

The Arts Faculty Journal

Vol. 11, No. 16, July 2020 - June 2021

Editor

Professor Dr. Abu Md. Delwar Hossain

Dean

Faculty of Arts

University of Dhaka

Associate Editor

Professor Dr. Tazin Aziz Chaudhury

Department of English,

University of Dhaka



University of Dhaka

The Arts Faculty Journal

Published by

Dean

Faculty of Arts

University of Dhaka

Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

Published in March 2022

Printed at

BCS Printing, Rafin Plaza (2nd Floor)

3/B Mirpur Road, New Market, Dhaka-1205

Cell: 01710-880728

Email: bcsprinting123@gmail.com

The Dhaka University authority is not in any way responsible for the opinions expressed in the articles.

Price

Tk. 100

US\$ 5.00

ISSN : 1994-8891

The Arts Faculty Journal

Editorial Board

[Until 30 July 2020 – June 2021]

Professor Dr. Bhishmadeb Choudhury
Chairman, Department of Bangla

Professor Dr. Syed Azizul Huq
Chairman, Department of Bangla

Professor Dr. Nevin Farida
Chairman, Department of English

Professor Dr. Md. Abdul Kadir
Chairman, Department of Arabic

Professor Dr. Md. Abul Kalam Sarker
Chairman, Department of Persian Language
and Literature

Professor Dr. Mohammad Bahauddin
Chairman, Department of Persian Language
and Literature

Dr. Rashid Ahmed
Chairman, Department of Urdu

DR. Md. Rezaul Karim
Chairman, Department of Urdu

Mrs. Namita Mandal
Chairman, Department of Sanskrit

Professor Dr. Suman Kanti Barua
Chairman, Department of Pali and Buddhist
Studies

Professor Dr. Ahmed Abdullah Jamal
Chairman, Department of History

Professor Dr. Abu Md. Delwar Hossain
Chairman, Department of History

Professor Dr. A. K. M. Haroonar Rashid
Chairman, Department of Philosophy

Professor Dr. Md. Shamsul Alam
Chairman, Department of Islamic Studies

Professor Md. Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan
Chairman, Department of Islamic History
and Culture

Professor Dr. Kazi Mostak Gausul Hoq
Chairman, Department of Information
Sciences and Library Management

Professor Dr. Md. Shiful Islam
Chairman, Department of Information
Sciences and Library Management

Dr. Ahmedul Kabir
Chairman, Department of Theater and
Performance Studies

Mr. Md. Ashiqur Rahman
Chairman, Department of Theater and
Performance Studies

Professor Dr. Salma Nasrin
Chairman, Department of Linguistics

Professor Dr. Mohammad Ashaduzzaman
Chairman, Department of Linguistics

Mrs. Tumpa Samadder
Chairman, Department of Music

Dr. Debproshad Dawn
Chairman, Department of Music

Professor Dr. Fazrin Huda
Chairman, Department of World Religions
and Culture

Dr. Mohammad Jahangir Alam
Chairman, Department of World Religions
and Culture

Professor Dr. Rezwana Choudhury
Chairman, Department of Dance

Contents

**Bengali Diplomats in the Independence War of Bangladesh
(1971): With a Special Reference to India
(Delhi and Kolkata) 1**

Dr. Fazrin Huda

Some Limits of Utilitarian Generalization 23

Dr. Md. Iqbal Shahin Khan

**Ramakrishna Mission of Bangladesh and its Services in the
Field of Education 37**

Dr. Milton Kumar Dev

**Lives on the Move: Language Shift and Migration Experience
of the Garos in Dhaka City 57**

Syeda Afsana Ferdousi

Lessons of *Nitiśataka* : Significance and Relevance 81

Dr. Sanchita Guha

**Development of Bangladesh-China Relations (1975-2017):
Priorities and Realities 93**

Dr. A.T.M. Shamsuzzoha

**Religious Reasoning Behind the Precise Formation of the
Universe: A Perspective of Religion and Science 119**

Shafiul Islam

**Said Nursi's Understanding of Prophethood: A Study in the
Light of Risalae-I Nur 135**

Dr. Md. Abdullah Al Mahmud

**Caesar the Celebrity: Shakespeare's Representation of Julius
Caesar 157**

Mehedi Karim Shimanto

**Religious Freedom for the Religious Minorities in Bangladesh :
A Critical Analysis of the Insertion of State Religion in the
Constitution 171**

