Jessore) near Kaliganj in the Sunderbans of present Satkhira district. Jesuit Father

Francisco Fernandez went to Chandecan in October 1599, and with the permission of King Pratapaditya built a church and a rectory there.<sup>4</sup>

But the Christian mission started as an organised movement in Bengal with the arrival of British Protestant missionaries in the last decade of the 18th century.<sup>5</sup> There were many missionaries involved like the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), the London Missionary Society (LMS) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS). The BMS and The LMS were non-conformist bodies and CMS was Anglican. But the formation of the interdenominational Calcutta Missionary Conference (CMC) in 1831 was the best illustration of such evangelical spirit.<sup>6</sup>

The missionaries first tested their strength when the Baptist missionary, William Carey, arrived in Calcutta in 1793. He started his permanent mission station in 1800 at the Danish settlement of Serampore.<sup>7</sup> He joined his colleagues Joshua Marshman and William Ward at Serampore; they constituted a brotherhood which was to give an unparalleled contribution to the development of the Church in India.<sup>8</sup> The English East India Company initially opposed their organised work. But later in the year of 1813 the CMS gets the approval of the Company's Charter which removed the restriction on missionary enterprise in India.<sup>9</sup> Dr. Ranson points out the significant fact that the possession and use of the power granted by Royal Charter to confer degrees had influenced the development of ministerial training in India and had helped to raise the academic level of theological education.<sup>10</sup> After the Charter Act of 1813, the British government in India gave the missionaries a free hand in their educational work; and the

period from 1813 to 1833 saw brisk missionary activities in all parts of India. Even in the first half of the nineteenth century, formal or classroom education for women in Bengal was mainly in the hands of Christian missionaries.<sup>11</sup>

As one of the aims of the missionaries was to spread the light of the Gospel in Indian homes through their Hindu girls – students and Bible teaching was made compulsory. This in the long run resulted in an inevitable reaction against the missionaries in the Hindu society.<sup>12</sup> After the Charter Act of 1813 had removed all restrictions imposed on the entry of the missionaries in India by the East India Company when it became a territorial power, many of the missionary organisations in Europe and America became active again.<sup>13</sup> Several schools were established by Captain James Stewart at Calcutta, Burdwan, Khulna and Krishnanagar in Bengal.<sup>14</sup> Another 36 schools were established by the London Missionary Society between 1814 and 1818. Attended by nearly 3,000 children in and around Chinsurah, they functioned well “as a joint Government – Missionary enterprise in the field of vernacular education in Bengal.”<sup>15</sup> The educational development and the relative position of the missions in the educational system provide the background against which the reformulation of the missionary approach and evangelisation can be viewed. Education was the principle means by which the missionaries sought the evangelisation of the Indian people.<sup>16</sup> In the 19th century missionary educational activities has been called the ‘age of the mission schools’.<sup>17</sup> The emphasis of the missionaries was on English education. Alexander Duff and his colleagues of the other missionary societies believed that the ultimate evangelisation of India was to be effected by raising a class of teachers and preachers well grounded in English and the Christian religion. For a correct knowledge of Christianity as well as of

western ideas were to pave the way for its reception by undermining the popular notions of Hinduism. This could be effectively communicated only through the medium of English, the native language being undeveloped and there being a dearth of text books in them.<sup>18</sup> The mission schools did various work in increasing the speed and effectiveness of the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic, and in introducing printed textbooks and in widening the syllabus.<sup>19</sup> The freedom of Press Act of 1835 for example, encouraged the printing publication and availability of books in English, thereby indirectly promoting the cause of missionary activities. All materials were printed at the Serampore mission press and reached schoolrooms so that the pupils could use them as examples for reading and writing.

The missionaries thus acted as the inaugurator of an intellectual awakening, or even revolution because they believed that as an inevitable consequence their pupils would realize what they themselves regarded as the absurdity of the religion by which they seemed to be enslaved; and schools were obvious agents of such a 'Christian enlightenment'.<sup>20</sup> Apart from the Bible, required reading in these institutions consisted of religious tracts, textbooks, parables, sermons, homilies, and prayers, many of which were specially written for inclusion in the curriculum.<sup>21</sup> The missionaries established schools outside the four main centres such as Chinsura, Serampore, Burdwan, and Calcutta.<sup>22</sup> The Baptist mission Society, the Roman Catholic Mission, The Lutheran Mission, The Scandinavian Alliance Mission were doing admirable work in the district of Eastern Bengal. The following table indicates the missionaries who were engaged in the different areas in Eastern Bengal districts namely Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur.

Table: XV  
Christian Mission in Bengal (1931)

Serial no.	Christian Mission	Districts
1	Anglican Church Mission Society	Howrah, 24 Pargana, Nadia and Rangpur
2	Australian Baptist Mission	Pabna, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Tippera
3	English Presbyterian Mission	Rajshahi
4	American Church of God Mission	Howrah, Bogra, Rangpur
5	Roman Catholic Mission	Rajshahi, Rangpur, Howrah, 24 Pargana, Dinajpur, Darjeeling
6	Salvation Army	Jessore, Rangpur

(Source: A.E. Porter, *Census of India, 1931, Bengal & Sikkim*, part I, statement no. XI-3)

There were two mission girls' schools in the town of Rampur Boalia. One was of middle vernacular and the other of Primary status. In the district of Rangpur the Kerwalnut School run by the Salvation Army had 51 pupils on its roll.<sup>23</sup> The mission schools in the district of Rajshahi Rangpur and Pabna were doing well. The grant of the Orkandi girls school was stopped in 1917. At Padrishibpur the mission school had two looms, where

weaving was taught to the girls and women of the village. The two mission schools in Rajshahi were under excellent management well staffed and supervised.<sup>24</sup> There were 16 such schools in the Dacca district some belonging to the Baptist mission and some to the Roman Catholics. In the district of Bogra, Pabna, Rajshahi, there were two schools under the management of the English Presbyterian mission.

Earlier Zanana system of education had been started by missionaries in Bengal. In 1871 there were more 'zanana' pupils in Bengal than in other presidencies put together.<sup>25</sup>

Indicating its success the education commission of 1882 recommended special grants for running the system.<sup>26</sup> The Inspectors of Schools, Eastern Bengal and Assam, commented on the importance of the scheme thus, "I felt that it is the only way to reach the home life of India. The home is the foundation for the education of both boys and girls. I do not consider, therefore, that there can be a better investment of money than in that of supplying really good, and well qualified and enlightened teachers for the mothers of Indian future sons and daughters."<sup>27</sup> The scheme for zanana teaching was supported by the female education committee and made some progress in Eastern Bengal and promising start in the Rajshahi division. In this division zanana classes were started in Rangpur, Pabna, Bogra, and Jalpaiguri districts. The district of Jalpaiguri and Rangpur had six and five centers with 43 and 28 pupils respectively.<sup>28</sup> And two new schemes for zanana education at Pabna and Rangpur were sanctioned during the 1922-23, but the scheme for Pabna could not be given effect to as the zanana ladies there were not willing to join the centres. The centres were opened at Rangpur in August 1915 and a Hindu lady of an orthodox family was appointed as the governess.<sup>29</sup> In the districts of Pabna and Rangpur the students of zanana education were all Muslims. This indicates that Muslims

were taking active part in spreading education among their women possibly because they recognised their backwardness in education in general and possibly because they did not have to spend anything for such *zanana* education.<sup>30</sup> The *zanana* education system aimed at giving education to women and widows at some centres organised and run by the government in co-operation with the local people.<sup>31</sup> We find that the missionaries played a significant role for the establishment of schools in the district of Rajshahi Rangpur and Pabna. Initially their activities were directed from Calcutta and Serampore. Their entry into in these districts was highly influenced by the socio political climate of the time as the British paramountcy had reached its apex then. Australian Baptist Mission was only missionary worker got the permission to enter Pabna district. The government permitted the Roman Catholic Mission to build mission stations in limited numbers and restricted areas of the district of Rajshahi and Rangpur. Another important mission Salvation Army remained active during the period of British administrative control in Bengal.