Md. Didarul Islam

BENGALI DIPLOMATS IN THE INDEPENDENCE WAR OF BANGLADESH (1971): WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA (DELHI AND KOLKATA)

Dr. Fazrin Huda*

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to explore the role of Bengali diplomats who had submitted their allegiance to the government of Bangladesh and adopted the strategy of public diplomacy to fight against the colonial oppression of Pakistan. By disconnecting all sorts of association with Pakistan this group of Bengali diplomats joined the War of Liberation to support the cause of Bangladesh. In order to conduct the diplomatic fronts of the war the Bengali diplomats embraced the strategies of public diplomacy instead of following the policy of the traditional diplomacy. While the group relied on the strategy and means of public diplomacy the paper examines the effectiveness of the application of public diplomacy tools in order to form public opinion across the globe and regions in support of the Independence War of Bangladesh. The paper particularly focuses on the role of Bengali diplomats who had been in India and had defected and embarked to propagate in favour of the Bangladesh Independence War. They started preaching both among the Indian government and non-government circles through public diplomacy tools to get recognition from Indian authority to solve the political crises of the then Pakistan. The humanitarian issues such as millions of Bengalis' plight to India, a concurrent genocide, killing millions of Bengalis, tormenting women and innocent people, deviance of law and order situation, had repeatedly been raised and protested through press, media and public speaking programs to get support from Indian authority with the hope that India would raise these issues to the world community and Bangladesh crises would come to an end.

Introduction

The paper examines the different tools and methods of Public Diplomacy strategy initiated by Bengali diplomats among the Indian circles. In order to raise the issues of Bangladesh independence war and to get recognition for her, the Bengali diplomats followed a new type of

* Associate Professor, Department of World Religions and Culture, University of Dhaka.

diplomacy that is public diplomacy. In this context, it must be mentioned that, the issues such as secularism, linguistic nationalist spirit and policy of discrimination of Pakistan towards her eastern side contributed to make up the mind of the Bengali diplomats to resign from Pakistan especially from Foreign Service, the most prestigious job of Pakistan. From the capital city of India, Delhi and Bengali oriented Kolkata; they opened 'the window to the west' of the Independence War of Bangladesh. In this regard, they used different public diplomacy tools in order to expose the struggle of Bangladesh for her independence and appeal to the world community that they should come forward to support the cause of Bangladesh.

The present article sheds light on the public diplomacy strategy of the Bengali diplomats in India especially in Delhi and Kolkata. In this regard, it examines their different roles and initiatives to put forward the image of Bangladesh in Indian circles to get their support in favour of Bangladesh's Independence War.

Methodology

The article has been prepared with the assistance of secondary data including several bodies of Bengali and Western texts, research articles and international as well as local dailies. The paper also brings into focus the activities and initiatives of Bengali diplomats who had defected and declared their allegiance to the Exile Bangladesh Government. These primary data had been collected by the author with her assistance during the period of her PhD field work.

This research work accordingly has the following objectives:

- a) To investigate how public diplomacy strategy became more effective for Bengali diplomats to put pressure on the Indian government to recognize Bangladesh formally and to appeal to the international community to extend their support in the struggle for Independence of the then East Pakistan.
- b) To identify the different non-government groups of India to whom the rationale of the Independence War had been explained. Also to ascertain that different public diplomacy tools such as public meetings, rallies, processions and public opinion mobilization campaign became more effective than the traditional diplomacy.

- c) To determine the socio-economic and cultural groups of India who helped to frame the notion of Indian public opinion about the Liberation War of Bangladesh that Bengali people was fighting for a just cause and India should stand on her side and recognise her immediately.

Public Diplomacy and Small States: Theoretical Understanding

In order to comprehend the contribution of Bengali defected diplomats and their mode of operation regarding the application of tools and strategy of public diplomacy in the second front of the war, the researcher reviews the theory of Batora, Nye, etc in this regard. Although the term public diplomacy was originated in 1960, a debate is still going on among the practitioners and scholars about its precise meaning and usefulness in the political field. The term did not receive universal acceptance because of its ambiguous and paradoxical connotations. Indeed, the term has been defined from various perspectives in the light of targeted audiences, dialogue, cultural or informational program, promotional activities etc and differentiated from the traditional diplomacy.

Public diplomacy usually regarded as a process which includes the common people as well as non-state actors instead of the professional diplomatic persons for the presentation and promotion of the images and policies of the countries overseas.¹ It is often differentiated from the traditional diplomacy with the argument that the former is about the relationship between the representatives of state or other international actors whereas the latter targets the general public in foreign societies and more specifically non-official groups, organizations and individuals. Public diplomacy accordingly deals not only with the government but simultaneously with the non-government individuals and organizations. It operates through cultural program, media engagement, and academic grant. It involves dialogues and negotiations on bi-lateral and regional matter with foreign governments and multilateral organizations.²

Although the usefulness and applicability of public diplomacy has become a subject of great debate in the academic field and the diplomatic

¹ Jan Mellison, *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), P.74.

² Mark Leonard and Vidhya Alakeson, *Going Public: Diplomacy for the Information Society* (UK: Foreign Policy Centre, 2000), p.19.

arena, a group of scholars including Batora, Nye have highlighted the importance of public diplomacy in the socio-political and cultural context of the small and medium sized states. Because of the lack of infrastructural development and hard power Batora considered public diplomacy as an important tool for the small scale societies in order to negotiate and bargain with the international actors for their particular issue.³

Nye has coined the term Soft Power in order to describe the significance of public diplomacy in contemporary global world. By identifying the popular culture and media as the sources of soft power, he has emphasized on the role of the domestic and non-state actors. In order to influence the behaviour or interest of other political body through cultural or political means he brings into focus the role of civil society, NGOs, journalists, media personalities in this regard.⁴

Role of Bengali Diplomats in India: Application of Public Diplomacy Tools

The researcher finds the role of Bengali diplomats in diversified and confined ways in addressing public diplomacy strategy both at the national and international levels during the period of nine months of war of Bangladesh. Indeed, by conducting the interview of the defected diplomats and reviewing relevant literatures (written by some diplomats who had defected) the researcher discovers both the direct and indirect role of diplomats in portraying the image of Bangladesh and enhancing the national interest of Bengali people to the state and non-state actors of the global community. Indeed, the role of the defected diplomats varied from country to country according to the prevailing socio-political environment of different countries, public sentiment, responses of civil society and distinguished personalities.

Defection of Bengali Diplomats in Delhi: Opening 2nd Front of the War

As a protest against the ‘Operation Search Light’ of March 25, 1971, Bengali diplomats started to switch over their side from Pakistan

³ Jozef Batora, *Multi-stakeholder Public Diplomacy Small and Medium Sized States, Norway & Canada Compared*, 2005 (available at: <http://www.diplomacy.edu/conferences/msd/papers/batora.pdf> Retrieved: 31/1/2010), p.3.

⁴ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (USA: Public Affairs, 2004), p.2.

government to Exile Government of Bangladesh.⁵ Although the Democratic Republic of Bangladesh was announced at Mujibnagar on April 17, 1971, the researcher contributes to discovering the fact that a group of Bengali diplomats including A. K. M. Shehabuddin, and Amjadul Haque declared their defection (6th April, 1971) even before the formation of Exile Government.⁶ By receiving the news of ruthless massacre of Bengali people by the Pakistani army on the night of 25 March and the formal Declaration of Independence on 26th March by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, they prepared themselves psychologically to launch the Independence War on the second front. In this regard, Shehabuddin referred to the name of Peter Hazelhurst of 'The Times of London,' who unveiled how the Pakistani army had lined up several students of the University of Dhaka and shot them to death.⁷ While he got deeply shocked with the news of such genocide waged by the Pakistan army he expressed his view how hard it was for him to live within the comfortable diplomatic life.⁸ Accordingly, since March, Shehab with Amjad started to strengthen their contacts with Indian politicians, intellectuals as well as foreign diplomats stationed in Delhi in order to map out their future course of action.

Diplomatic Endeavour

In order to take the final decision of the defection, Shehabuddin, consulted the matter with his wife Bulbul and resigned from the Pakistan Foreign Service on 28th March to work for the newly born state of Bangladesh.⁹ After taking the decision of defection Shehabuddin got an appointment with A K. Ray, the joint secretary, in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and requested the Government of India to grant them permission to work in Delhi for Bangladesh.¹⁰ During that period, Bangladesh had not become an independent entity and India was still maintaining diplomatic relations with Pakistan, both diplomats were allowed to carry on their work in Indian soil for Bangladesh fully but discreetly.¹¹

⁵ KM. Shebuddin, K. M. *There and Back Again, A Diplomat's Tale*, (Dhaka :The University Press) 2006, p.167

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ Interview with Shehabuddin with the researcher on 30th August 2005.