### III

Missionaries realized that the conversion of students in large number was increasingly questioned in Bengal. Protestant Missionaries had targeted the tribal community for conversion. Exploited by both Hindus and the tribals became easy victims of the missionary design of preselytization. The Santals in particular were the target group of the missionaries for evangels in Eastern Bengal. Most of the Santal resided in the district of Rajshahi and Rangpur.<sup>32</sup> For this cause protestant missionaries would only expand in India by way of gradual growth of the Christian population and the annual conversion of low caste and tribal Indians.<sup>33</sup> Missionaries were in favour of imparting education the

Santals through their mother tongue and were keen to improve their socio economic condition as a prerequisite for evangelisation.<sup>34</sup> After the Santal Rebellion in 1855 new mission stations were established in some parts of the newly created Santal Parganas (1856) which included some parts of Bengal proper.<sup>35</sup> It is noted that the Presbyterian Mission was mainly responsible for working among the Santals of the Rajshahi district. In 1862 Presbyterian Church, the first minister, The Rev. Bihari Lal Singh, opened schools and an orphanage, and gathered a little congregation.<sup>36</sup> They look it upon themselves for the spread of education among them. In 1866 Calcutta Mission Society (CMS) completed Santal vocabulary and published the Santal dictionary, Bible History, and translations of Part of St. Mathew's Gospel and Anglican Prayer Books etc. At Saidpur, Rangpur district, the Kerwlnut School was run by the Salvation Army and had fifty one pupils on its roll. Another five schools in the Pabna districts for the Santals, Muchis, Dhobis and Namasudras, with one hundred and fifty pupils.<sup>37</sup>

After 1871 the Calcutta Bible Society published more textbooks in Santali. Missionary efforts created a growing urge for education among the Santals since missionaries made them believe that education was the only safeguard against the oppression of Zaminder and Mahajans. George Campbhall, Lieutenant Governor in Bengal showed keen interest in Santal mission and a special grant by the Government towards Santal education encouraged the missionaries.<sup>38</sup>

Christians, Native and European together, number no more than 93,013 souls in Bengal in 1872.<sup>39</sup> The total number of Christians in Bengal is 183,067 and their numbers have shown a fairly regular rate of increase from 1881 when they were 72,289.<sup>40</sup> The whole of

Bengal saw their increase during the early twentieth century. It had been greater than at any other decades since 1881 except between the years 1891 and 1901 when the percentage increase was 29.5%. Except in the Dacca division where they had increased by 32.1 percent. Their numbers were greater in all Bengal than they were in 1881 and in the Rajshahi division there were actually almost 19 times as many of them as they were in that year. Amongst the Indians some groups were included such as Sinhalese who were not actually Indian, as well as some others of Nepalese origin who may not have been born in India. As might be expected no less than 16,863 Anglo Indian Christians out of a total of 27,573 resided in Calcutta, and for the most part they were found principally in urban areas. Next to the Presidency division with 17,768 the Burdwan division with 6,244 contains the largest number of Anglo Indian Christians. Amongst the Indian Christians also majority lived in the Presidency than in any other division. Out of 131,886 45,099 lived in the Presidency division of whom 17,388 were found in the 24 parganas and 14,280 in Calcutta. Dacca division with 40,419 and Rajshahi division with 31,835 Indian Christians comes next in order to Presidency Division. Jalpaiguri had no less than 14,327 Indian Christians and Dacca and Mymensingh 13,567 and 10,603 respectively.<sup>41</sup> In Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur this number was 1483, 428 and 1686 respectively.<sup>42</sup> They were seen to lie therefore principally in two series of districts running contiguously from north to south viz., Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Rajshahi Nadia, Calcutta and 24 Parganas and again in Mymensingh, Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj.<sup>43</sup> It was doubled during the period of 1872 to 1921. The rate of increase of successive decades had been 13.9% between 1881 and 1891, 29.5% between 1891 and 1901 21.7% between 1901 and 1911 and 14.9%.<sup>44</sup> Christians were more numerous in central Bengal than in other

divisions in Bengal. Thus it may be concluded from the above mentioned figures that Rajshahi division ranked third<sup>45</sup> in Bengal by way of Christian population but Rajshahi district came much lower in the ladder with 1483 only out of a total of 14,327 (in the Rajshahi division).

The missionaries' attitude to Hinduism and Islam tended to be highly critical and confrontational for most of the 19th century. The intellectual opposition to Christianity from Hindu quarters took the form of intellectual defense of Hinduism and Shastric injunctions, with which learned Hindus sought to counter the anti-Hindu propaganda of the Christian missionaries or corner the missionaries themselves during their itinerancies.<sup>46</sup>

The *Tattavabodhini Sabha* entered into a controversy with the missionaries regarding the merits of the 'Vedantic doctrine'. On the other hand, at that time Alexander Duff published a work entitled "India and India Missions" which was critical of the doctrines of Hinduism. The *Tattavabodhini Sabha* regarded it as an unjust criticism, and decided to write a 'Refutation' in 'defense of the rural doctrines of Hinduism'.<sup>47</sup> The evangelizing efforts of the missionaries and their criticism of Hinduism naturally provoked counter criticisms from the Hindus. Through these criticisms were more or less continuous and assumed the form of an anti-missionary propaganda.<sup>48</sup> *Tattavabodhini Sabha* and some press were taken part anti-missionary in attitude during this period. The papers which played a predominant role against the missionaries were the *Samachar Chandrika*, edited by Ishwar Chandra Gupta, the *Sambad Purnachandradoya* edited by

Uday Chandra Adhya and his brothers, Advaitcharam Adhya, and the *Tattavabodhini Patrika*.<sup>49</sup>

The Muslims of Bengal also felt threatened by the missionaries as some Muslims were converted to Christianity. Illiteracy, weak faith in their religion and the prospect of economic benefit led some Muslims to accept Christianity.<sup>50</sup> However, Christian Missionary enterprise in Eastern Bengal districts particularly in the Muslim majority areas in the nineteenth century barring a few success, faced great obstacles from the orthodox Muslim society. The Bengali Muslims in the face of the onslaught of the Christian missionaries became conscious of their precarious position and that to a certain extent explains the aloofness on the part of the Muslim to associate themselves with English education.

William Carey was the greatest Protestant missionary who arrived at Serampore of West Bengal in 1793. This Englishman heralded the new missionary era in Bengal. Besides preaching, he left versatile contributions in Bengal. When Carey came the Baptist Missionary Society (British) in 1793, followed by Church Missionary Society (British) in 1805, Council for World Mission (British Presbyterian) in 1862, Australian Baptist Mission in 1882, New Zealand Baptist Mission in 1886, Oxford Mission (British Anglican) in 1895, Churches of God (American) in 1905, Seventh-Day Adventists in 1919, Assemblies of God in 1945, Santal Mission (Lutheran) in 1956, Bangladesh Mission of the Southern Baptist Convention (American) in 1957, and Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (American) in 1958. Such mission activities then spread to other towns like Dinajpur (1795), Jessore (1805), Dhaka (1816),

Barisal (1828), Khulna (1860), Chittagong(1881) and Rangpur (1891). And all missionaries in Bengal followed the humanitarian ideas of the early evangelicals in England and emphasised the social aspects of the missionary programme.<sup>51</sup> To expedite and promote evangelism, these societies also plant churches, and establish and run various educational, healthcare, and welfare institutions and organizations. Under this scheme a Christian mission hospital was established initially by medical missionaries of the Presbyterian Church of England in 1817 as a 5 bed hospital in Northern Bengal. It was later shifted to Rajshahi town in 1890.<sup>52</sup> Not unlikely the rural masses therefore felt they had their real friends in the missionaries.<sup>53</sup> Mohar Ali remarked that 'whatever might have been their religious prejudices, the rural population of Bengal would not have risen in revolt against the missionaries.'<sup>54</sup>

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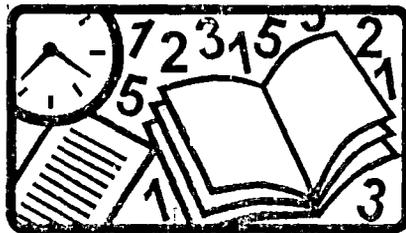
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## Chapter: 6



Colonial Subversiveness and Reactive Social Quest for Authenticity

## Chapter: 6

### Colonial Subversiveness and Reactive Social Quest for Authenticity

In this chapter has been made to examine the reaction of the Indians in terms and adjustment to western ideas and ideologies that led to the development of a 'hybrid' English educated native elite. A trend that followed in its trail was manifested in a search for identity and authenticity of the 'natives' that expressed itself in cultural and religious revivalist movement. It was a reaction of the colonised to the colonial cultural subversiveness.