⁹ Shebuddin, interview

¹⁰ Shehabuddin,.

¹¹ *Shehabuddin*.

Strategy of Public Diplomacy

Although at the initial stage of defection Bengali diplomats relied on the Indian Government for her assistance and support, latter they adopted the strategy of public diplomacy due to lack of state apparatus, administrative authority and hard power of a newly born state like Bangladesh. During that period, since the Exile Government did not assume formal shape and Bangladesh had not been recognized as an Independent nation state by India and other international communities, it was not possible for those two Bengali diplomats to carry on their mode of operation through traditional diplomatic procedure.

Under the circumstances, they adopted the strategy of public diplomacy to put pressure on the Indian government to recognize Bangladesh formally and to appeal to the international community to extend their support in the struggle for emancipation of the seventy five million people of East Pakistan. For this they relied on public diplomacy strategy through the employment of person to person contacts, press, broadcasting, electronic media etc.

While both Shehabuddin and Amjadul Haque had the realization that they had to rely on public diplomacy to win the fight against Pakistan by promoting their national interest, they arranged a press conference on 6th April at zero hour of that night.¹² The representatives from the BBC, AFP, UPI, TASS etc. and several Indian dailies attended the press conference.¹³ In that conference, Shehabuddin and Amjad made it explicit that they had resigned from the Pakistan Foreign Service in order to protest against the atrocities perpetrated by Pakistan on the civilians of Bangladesh. By identifying Pakistan army in Bangladesh as an occupation force they unveiled how that force got engaged in massacre of the innocent people of Bangladesh. Under the circumstances, they appealed to all civilised people everywhere in the world for sympathy and concrete assistance.¹⁴ They appealed to the nations of the world to recognize the sovereign state of Bangladesh in a similar fashion. By cutting all connections with that government they accordingly declared their allegiance to Bangladesh which derived its authority from the unambiguous mandate of 75 million Bengali people since that day.¹⁵

¹² *Shehabuddin.op.cit* p. 78.

¹³ Hindustan Standard, 1May , 1971

¹⁴ *Ibid*,

¹⁵ *Ibid*,92

The significance of that event lies on the fact, that, it had received wide media coverage in India and abroad and contributed to rousing the conscience of the world. Although Shehabuddin started working for Bangladesh since 6th April, he did not have any office or official recognition. Since, it was not possible for them to conduct their mode of operation through the traditional diplomatic procedure under the prevailing situation so they depended heavily on media and on 8th April their interview was broadcast by All India Radio and the Indian Television Network, Doordarshan¹⁶ In that interview, Shehabuddin claimed that Pakistan was a dead state and buried under the blood of millions of Bengali martyrs who had been massacred by its army.¹⁷ Along with this he also raised his voice by claiming to take urgent steps to end foreign occupation and genocide in their motherland and save the lives of millions of their displaced compatriots.¹⁸

Communication with Government Circle

Bengali diplomats who had defected started their mode of operation with specific objectives and strategies by targeting both at the government and non-government circles to maximize support for Bangladesh's cause. After the formation of Mujibnagar Government on 10th April Shehabuddin and Amzad communicated with Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed on 21st April.¹⁹ With the objective to open the first Bangladeshi mission in Delhi he met with Indian Minister Sardar Singh on April 28 and handed over the letter of Mujibnagar Government formally to the Government of India. That historical incident contributed to initiating the first diplomatic dealings of Bangladesh with India. Indeed, the Government of India granted permission to open the first Bangladesh Information centre (Bangladesh Mission) in New Delhi, on April 30, after that promotional meeting with Indian foreign Minister.²⁰ Indeed, the aim of their constant lobbying to the political circles of India was 1) to make repeatedly appeal for Indian recognition for Bangladesh who were sympathetic to Bangladesh cause; B) to determine the war policy of the Exile Government with the consultation of senior leaders of Indian Government that they

¹⁶ *ibid*, p112

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.113

¹⁸ *Ibid*,

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.105-106.

thought would be effective; d) to evaluate the strategy and policies of Exile Government with the necessary information collected from different Indian sources.²¹

Since Delhi was one of the hubs of Asia and a centre of foreign delegates and officials the Bengali diplomats undertook the opportunity of living in that city. Shehabuddin, accordingly used to be present at the airport regularly to receive foreign political leaders—Senators, Congressional representatives, and Members of Parliament (MPS) with the aim to dispense messages and press notes to those foreign delegates about the Pakistani atrocities in Bangladesh.²²