Seeking avenues for trade the British stepped into India in the 17<sup>th</sup> and gradually established, with their perseverance and the response of the indigenous society, a colony that was to emerge as a classic colony destined to play a crucial and important role in the development of British Capitalism.<sup>1</sup>

Bengal, became the focal point in Eastern India of British trade and circulation of British merchant capital. Consequently, in the process of the development of a colonial state Calcutta the centre. In course of time Bengal underwent a transformation, both remarkable and significant. Politically overthrown by the British she came fast under the sway of an alien culture and civilisation. Imbibing new knowledge, technology, believes values, and institutions of the West, it was Bengal which was to develop and high degree of rational thinking and initiate a process of social and religious reforms which was to regenerate the entire country. One single factor which was mainly responsible for bringing about the change from medieval to modern age, was the introduction of English education and the western ideas which followed. It resulted in a complete cultural chaos

particularly within the zone of English education does of political power was accompanied by loss of faith in the country's age old culture. A surging wave of European ideas and ideals seemed to sweep India off her cultural moorings.<sup>2</sup>

Colonialism, being a cultural project of contract, tried to impose alien values not through legislation, nor by force: the path chosen for what can be termed as cultural colonialism was education. In fact Macaulay saw in "English education the main key to the full colonization of India".<sup>3</sup> And he suggested, "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern."<sup>4</sup> His argument was that since English was the language of the ruling class it should become the means of Indian education system. Thus "colonial education laid the structural basis for the development of an ideology".<sup>5</sup> It can be said that the basic aim of the British education not only the district of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur but in entire Bengal between 1854-1947 was to create a class who could support the British to implement their designs in the country. But approach of the middle class also radical. They were also influenced by rational philosophy. They still tried to compromise modernity with tradition and this was the beginning of hybridity and at the same time a search for authenticity. Thus English language and culture played a significant role in imparting western orientations to the traditional society. This was the British viewpoint. A very interesting of study in the response of the Indians to this alien cultural penetration. A very important fact to be remembered is that initially the British rulers did not introduce English education, they did not even encourage it till 1835 when they took the responsibility of introducing it. In the mean time considerable progress had been made in the diffusion of English education in Bengal through the efforts of some Bengalis

especially the Hindus, and the Christian missionaries who became the vanguards of English education in the country. The need for a liberal education was keenly felt by a good number of Bengali gentlemen. Assimilation of British ideas and values in their culture resulted such an interaction between the British and Bengali elite. This Bengali elite were the western educated Hindu upper caste who were professionals Government employees or engaged in commercial enterprise. In this reaction between the two the British were obviously in the dominant position while the Bengali elite, assimilating British values and ideas in their culture was the subordinate partner. Martin Oran's theory of the rank concession syndrome (R.C.S.) (where he observes the synthesizing process of different group) is relevant to the Bengali elite of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In an attempt to raise its status, a society, which concedes rank to a dominant society, emulates attributes of the latter to raise its status. The reason why it does so is that technologically the dominant society is more powerful. Therefore the attainment of some practical goal was the real motive behind it. Great economic benefits were achieved as a result of entering into relations with British commercial, financial, administrative organizations in Calcutta. British lifestyle, British customs, British system of education, British behavior pattern were borrowed and adapted because successful economic interaction demanded it. The leaning towards western education instead of traditional education was because of the former's practical importance.<sup>6</sup> This is where mimicry came in: the Bengali elite tried to mimic the British so that in the words of Macaulay they would become English in tastes and intellectual outlook. An effort to compromise modernity with tradition was the beginning of hybrid culture of the Indian.

Though this was mainly the picture of the Bengali elite in and around Calcutta, the same may be projected in analyzing the Bengali elite in other parts of Bengal. This elite class patronized by the British was bestowed with titles of Raja, Maharaja, Rajbahadur, Khan Bahadur. In the districts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur the prominent among this aristocrats were Raja Bahadur Prassanna Nath Ray (Rajshahi), Raja Pramada Nath Ray (Rajshahi), Maharaja Jagadindra Nath Ray (Rajshahi), Raja Bahadur Harnath Ray Chaudhury (Rajshahi), Khan Bahadur Ershad Ali Khan Chaudhury (Rajshahi), Rai Banamali Rai Bahadur (Pabna), Khistish Bhushan Rai Bahadur (Pabna), Rai Shahib Tarak Nath Maitra (Pabna), Rai Shahib P.N. Chaudhury (Pabna), Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandy (Rangpur), Babu Chandra Kishore Ray (Rangpur), Maharanee Surnomoyee (Rangpur), etc. Besides, there were many zamindars in those districts who lived in Calcutta. Moreover the emergence of some district and mofussil towns due to the induction of colonial administrative and judicial system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century accelerated the process of growth of western educated Hindu Bhadrakalok middle class.

The Muslim middle class did not emerge till then. The Muslim apathy towards all that was English, a natural corollary to their disappointment and disapproval being removed from political and economic power by the was the reason behind this British backwardness. The trend was reversed in second half of twentieth century when the Mohammadan Literary Society (1863) of Abdool Luteef and Central National Mohammadan Association (1877) of Syed Ameer Ali played an important role to awaken the Muslim society. Mohammadan Literary Society was established, "to educate the Muslims in western learning through English medium and to prepare them equal to the educated Hindus and the English men in social intercourse."<sup>7</sup> Central National

Muhammadan Association was established to look into the interests of the Muslims.<sup>8</sup> The *Anjumans* established to serve class interest at different times in the Mofasil towns in Bengal. *Anjuman I- Islami*, *Anjuman I- Islamia*, *Anjuman I- Islam* all of these societies branches were Mymensingh (1875), Chittagong (1880), Noakhali (1885), Rangpur (1887), Comilla (1887), Faridpur (1892), Jalpaiguri (1892), Sylhet (1894), Sirajganj (1898), Pabna (1905), Darjeeling (1909) etc. By the turn of the twentieth century several Muslim writers, journalists, and social workers drew attention to this problem and suggested ways of overcoming it. In the districts of Eastern Bengal, where the largest number of Muslims were concentrated, the rate of progress, except at the primary stage, was slower than that of the Hindus. But gradually the number of Muslims of the district of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur were becoming interested in participation in politics and shares in jobs. In the districts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur the prominent among this educated Muslims were Moulvi Tofazzail Hossain (Rajshahi), Moulvi Imaduddin (Rajshahi), Moulvi Madar Box (Rajshahi), Moulvi Abdul Karim(Pabna), Moulvi Mofukharul Islam (Pabna), Syed Ismail Hossain Seraji (Pabna), Moulvi Wasim Uddin (Pabna), Syed Izhar Hossain (Rangpur), Abdul Mazid Chaudhury (Rangpur), Shaikh Fazlul Karim (Rangpur), Moulvi Taslimuddin Ahmad (Rangpur) etc. Those were drawn towards westernization and the modern education was also ambivalent. Thus led to a steady increase in the number of educated both at the lower and higher levels.

However towards the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the hypnotic spell of foreign civilization began to recede. It was a slow but steady process-giving rise to a wave of self-consciousness of the Hindus. Rational thinking leading to social and religious e.g.

Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Hari Sabha, Branno Sabha, reforms development of intellectual eminence, induction of liberty and freedom and organistaion, a fall out of western learning began to influence the Indians particularly the Hindu mind set. The Bengali elite became more and more conscious of their identity with their own culture. The search for authenticity began, the process expressed itself in various outlets, political, social, and economic. The British became aware of it as is evident in the remarks Elphinstone related by General Briggs who had served under him: Educating the natives, "may be our high road back to Europe", he had said. But there could be no turning back.

Stepped in western ideas of liberty democracy, fraternity the educated Indian elite gave a new direction to national views, with a demand for participation and involvement in the state machinery and finally freedom from foreign yoke. The year 1885 was a landmark in the history of India, when the Indian National Congress was established. Gradually the nationalist upsurge engulfed the whole subcontinent. The district of Rajshahi, Rangpur and Pabna was not lagging behind the freedom movement. Many of its politicians and leaders, students and intellectuals were arrested and persecuted in the cause of freedom. The meanwhile seed of separatism, implanted in the Indian soil by the British after 1857 mutiny began to bear fruits. Both the communities, Hindus and Muslims were provoked against one another. The central national Muslim Association reported the interest of the Muslim community prior to the foundation of the Muslim league in 1906. A sense of loyalty of the Muslims to the British developed as the latter tried to uphold the claims of the Muslims. The need to \* western ideas through education was increasingly felt. Meanwhile the partition of Bengal in 1905, the creation of the new

province of Eastern Bengal and Assam: and the Swadeshi movement that followed added a new colour to the national movement, that of militancy. Between 1905 and 1921, therefore, we find a great ferment of educational thought within the fold of the country's struggle for freedom could be noticed. A demand for Swadeshi education was made. Both the Hindu and Muslim communities of Eastern Bengal joined hands in Swadeshi movement. Great Poet Rabindranath Tagore presided over the meeting that was held in Pabna in 1908 where Barrister Abdur Rasul and Didar Box took part. Didar Box delivered his speech and requested the Muslim society for the active participation in Swadeshi Movement. Mujibur Rahman editor of the Mussalman, he wrote:

My humble appeal to my Hindu brethren is that - they should guard against giving a place in their minds to the idea that "anti-swadeshi" and "Mussalmans" are synonymous. I regret to have to observe that such an idea has, in many places, worked in calculable mischief...<sup>9</sup>

So, many muslims were attracted the movement and they were very famous for their educational qualification, social identification etc. The educated intelligentsia and the students of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur districts also took part in the Swadeshi movement. The Rajshahi college which was the nerve center of higher education in North Bengal took the lead in the movement. Nripendra Chandra Banerji wrote that "the waves of swadeshi movement were still in full swell and the open movement of negative boycott and positive and constructive swadeshi thwarted and repressed with all the engines of law and unlaw at the disposal of a Government to which the vast majority of the virile and patriotic Hindu, population were hostile had run underground and revolutionary and terrorist groups and cells, had been formed in every district in Bengal and Rajshahi was

no exception."<sup>10</sup> At the earlier stage of Swadeshi Movement in Rajshahi about 1904-05, five pro nationalist persons persuaded the students of Rajshahi college to stir up troubles in favour of Swadeshi Movement. They were Kedaresvar Acharya, Prasanna Kumar Bhattacharya, Kesori Mohan Chaudhuri, Hari Charan Maitra, Mahendra Kumar Saha Choudhuri.<sup>11</sup> These persons in a printed appeal to the masses explained to them that the Swadeshi Movement was a movement for the economic emancipation, and that it could be developed by silent, slow and steady work. The people were encourage to purchase country made good. They further said: we do not think it is at all necessary now, for you to detract your attention form studies; but we do think that you should have love for your country made things and that you should purchase them and use them in preference to foreign article."<sup>12</sup>

In 1908, Jogendra Nath, a third year student of this college and a zaminder of the district of Rajshahi, had attended the provincial conference held at Pabna where anti British and pro-independence views were expressed. In the district of Pabna, Edward College, and Bipin Bihari High School were the centers of revolutionary recruiting and activity. One observer has remarked: "the college was hundred percent under Swadeshi control, every body from the Principle to the junior most peon or orderly were Indians. Only the President of the Governing Body was a European I.C.S. by regulation the District Magistrate."<sup>13</sup> In the district of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur, most of the school and colleges actively took part in the Swadeshi Movement. Not only the students, the teachers also actively supported the patriotic movements. In the district of Rangpur, Professor Hirendra Mukharjee of Carmichael College delivered a lecture for the encouragement in the Swadeshi Movement at Palashbari, Rangpur district. \* Palashbari

had grown to be a real power centre in the district, it was almost like a state within state' he declared.<sup>14</sup>

The Swadeshi Movement, was followed the Non Cooperation Movement for achieving independence by means of passive resistance: all governmental assignments such as armed forces and deserting all educational institutions.<sup>15</sup> Of course it was a logical consequence of the swadeshi Movement. Bengal including Rajshahi, Rangpur and Pabna was profoundly affected by this movement. The main idea behind Gandhiji's Non cooperation Movement of 1920-21 was that *Swayj* could be obtained within one year if the public followed his advice in general and, in particular, completely boycotted the institutions.<sup>16</sup> He desired to create a complete deadlock and paralyse Government by calling upon the people to make a supreme, co-ordinated, and comprehensive effort to non-cooperate with the alien rulers and naturally expected that the youth of the country, which included the students reading in schools and colleges, should take a prominent part in the struggle and sacrifice a year of their life for the cause of national freedom.<sup>17</sup> It began to gain momentum after 1921. The initial emphasis being on middle class participation, such as students leaving schools and colleges and lawyers giving up their legal practice.<sup>18</sup> Gradually the movement became more militant, with the beginning of boycott and organization of public bonfires of foreign cloth.<sup>19</sup> The principle K.K. Banerjee in his Quinquennial Report for 1917-18 to 1921-22 remarked: "Non cooperation with educational institution exists because the education imparted is hardly beneficial. If the Non-Cooperators could establish better schools and colleges the present ones would be practically emptied. The real remedy lies in thorough and drastic improvement of the present system of the collegiate and the secondary education."<sup>20</sup> In

fact, the response of the students to the call for the boycott of schools and colleges was far more successful than any other form of boycott or non-cooperation suggested by the Congress.<sup>21</sup> As a result of the non-cooperation movement, in the Rajshahi divisions many national schools were established of which two, in Bogra and the Rai Daulatpur High school of Pabna were famous. Besides, two more the Aryan Academy and the Amritalal Middle English School (unrecognized) in Pabna were converted into national institutions.<sup>22</sup>

Swadeshi and Non-cooperation movements were a source of great discomfort to the British Government. The District Magistrate with police officials came to the school and college and had all the boys lined up and made a search for the accused boys. The Government also tried to control the students and by other means. The D.P.I. H. Sharp circulated a letter to the head of the institution prohibiting the reading of a weekly paper *The Bengalee* by the inmates of hostels attached to the institutions. In this regard H. Sharp mentioned to the Principle of Rajshahi College in 1908 said "though the *Bengalee* professes to be a moderate paper, I think its tone is very objectionable. It holds up Government to ridicule and abuse on every possible occasion. *The Bengalee* is not on our authorized list; and I shall be glad to know if this paper is going to be discontinued."<sup>23</sup> It also created a wave of patriotic feeling, not only among the students of national institutions, but among the student community as a whole.

There was the other side of the story too. Not all people in Bengal felt the impact of British system of education and its consequent effects. The vast population of Bengal including the Muslim majority living in Eastern Bengal were agriculturists by profession. They had neither the means, nor the inclination to understand the benefits of English

Education. Having difficulties to make both ends meet they could not even pay a small school fee or buy books for their wards. The distance to schools and the difficulty of finding accommodation for scholars, coming from interior areas, were factors that operated against the spread of education among them.<sup>24</sup> All they could afford was to send their children the traditional *Pathshalas*. From the beginning of the twentieth century however an increasing communal demand for agricultural products like jute, rice, tobacco and other cash crops<sup>25</sup> the economic fortunes of some of the big peasants did brighten up. They were sending their children to schools where English was taught. This was marginal: the majority were in the deprived lot. In earlier Bengal therefore not all the people, including those living in Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur, shared the awareness whether economic, political or social that came through modern education. To them the concept of mimicry or hybrid and culture was unknown. Neither were they whether Muslim or Hindu, at home with Anglo Centric or Euro centric ideas. They remarked the 'nature' changing to their age old customs and traditions. The Bengali society as a whole with its majority, minority discourse of its representation of culture and the people was subjected to a number of splits and crossings where dominant identities claiming authenticity was challenged.

There participation in the national movement for independence, which has been narrated briefly in the next section, to came late: later than that of the English educated intelligentsia from where the leaders, steeped in western ideas and thought, came. They could not be motivated either by the by " the ideologically inspired desire for

independence or by the ambition to command the new sources of economic wealth developed under imperial rule."<sup>26</sup>

Besides, not all belonging to the English educated middle classes were anglicized. They regarded the reformists favourable response to western influences as serious affront to India's cultural heritage and intellectual pride.<sup>27</sup> In Eastern Bengal the middle class emerged especially in Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur, belong to this category. To them the question of 'authenticity' was the dominant theme. Later when the Indians reacted to the new structural forces released by colonial interest, the assertive authenticity of the colonized challenged the British policy of subversion.

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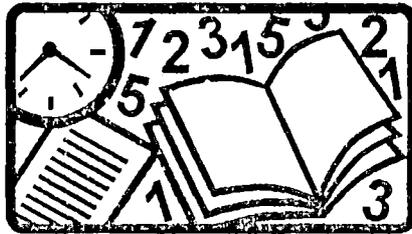
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## Chapter: 7



## Conclusion

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A detailed enquiry into the system of education in colonial Bengal in the three selected districts of Eastern Bengal – Rajshahi, Rangpur and Pabna as case studies has revealed several hitherto unexplored phenomena thereby extending the frontiers of our knowledge and information. It is in the background of colonialism that the study has been conducted, i.e. colonial political control which encapsulated colonial interest, policies, ideas, ideologies, culture and of course colonial state and administrative institutes. The post colonial discourse taking into account the colonial design of cultural subversion, colonial subject making, mimicry hybridity syndrome, the quest for authenticity has also been explored. Major transformations were introduced in the field of administrative economy and social formation and structures. As Arif Seal has pointed out British rule in India became the most spectacular case of imperialism in modern times. As the British rule was first established in Bengal it was here that the impact of the western spirit was first felt. Though initially aloof it gradually introduced reformative measures in politics, economy and society to sustain its colonial domination. It was not the East India companies policy however to spread education among the Indians till 1813. In that year by the Charter Act the East India Company was given the responsibility of educating the Indians. Gradually the Christian missionaries who became closely associated with British imperialism in India were induced in the scene and permitted to establish schools in European model.