Communication with Non-Government Circles

In order to put pressure on the Indian Government to get its unconditional support for the recognition of Bangladesh, the Bengali defected diplomats undertook the strategy to appeal to all sections of people and classes of India. By comprehending the fact that the support of the Indian mass, cultural artists, civil society would be effective in their public opinion mobilization campaign Shehabuddin started travelling in different parts of India and addressed well-attended public meetings,²³ rallies and processions in a planned and systematic way. With the consultation of the Exile Government he set some particular agendas in this regard including the issues of genocide, refugee, and the trial of Sheikh Mujib. Through this procedure, he brought into focus, the matter of reorganization of Bangladesh in order to get the sympathy from the general mass and draw the attention of the cultural elite, academicians, press and media etc of India.²⁴

While public diplomacy is the art of engaging, informing and influencing the international audiences,²⁵ Bengali diplomats revealed to the Indian people how the politicians, professionals and the unarmed civilians including women and children had been deliberately killed and reign of terror was created in East Pakistan. In order to shape public impression, the defected diplomats equally remained very careful and aware about the deliberation and selection of the words. Since most people in India were

²¹ Shebuddin, interview

²² *interview*

²³ Shehabuddin, interview

²⁴ Shebuddin, interview

²⁵ John Brown, 'Public diplomacy During the Cold War' in *GJIA*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2005. P.1

not acquainted with English in most cases the discussants used to discuss Bangladesh issue in Hindi in those seminars.²⁶

By bringing into focus the issue of refugees Shehabuddin, Amjad, and Humayun Rashid Chowdhury (defected in October) in several processions meetings and public speaking programs exposed the story of inhuman condition of millions of frightened people who took shelter in India.²⁷ By narrating the miserable condition of hundreds of thousands of people who were helpless, homeless, and jobless and in desperate need of food and medical support they endeavoured to organise fund collection and provide arms for the freedom fighters who were then fighting without any modern weapon. In name of civil war as they asserted that the cruelty in East Pakistan could not be ignored by the international apathy, several humanitarian and non-governmental organization came forward in response to the appeal for the refugees.²⁸

With the objective to frame the perception of the Indian public, Shebuiddin simultaneously raised the issue of unconditional release of Sheikh Mujib in many public forums, political circles as well as among the civil society, and in procession meetings. The subject of trial of Mujib in fact remained as a significant political phenomenon in the political sphere and caused considerable anguish in the government circles of both Bangladesh and India. In the light of such emotional sensitivity Shehabuddin repeatedly claimed that military junta did not have the authority to court martial Mujib, who is the President of a sovereign state.²⁹

Instead of accepting the verdict of the people and regarding Sheikh Mujub as the elected and undisputed leader of Bangladesh, Pakistan government carried out genocide in a planned way. Under the circumstances, such trial was nothing but an illegal initiative.³⁰ While the demand of releasing Mujib had been justified and rationalized in such a way, that demands and appeals received wide publicity in all major newspapers and drew the attention of the international press including AFP and PTI.³¹

²⁶ Shehabuddin, interview

²⁷ Shehabuddin, *op.cit*, p121

²⁸ *ibid*

²⁹ *Ibid*,

³⁰ *Ibid*

³¹ *Ibid*,p.109-110

By getting the news of the postponement of the trial of Sheikh Mujib, Shehabuddin further demanded that some neutral observers must be allowed to meet him. That strategy to appeal consistently to the Indian public about the trial of Mujib proved successful as in the session of Lok Sabha (Lower Chamber of Parliament) Indian foreign minister issued a strong statement expressing India's grave concern over the well being of Sheikh Mujib on August 9, 1971.³² Shehabuddin attended that session in order to support the issue of release of their leader as a part of his promotional effort.³³ Humayun Rashid Chowdhury (defected on 13th October) attended several seminars, assemblages and meeting in Delhi in the similar fashion with the demand to release Bengali leader Sheikh Mujib when he became the Mission Head..³⁴

Demonstrations, public speaking programs, assemblages were the other important instruments through which the defected diplomats fought against the propaganda war of Pakistan. By organising several demonstrations before foreign diplomatic missions, they endeavoured to convey messages particularly to the American Embassy for considerable results. Indeed, their memorandum to the American political counsellor ran like this, "the people and Government of Bangladesh got shocked because of the supply of arms shipments by the US to Pakistan which unleashed an unprecedented genocide in Bangladesh. In order to create and shape public opinion, Shehabuddin routinely held demonstrations at Palam Airport carrying placards with the demand of "Stop Arms Supply to Pakistan", 'Stop the ship', 'Stop Genocide in Bangladesh', 'Don't Strengthen the Hand's of the Pakistani Butcher'.³⁵