Education, specially English education was henceforth to become one of the tools of control sustenance and subjugation of the vast Indian empire, as well as a legitimizing

agency for conveying the values of the ruling class. It was to become the *modus operandi* for the colonial system to meet the requirements of British imperial interest. With this aim in view teaching in oriental languages was replaced by English. Lord W. Bentinck and his successors took major steps to spread English through schools and colleges. The educational Council of 1842 attempted to establish English schools in each district. In 1844 came Lord Hardinges famous resolution for the development of English education. It made English compulsory qualification for Government services. The thrust obviously, was on the creation of a support group from among the Indians. In this context the district headquarters established Middle Vernacular Schools in the Mofassail and others schools rural areas. In this way some Government aided English School and Colleges emerged in the districts of Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur. Though during the period between 1854-1947 the education system of those district was haphazard and un planned. Most of the educational institutions were sponsored by private personalities. Many were run without Government aid. The local zamindars used to help with land, building and finance in those institutions.

The Christian missionaries played an important role in the spreading the English education. But there main motive was to convert the Indians to Christianity, believing that the rulers and the ruled would be well communicated through the preaching of Christianity and English education. Joshua Marshman, a Baptist missionary (1813) wrote that 'the most effective way to make the British rule permanent would be to get the supports of the native people'. Missionaries were active in the districts in Rajshahi, Pabna and Rangpur but there was no religious conversion in significant number in these

districts. The reasons were simple. Being Muslim majority areas of East Bengal where people mostly lived in rural areas they were profoundly and significantly influenced by the *Mullahs* and *Moulovies*. They propagated against Christianity in mosques and madrasahs. Even the replacement of the Persian by English language in 1835 was looked upon with doubt by them. Moreover they regarded the English learning as the primary stage of conversion in Christianity. Thus missionary activities were less influential in these districts. However among the tribal people of these districts missionary influence was considerable. This was mainly due to the social welfare works conducted by them for the development of the tribal societies. The tribal pockets did provide a virgin soil for missionary activities.

All said about British colonial interests in India the question remains as to how did they look upon the Indians. Debates about the accession of political power by the British revolve round several issues of which one was the civilizing mission of the white. The British imperial colonial construct of Indians is to be traced to British imperial interest. The East as counter poised against West was seen as fragmented, divided, devoid of a universal language of the West. The concept of 'We' and 'They' underlined every activity of the British in the Indian colony.

However, as a result of prolonged contact with the British there was the rise in the Indian social context of an educated, westernized, modernized elite class. Bengal was to experience this first. The Bengali Hindus took an early and keen interest in British rule, interacting with them and offering them services. At the same time they became

involved in a critical dialogue with them and in the process developed a rich tradition of discourse, a phenomena that was unique and not to be found in other Indian communities. The growth of a hybrid culture can be located at this point. But the process did not stop here. The Hindu discourse revealed an unusual feature: the colonial rule was located and discussed in the wider context of their social regeneration. The Hindu elite started reinterpreting Indian traditions, culture, history, thought in a very creative way in response to European criticisms. They indeed borrowed ideas and institutions from the British but these were subjected to rigorous reinterpretation and analysis. They discovered that there was no way of countering the various questions, often sharp and critical, raised by their rulers, save by providing an alternative and deeper question of self-definition. How were they to do so unless they conceptualized themselves as a single homogeneous community which would ensure their collective identity? Almost all Hindu thinkers from Rammohun Roy onward laid emphasis on this crucial question of self definition. The colonial rule acquired new significance in the fact that it was like a mirror against which the Hindu could see himself with his strength as well as weakness and determine thereby who and what they were. In other words it helped him to discover his "authentic" self. This was in brief the impact and response British rule of the Hindu elite in Bengal first and then in the rest of India.

But this particular response did not bear the stamp of uniformity. In fact the Indian responses to their rule were diverse articulated at various levels both regional and communal. The Muslim awakening came late due to their apathy toward English education and their weak economic condition. A small body of politically powerful

Muslims constituted a very important part of the pre British aristocracy of India, while the bulk of them, converts from the low castes, remained poor and at the bottom of Muslim caste hierarchy. Till the last quarter of the nineteenth century they were opposed to westernization. Ultimately when they decided to come out of their self imposed isolation. They found that the Hindus were far ahead of them.<sup>2</sup> However when this realization came upon them they did contribute toward the extension of the boundary of Bengali middle class. The Mohammadan Literary Society of Abdul Luteef and Central Mohammadan Association of Syed Ameer Ali played important role to awaken the Muslim society. At the same time a large number of Muslim writers took to English education. Kazi Emdadul Haque (1882- 1926) realised its importance in Muslim society. His novel *Abdullah* (1933) underlined the importance of spreading English education in Muslim society. Najibur Rahman Sahitya Ratna (1880-1931) made a sincere effort to explain to fellow Muslims the necessity of English. The main characters of his novels namely *Anowara* (1914), *Premar Samadi* (1915) and *Goriber Meye* (1923) were the representatives of the Muslim middle class. Nurul Islam, a main character of the novel *Anowara* had established a free minor school for the poor Muslims on humanitarian ground. Some Bengali Muslims leaders realised the importance of English. They also tried to explain to their fellow Muslims that English was necessary if they wished to improve their lot. Among this part, the first Provincial Muhammedan Educational Conference was held at Rajshahi in 1904. It can be said that the main purpose of this conference was to express opinion and undertake programmes on educational matters.<sup>3</sup>

The issues of hybrid culture and the authentic self as described above in Hindu society were applicable here too but in a more restricted form in the regions of Rajshahi, Rangpur

and Pabna which were far removed from Calcutta, the throbbing centre of British activities. Westernization of the Muslims was to bear fruit in different way. The emergence of a separatist ideology initiated by the first westernized Muslim Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and further developed by the poet philosopher Sir Allama Mohammad Iqbal was finally given shape by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the formation of Pakistan.

But the lot of the poor agricultural masses of Eastern India remained almost unchanged few exceptions e.g. the emergence of talukdars, ijardar, jotdar etc. as a new social class, who tried to adopt western ways in their living style. The education that was introduced by the British was alien to the country's tradition. The vast majority of the Indian population, clinging on to their traditions and customs, neither understood the language of English education nor could they afford it. To them 'hybrid culture' was an alien domain 'self definition' or discovering the authentic self was not their cup of tea.

In conclusion therefore it may be said that in the case of Rajshahi, Rangpur and Pabna western education had a limited application in the construction of the 'subject' and the colonizer's assertion authenticity. Here the problem was not the crisis of identity leading to assertive authenticity within the framework of derivative discourse. The small group of westernized Muslim intellectual did succeed eventually in imparting in the masses a different crisis of identity which led them to give active support to the partition of the country in 1947.

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## **Glossary**

## Glossary

- Anjuman:** An association or society of Muslims in Bengal.
- Anna:** The Sixteenth part of a rupee.
- Ashraf:** Respectable class of Muslims in India.
- Atraf:** Lower class of Muslims in India.
- Aulia:** Holy man of Muslims.
- Baidya:** One of an upper- class Hindu Caste.
- Baishya:** A member of the third caste amongst Hindus.
- Bakr Id:** One of the chief Muslim festivals.
- Barkandaz:** A troops.
- Behadayits:** The conservative class of Muslims.
- Bhaddaralok:** Middle class gentleman.
- Bil:** Small lake, Marsh.
- Bramho Samaj:** A council of Brahmans for theological and social discussion and arbitration.
- Chakla:** An administrative division of a country during Mughal period normally consisting of many parganas.
- Dakatis:** Bandit.
- Dhobi:** A washer man (by trade or caste).
- Diara:** Riverside.
- Diwani:** The right of collecting and receiving the revenue; hence *Diwan*: The chief officer in charge of the revenue department under the Mughal system of administration.

Fakir:	Ascetic people in Muslim.
Faujdari:	A tax levied for the support of the Police.
Ganja:	A kind of drug. Botanical name: <i>Cannabis sativum</i>
Hari Sabha:	An assembly to discuss the glory of Lord Hari.
Hedayits:	The progressive class of Muslims.
Ijaradar:	Intermediary class of people in Bengal same as Jotdar, Talukdar.
Jollah:	Weaver of Muslim community.
Kayastha:	A caste amongst the Hindus.
Khal:	Canal.
Khan Bahadur:	Title of a noble class.
Khan Saheb:	Title used by the members of noble class Muslims.
Madrassa:	Higher school of Muslim.
Mahisya:	A caste amongst Hindus.
Maktab:	Elementary school of Muslim.
Moffussail:	Small town.
Mollah:	A Muslim theologian.
Moulvi:	Islamic law scholar or teacher.
Muchi:	Cobbler.
Muhharam:	The Muslim festival.
Namasudra:	A Hindu community placed low in the social order.
Nawab:	Title of the Governor of Bengal in late Mughal period. Title used by some Zamindar.

**Nizamat Adalat:** The court of the Nazim. **Nazim:** A viceroy; a governor; the title of the Nawabs of Bengal.

**Pabnee:** With the speed of the wind.

**Pandit:** Learned Hindu scholar. teacher.

**Pargana:** A former administrative division.

**Pathsala:** An indigenous elementary educational institution.

**Raja:** King. Title of a big Zamindar.

**Rajbahadur:** Title of honour conferred by the British Government.

**Rajbanshi:** A lowly Hindu caste chiefly of North Bengal.

**Rai Shaheb:** Government honour.

**Rupee:** Monetary unit of Indian Government.

**Santal:** An aboriginal tribe of India.

**Sannyasi:** Ascetic people in Hindu.

**Sicca:** A silver currency issued by the Mughal Emperor and adopted by the English East India Company.

**Swadeshi:** An Indian national movement favouring home industries and boycott of foreign goods.

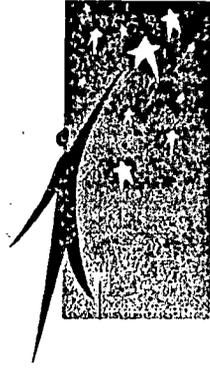
**Thana:** Police Station.

**Toll.** A school run by a Pandit. especially for imparting Sanskrit learning.

**Zamindar:** A landlord.

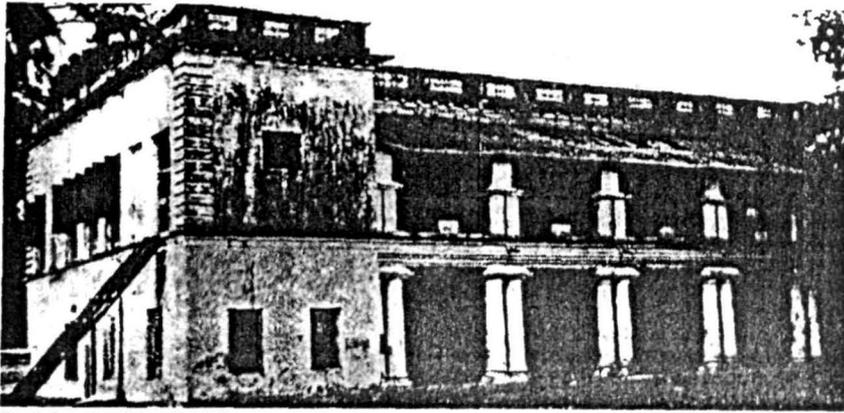
**Zilla:** District.

**Zilla School:** Government Higher Secondary School located at district town.



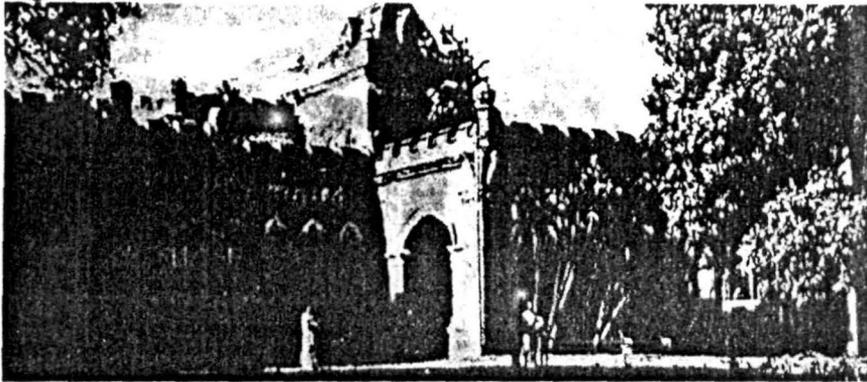
## ILLUSTRATION

Figure: 1



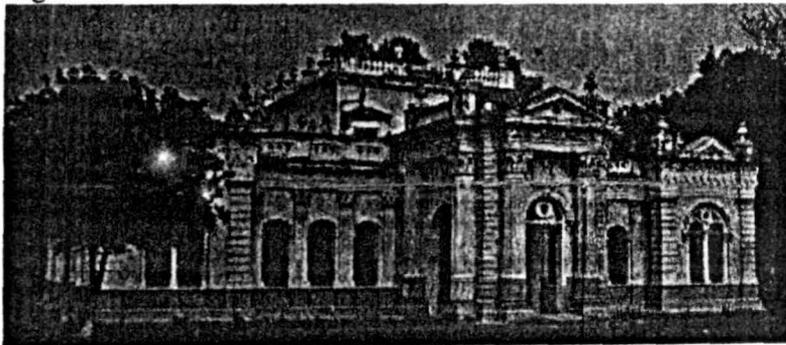
Rabindra Kuthi House, Shahzadpur, Sirajganj.

Figure:2



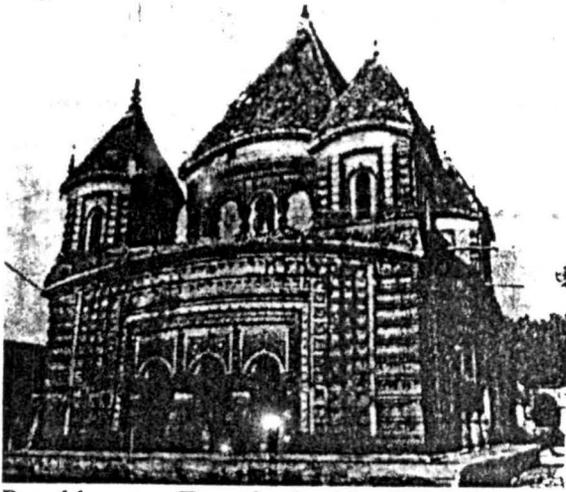
Palace of Digapatia's Zamindar, Natore

Figure:3



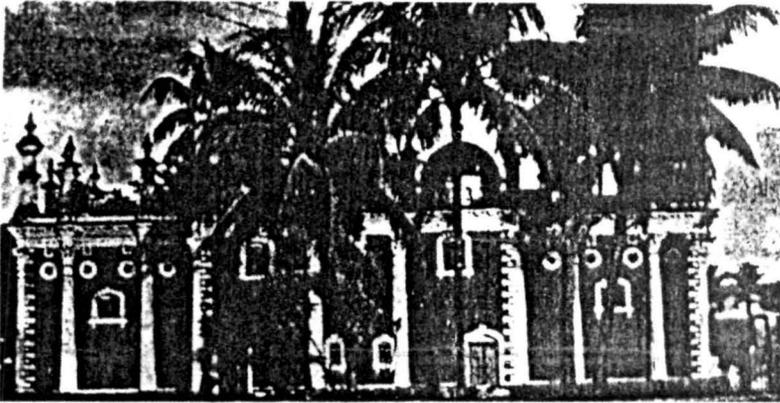
Zamindar's House, Natore (Now Uttara Gonobhaban)