The public speaking program had been used by the defected diplomats as a channel to have conversation and dialogue with the Indian public directly. By taking the advantage of such tool they got the opportunity to explain the motives and causes of the War of Independence precisely and logically. While they used to receive several questions through such a procedure of two way of communications once a question had been raised by some Indians that, "By rejecting the Two-Nation Theory will

³² Hasan Hafizur Rahman(eds.), *Bangladesh Documents* vol. 13.(Dhaka: Hakkani Publishers, 1977) P.877-886.

³³ *Ibid*,

³⁴ Interview with Amjadul Haq conducted by the present researcher on 24 September, 2009.

³⁵ *Shehabuddin op.cit*134.

Bangladesh join secular India?.”³⁶ The question was very sensitive in nature as the Pakistani side heavily propagated that conflict in East Pakistan was the result of conspiracy of India. In order to handle such sensitive and delicate question he remained very assertive and answered the question with the strong argument that ‘the people of Bangladesh was fighting for the independence, not to remain or become part of any other state’³⁷.

While public diplomacy is both for public and diplomatic strategies³⁸ Shehabuddin being the Head of Delhi Mission used to arrange the meetings among the Bengali intellectuals and parliamentarians as well as their Indian counterparts and the press. Because of such initiatives, Phani Bhusan Mozumder, Shah Muzaem Hussein and Noor Jahan Murshid³⁹ came to Delhi in May as the members of the first parliamentary delegation and delivered passionate speech in Indian parliament. Being the eye-witnesses they provided a vivid description of Pakistani atrocities, rape and massacre in Bangladesh, which received excellent coverage in the media and contributed to a great extent in creating public opinion in India and abroad at that early stage of the Liberation War.⁴⁰

Communication with Cultural Group

While the idea of a nation is often represented by the intellectual and cultural artist,⁴¹ the defected diplomats endeavoured to establish association with that force of Bengali community too. Indeed, a group of Bengali intellectuals including Professor Rehman Sobhan, Anisuzzaman etc. played an active role in India preaching about Bangladesh War. Whereas Mallick and Anisuzzaman provided comprehensive accounts of atrocities of the Pakistani army in Bangladesh,⁴² some renowned

³⁶ *Ibid*,

³⁷ *Ibid*,

³⁸ Jarol B. Manheim, *Strategic Public Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy*(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 5

³⁹ Two are prominent parliamentarians and Famous female activists of Bangladesh.

⁴⁰ Shehabuddin, *op cit*. p.113-114.

⁴¹ Zeenat Huda, *Problem of National Identity of the Middle class in Bangladesh and State-Satellite Television* (UK: University of Warwick, 2005)p.101

⁴² A respected History Professor, Mallick later became first Bangladesh High Commissioner in India (1972) and Anisuzzaman professor of Bengali Department at Dhaka University, became a vocal human right activist on Bangladeshis independence struggle. Interview with Professor Anisuzzaman conducted by researcher on August, 30 2009.

economists of India such as Asoka Mitra came forward to help Bengali delegates in India.⁴³

The role of '*Rupanthar* (Transformation), a Bangladeshi cultural organisation is praise worthy whose cultural artists including Hasan Imam, Laila Hasan travelled all over India, and rendered patriotic songs and music to promote the Bangladesh movement.⁴⁴ By developing excellent rapport with those cultural groups and organisations, Bulbul, wife of Shehabuddin assisted in fixing the date of the meetings between Bengali and Indian groups and played a crucial role in mobilising support for Bangladesh in the cultural arena.⁴⁵

Paradoxical Role of Intellectual

In order to conduct public diplomacy the co-operation between the government and non- government circles remained as an important phenomenon.⁴⁶ However, the joint efforts had been found sometimes complex and controversial as a couple of private group or individual became aware of their self-interest instead of Bangladesh cause in India.