Figure:4



Panchharatna Temple, Puthia, Rajshahi

Figure:5



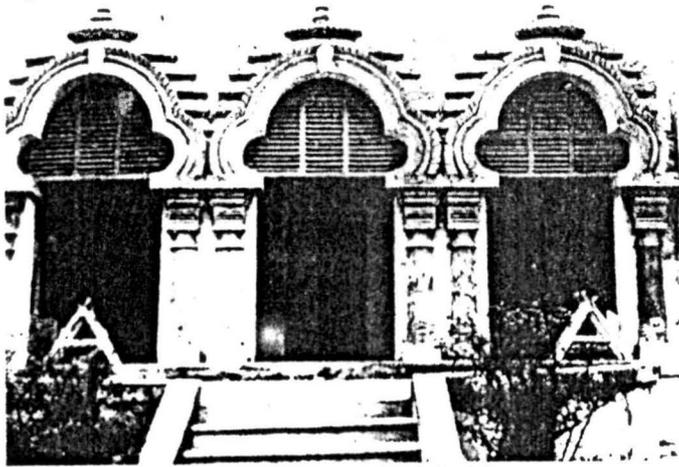
Jama Mosque, Pabna

Figure: 6



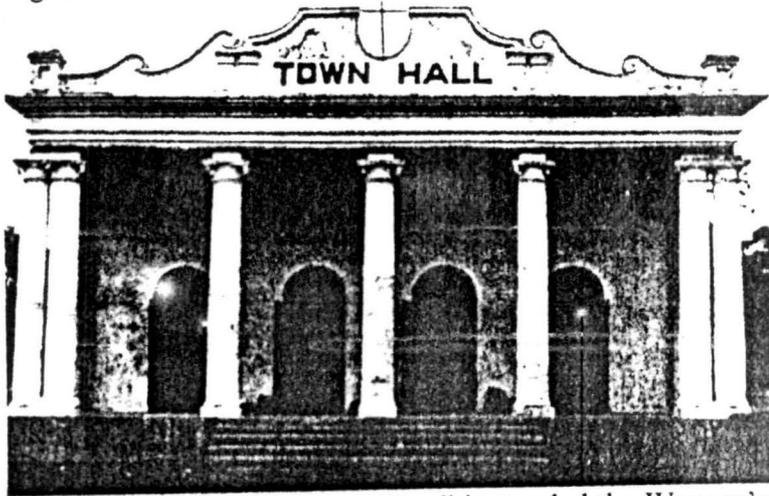
A Festive Occasion in Rangpur

Figure:7



Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi

Figure:8



Town Hall Pabna (Mahatma Gandhi attended the Women's Conference at this Hall on 23rd May 1925)

Figure:9



Carmichale College, Rangpur

Educational Advertisements:

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—সকলো প্রাথমিক শিক্ষকসকলকে নিজ নিজ আঙ্গিক পত্র—  
 রাজসাহী বিভাগের জি, টি, স্কুলসমূহের কমন ম্যাগাজিন  
 এবং নিম্নলিখ প্রাইমারী শিক্ষক সমিতির  
 মুদ্রাপত্ররূপে প্রকাশিত ।

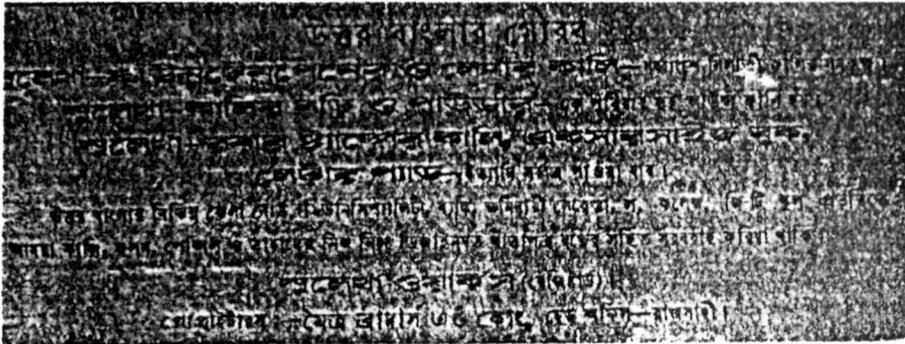
বঙ্গীয় প্রাইমারী বায়ামিক পরীক্ষার প্রশ্ন পত্র

সন ১৯৪০ সাল

বৃত্তম কারীকরণ অথবা উন্নত অধ্যাপক বিভিন্ন জেলার শিক্ষক মহোদয়গণ কর্তৃক  
 নিম্নলিখিত প্রশ্নে উত্তর দিতে হইবে। ১ম শ্রেণীর এই প্রশ্নের দ্বারা বিশেষ  
 করিয়া টেট পরীক্ষার উপকার হইবে। প্রশ্নের মূল্য অগ্রিম পাঠাইলে জি: সি: নরড করিবে না। কিছু  
 মূল্য অথবা অর্ডার বিলের প্রার্থনা হইবে কিন্তু জি: সি: নরড প্রাকৃতিক দিতে হয়। প্রত্যেক পরে  
 টিকানা পাঠ করিয়া লিখিবেন। টেট (মক্কা ও কুল) ১ম শ্রেণী ১০, ২য় শ্রেণী ১০, ৩য় শ্রেণী ১০,  
 ১ম শ্রেণী ১০ ও শিশু শ্রেণী ১০ পর্যন্ত।

একমাত্র প্রাপ্তিস্থান—

লডজেমউজ্জ্বিন আফ্রিকান, মেসারী জেমা সা: সি: লিমিটেড। ১০৭, সি: বা: সি: লিমিটেড  
 আবিস খানগেট, বরুয়া।







## Appendix

## Appendix: 1

### *Report of the State Education in Bengal (Rajshahi and Rangpur District)*

#### Section XVI

##### The District of Rajshahy [Rajshahi]

Population: - In 1801 the number of inhabitants was estimated in round numbers at 1,500,000 in the proportion of two Hindoos [Hindus] to one Mahomedan. From the beginning of July to the end of November the district is nearly submerged.

*Indigenous Elementary Schools:-* I do not find in any publication or authority the slightest reference to the state of elementary education in this district, although it is not to be supposed that the inhabitants are entirely indifferent to the instruction of their children.

*Elementary School not Indigenous:-* In a letter published in one of the monthly journals dated September 1834 from *Rampore Bauleah*, I find mention made of a school at that station under the superintendence of an English gentleman; but no account is given of it except by saying that it was succeeding beyond expectation.

*Indigenous School of Learning:-* There is no doubt that in this district there are several schools of Hindoo [Hindu] learning, but I find no mention of any of them except two which are supported by an allowance from Government. In June 1813, the Collector of Rajshahy [Rajshahi] forwarded to the Revenue Board a petition from Kassessur Bachusputy, Govindram Sirhat, and Hurrām Surma Buttacharjee, stating that their father had received from Rani Bhowannee an allowance of 90 rupees per annum for the support of a college, which allowance on the decease of their father had been continued to their elder brother till his decease; and that since the date of that event they had kept up the establishment, and, therefore, prayed that the allowance might be continued to them.

The collector corroborated the averments in this petition, observing that Kassessur discharged the duties of one college in the town of Nattore [Natore], and that his two brothers had established another in the Mofussil.

The Revenue Board, in forwarding the collector's letter and the petition to Government, observed that the pension had been conferred by the authority of Government on the late Chundar Sikar Turkanshes for his life, on a representation from the collector that he had no other means of subsistence, and was attended by many students; was the only capable teacher in Nattore [Natore], and that the continuance of his pension might be deemed a public benefit.

The Revenue Board further submitted that, as it appeared the brothers maintained the institutions of their father in full efficiency, the pension might be continued to them and their heirs in perpetuity, on the condition of their continuing to uphold these establishments under the supervision of the local agents of the British Government. The Bengal Government fully acquiesced in this suggestion, and sanctioned the payment of the allowance of 90 rupees per annum on the condition stated by the Revenue Board.

## **SECTION XVII.**

### **The District of Rangpur.**

*Population:*- This is one of these districts on which Dr. Buchanan reported, but that copy of his reports which has been retained in India is defective on this district. Only one volume remains on Rangpur out of three or four of which the report on this district originally consisted, and the missing volumes contained the chapter which, in conformity with the arrangement he adopted in his reports on other districts, he most probably devoted to education. Hamilton apparently had an opportunity of inspecting the original Buchanan reports at the India House which, it is believed, are complete.

In 1809 Dr. Buchanan estimated the population at 2,735,000 persons, of whom 1,536,000 were Mahomedans, 1,194,350 were Hindoos [Hindus], and the remainder 4,650 are called infidels, by which term it is probably meant that, without embracing either the Hindoo [Hindu] or Mahomedan faith, they retain the aboriginal superstitions of the country. The principal sect among the Hindoos [Hindus] is that of the worshippers of the female deities. The whole number of Brahmans in 1809 was estimated at about 6,000 families, or one forty third of the whole Hindoo [Hindu] population. The proportion of the Mahomedan to the Hindoo [Hindu] population is about ten to nine, and the faith of the former is stated to be daily gaining ground: but the adherents of the tworeligious are on the most friendly terms.

The following are the divisions of the population with regard to occupation:-

Persons who do not work...	...	...	343,000
Artificers	...	...	326,000
Cultivators	...	...	2,066,000
Total	....		2,735,000

The great farmers in Rangpur are mostly Brahmans, Kayasthas, and Mahomedans of some rank. Few especially of the older families ever visit each other, but live surrounded with dependents and flatterers, especially mendicant vagrants. Some families pretend to be of divine origin: others are descended from princes who have governed the country; but a great majority of those who possess the most valuable lands are new men who have purchased their estates at auction. Time in this district is measured by clepsydras or water clocks. Domestic slavery exists especially along the Northern Frontier, and female prostitution is in a remarkable manner systematised. Education generally is in a very low state, on which account almost every person employed in any high department of the revenue or police is a stranger. Few persons in the district are qualified for the occupation even of a common clerk or writer. Some of the strangers bring their families with them, but by far the greater number leave them in their native district, and consider themselves as undergoing a species of banishment. The small farmers are very timid and totally

illiterate. Five or six families commonly unite under one chief man, who settles the whole of their transactions with their landlords, and to whose guidance they entirely surrender themselves. Throughout the district the most opulent merchants and landholders have no better habitations than the huts constructed of straw mats precisely of the same form and appearance as those of the lowest peasantry, but in greater number and larger dimensions.

Rangpur has on its frontier Nepal, Bhootan [Bhutan], Cooch Behar, Assam, and the country of the Garrows from which it is separated, not by large rivers, lofty mountains, or any other natural landmark, but by imaginary and ill-defined boundaries.

*Indigenous Elementary Schools:-* In the absence of Dr. Buchanan's account of the state of education, the answers made by the canoongoes of the district to the circular inquiries of the General Committee in 1823 afford some information on which apparently dependence may be placed. The information thus given to the Committee was communicated in a singularly ill-digested form: but after comparing the various statements which it includes, it would appear that in fourteen out of nineteen subdivisions of the district there were no elementary schools whatever, and that, in the remaining five, there were ten Bengalee schools and two Persian ones for elementary instruction. In some of the sub-divisions having no common schools, parents, to supply the want of them, either employ teachers in their own houses in whose instructions the children of neighbouring families are allowed to participate, or themselves instruct their own children. The employment of a private tutor and still more parental instruction would appear to be very common. In some instances Hindoos [Hindu] are mentioned as teachers of Persian schools, and Mahomedans of Bengalee ones. In these schools the monthly payment for the instruction of one boy is from two to four and eight annas and even one rupee. The number of boys in one school did not exceed twelve, and there was sometimes as small a number as three taught by one master. In this district the boys are described as attending school from their seventh or eighth to their fifteen year. The canoongoes almost uniformly speak of the advantage which the district would derive from the encouragement given to education by Government.

*Indigenous Schools of Learning*:- Hamilton on the state of learning in this district says that a few Brahmans have acquired sufficient skill in astronomy to construct an almanac, and five or six Pundits instruct youth in a science named *Agam*, or magic, comprehending astrology and chiromancy. The latter is reckoned a higher science than the calculation of nativities, and is monopolised by the sacred order. The Mahomedans, he adds, having no wise men of their own, consult those of the Hindoos [Hindus]. This account of the state of learning is very unfavourable and is not quite correct. The Agama shastra does not merely teach astrology and chiromancy, but is also occupied with the ritual observances of modern Hindooism, and it is not the only branch of learning taught in the schools.

From the details furnished by the canoongoes, it appears that in nine sub-divisions of the district there are 41 schools of Sanskrit learning containing each from 5 to 25 scholars, who are taught grammar, general literature, rhetoric, logic, law, the mythological poems and astronomy, as well as the Agama shastra. The students often prosecute their studies till they are thirty-five and even forty years of age, and are almost invariably the sons of Brahmans. They are supported in various ways – first, by the liberality of those learned men who instruct them; secondly, by the presents they receive on occasions of invitation to religious festivals and domestic celebrations; thirdly, by their relations at home; and fourthly, by begging, recourse being had to one means when others fail. The instructors are enabled to assist their pupils, sometimes from their own independent means, sometimes from the occasional gifts they receive from others, and sometimes from the produce of small endowments. At least ten are stated to have small grants of land for the support of learning, one of these consisting of 25 beeghas of Brahmottur land, and another of 176 beeghas of Lakhiraj land. The quantity of land in the other cases is not mentioned, but it is not stated to be generally Brahmottur.

In one instance it is stated that the owner of the estate on which the school is situated gave the Pundit a yearly present of 32 rupees, and in another instance a monthly allowance of 5 or 8 rupees. In a third instance, the Pundit of the school lived on his patrimony, and at the same time acted as family priest to the zamindar.

*Native Female Education:-* In Rangpur it is considered highly improper to bestow any education on women, and no man would marry a girl who was known to be capable of reading; but as girls of rank are usually married about eight years of age, and continue to live with their families for four or five years afterwards, the husbands are sometimes deceived, and find on receiving their wives that, after marriage, they have acquired that sort of knowledge which is supposed to be most inauspicious to their husbands. Although this female erudition scarcely ever proceeds further than being able to indite a letter and to examine an account, yet it has been the means of rescuing many families from threatened destruction. The women of rank live much less dissipated lives than the men, and are generally better fitted for the management of their estates, on which account they are considered intolerable nuisances by the harpies who seek to prey on their husbands and to plunder their estates.

Source: *Report the State of Education in Bengal*, Published by the order of Government, Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1835, pp.68-73.

## Appendix: 2

Rabindranath Tagore in Pabna Edward College and Rajshahi College

"আজ আমি এখানে যাহা পাইলাম,  
তা হই আমার সর্বাপেক্ষা বড় জিনিষ  
ইউরোপে সন্মান পাইয়াছি, কিন্তু আজ  
সাহিত্যের মন্দিরে যে নির্মাল্য পাইলাম  
তদাপেক্ষা বড় বোধ হয় সে সন্মান নাহে  
... শস্য শ্যামল পদ্মা তীরে আমার যে  
সৌভাগ্যের উদয় হইল, তাহা চিরদিন  
মনে থাকিবে।"

The above speech was delivered by Rabindranath Tagore on the reception given by the students of Edward College, Pabna

The Conference venue was the then Pabna Institution (Now GCI), as the Edward College did not have her own Campus yet. Among the other participants were the Principal of Edward college Prof. Hemchandra Roy, Prof. Tarinicharan Choudhury (Chemistry), Historian Radharaman Saha, Gopal Chandra Lahiri, Editor of the *Bhadrabarsha*, Mr. Jaladhar Sen, Maharaja of Natore Jagadindra Roy, Shitlai Estate lord Jogendranath Maitra etc.

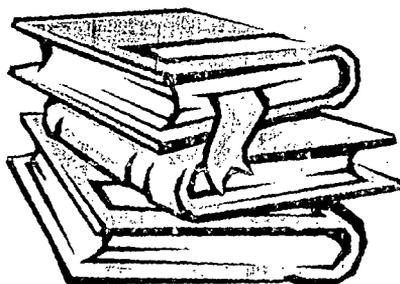
(Source: <http://www.pabna.net/rtipabna.htm>)

Rabindranath Tagore in Rajshahi College

"তবে ছেলেদের ভাগ্যে বাকি রইল কি। যদি কেবল বাংলা শিখিত তবে রামায়ণ মহাভারত পড়িতে পাইত, যদি কিছুই না শিখিত তবে খেলা করিবার অবসর থাকিত।... আর ইংরেজী শিখিতে গিয়া না হইল শেখা না হইল খেলা, প্রকৃতির সত্যরাজ্যে প্রবেশ করিবারও অবকাশ থাকিল না, সাহিত্যের কল্পনা রাজ্যে প্রবেশ করিবারও দ্বার রুদ্ধ রহিল।"

This lecture was delivered at the Rajshahi College by Great Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore, on the subject of Education when the Maharaja of Natore was on the chair. After the lecture a discussion was begun, in which the Collector Lokendra Palit, the Principal of the College Mr. Ahmed, Professor Kumidini Kanta Benerjea, Professor Syed Abdul Salek, Mr. Akshay Kumar Maitra, and Mr Pramatha Choudhury took part.

Source: *Oittijhey Rajshahi College Smarak Grantha* ( A Collection of documents on Rajshahi college) Rajshahi College:2001, p.14.



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