Although Bengali intellectuals and cultural artists played the unique role in organizing meeting, procession and raising voice against the atrocities of Pakistan some incidents created confusion and caused embarrassment for the defected diplomats of Bangladesh. The role of a Professor thus became paradoxical who identified himself as a Pro-vice Chancellor of Rajshahi University and close associate of Sheikh Mujib⁴⁷ However, at a university gathering he recommended that the current crisis of Pakistan would be possible if Pakistan agree to a loose confederation and that statement had been broadcast instantly by All India Radios news bulletin.⁴⁸

While Shehabuddin got stunned by hearing that statement he informed the matter to Foreign Secretary Mahbub Alam Chasi and requested All India Radio to stop broadcasting such unauthorized statements. He also referred the matter to Mujibnagar Government with a request to restrict the

⁴³ He had become the minister of Finance and Economy later on in the West Bengal. Shehabuddin, interview

⁴⁴ Shehabuddin, interview

⁴⁵ *Shebuddin, op cit.* p.116

⁴⁶ *ibid,*

⁴⁷ *ibid,*

⁴⁸ *Ibid,*

travel of that professor and instructed him to have his speeches cleared before delivering them. Although the Professor claimed that he was a friend of Henry Kissinger, and intended to have a meeting with Kissinger during his visit in Delhi, Shehabuddin could not arrange that meeting as Kissinger was fully booked during that period. However, after the Liberation War that professor wrote an article claiming that he had met Kissinger in Delhi through a senior Bengali diplomat.⁴⁹ That incident is indicative to comprehend how the war of Bangladesh had been used as a bandwagon by some individuals for promoting their own image.

Pakistani Propaganda and Public Diplomacy Strategy

The Government of Pakistan endeavoured to convince the world opinion with a flood of propaganda materials that normal condition was prevailing in Bangladesh and the entire independence movement was engineered by a handful of India inspired miscreants.⁵⁰ By portraying the image of India as the conspirator which was trying to break up Pakistan it successfully issued a statement to the American House of Representatives to cut off American aid to India.⁵¹

While Pakistan propagated the crisis of East Pakistan in such a way Indian side wanted some delay in her direct intervention in the internal matter of that country.⁵² Before undertaking any drastic decision or direct military intervention she preferred to adopt the strategy of public diplomacy to create international public opinion in favour of Bangladesh and herself. In this regard, her strategy was to highlight genocide and the influx of millions of refugees into India which put tremendous burden on her economy.⁵³

On 31st March, 1971, although both Houses of the Indian Parliament adopted a resolution pledging sympathy and support to the Freedom Movement in Bangladesh,⁵⁴ still a debate continued among the senior

⁴⁹ *ibid*, 123

⁵⁰ Muhammad Yunus and Shamsul Bari (compiled), *Bangladesh Newsletter* (Chicago: Bangladesh Defence League, 1971), p.14

⁵¹ *Ibid*,

⁵² Richard Sisson and Leo E Rose, *War and Secession: Pakistan India and Birth of Bangladesh* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) p.156.

⁵³ D. K. Palit, *The Lightning Campaign* (New Delhi: Thomson, Press, 1972), p.69.

⁵⁴ Sheelendra Kumar Singh (ed.), *Bangladesh Documents Vol. 1* (New Delhi: The Ministry of External Affairs, 1972), p. 66.

leaders about the appropriate extent and nature of Indian support. Despite India's awareness about the legitimate aspiration of the people of Bangladesh and the brutal operation of Pakistani force, she wanted to move cautiously for several reasons. While India had full diplomatic relations with Pakistan and maintained one of its diplomatic missions in Islamabad, she did not want unnecessary sufferings for her officials in those missions.⁵⁵

Moreover, India intended to move carefully to avoid giving the impression that she was meddling in Pakistan's internal affairs with a objective to breaking up that state.⁵⁶ In order to refute all these allegations of Pakistan as well as to mould the public opinion across the globe public diplomacy had been adopted directly by India along with the diplomatic procedure. She accordingly relied on international media, publications, cultural channels to make world understandable that if(1) genocide continued in East Pakistan unabated;(2) refugees continued to pour into India;(3) and the democratic government of Bangladesh requested for support and assistance India would extend her support directly and instantly.⁵⁷ By countering Pakistani propaganda Indira Gandhi through her speeches, media deliberations made it clear that India could not remain silent spectator at the event in East Pakistan although she did not have any intention to interfere in the internal affairs of another country.⁵⁸

While ten millions refugees poured into India because of the creation of massacre by the Pakistani military, India used that problem to gain legitimacy for its involvement in the Liberation War of Bangladesh.⁵⁹ Because of geographical reasons since the people fled from East Pakistan to India, she argued she would not be blamed for sheltering those refugees in her territory being the immediate neighbour.⁶⁰ While the issue of refugees remained as an intolerable burden for India, the internal affair of Pakistan became her internal problem as well. From the humanitarian point of view although India extended her support for the refugees, she also asked for international assistance. The tremendous pressure of

⁵⁵ Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. II No.1 24 May 1971, p.188

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, Vol. II No.3, 26 May 1971 pp.220-221.

⁵⁷ Shehabuddin, interview

⁵⁸ Indira Gandhi, *India and Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements* (Orient Longman: Delhi, 1972), P62.

⁵⁹ Udit Sen, *Refugees and the Politics of Nation building in India 1947-1971*(UK: University of Cambridge, 2009) (Unpublished thesis), p.29

⁶⁰ *Ibid*,

refugees could not be left for her shoulder alone since it was impossible for her to feed millions of refugees for an indefinite period. Although Pakistan never admitted the exodus of the refugees to India, she treated the refugee's problem as an international concern in the light of humanitarian need.⁶¹

By following the path of India, Bengali diplomats who had defected, narrated in details the horror and brutalities perpetrated by Pakistani army on the defenceless people of Bangladesh, to refute the Pakistani propaganda which considered the National Independence Movement of Bangladesh as the internal conflict of Pakistan. In order to end the silence of the world by revealing the appalling tragedy in East Pakistan, Shehabuddin demanded the formation an international tribunal for trying Yahya Khan for committing horrendous genocide, rape and arson in Bangladesh in a symposium of Andra Pradesh Urdu Periodicals Associations in New Delhi, on September 2.⁶²

He equally adopted the strategy to influence the Muslim world by propagating that Islam did not sanction killings⁶³ and justify the suppression of minority by the rule of majority for social and economic justice. While the heinous deeds of Yahya Khan accordingly would be considered as an un-Islamic he asked the Muslim World not to remain silent over the oppression and killing of fellow Muslims in East Pakistan.⁶⁴

In order to create confusion and suspicion Pakistan propagated another rumour that, the incumbent Government had permitted elected 88 Bengali Parliament Members to retain their seats in the National Assembly. Pakistan intended to create the impression that not all elected representatives of Bangladesh wanted independence.⁶⁵ In order to counter that propaganda, Shehabuddin personally met some of the MNAs who expressed their allegiance to the Exile Government with firm commitment and determination to fight until their death for the total Liberation for Bangladesh. Shehabuddin himself issued a statement on September 7, by clearing that they would not return to Pakistan as it was a dead state for them.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Muntasir Mamun and Mahbubar Rahman, *Media and the Liberation War of Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Ahanya, 2010), p.120- 129.

⁶² Shebuddin, *op cit.* p.136.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p.112-113

⁶⁴ *Ibid*,

⁶⁵ *Ibid*,

⁶⁶ *Ibid*,

Public diplomacy in Kolkata

Hussain Ali, with 65 Bengali officials defected on 18th April and transferred the Pakistan Embassy of Kolkata into Bangladesh Mission. Those defected diplomats of Bangladesh intended to use Kolkata as a potential channel in their public diplomacy endeavour for two very practical reasons. While Kolkata was the only de facto mission of Bangladesh Government, and the seat of Bengali speaking dwellers the main target of Ali was to utilise the massive support of those Bengali speaking dwellers of the city in order to get recognition from Indian government.⁶⁷

Under the circumstances, Hussain Ali, being the High Commissioner for Bangladesh in India attempted to establish association at the preliminary level with the government circles to get assistance, shelter and support for Bengali refugees who took shelter in various Eastern States of India. While more than ten million refugees fled from Pakistan to India who was in desperate need of food and shelter, he expressed his grave concern to the Indian authority and sought aid for those refugees.⁶⁸

In this regard, he contributed to communicating with the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Sirdharta Sankar Roy, Health Minister Joynal Abedin, CPM leader Samar Mukherjee MP, Priya Ranjan Das Munshi of Congress in order to influence them by revealing the magnitude of suffering and requirements of the Bengali refugees.⁶⁹ Mr. Ali in parallel remained in constant touch with other political elites including Indrajit Gupta of the Communist Party of India, Jotimoy Basu of the Marxists Communist Party, Dr Ranen Sen as well as Prasanta Sur, Pran Krishna Chakravarty, Gaur Kunda, Subhas Basu and Biva Ghosh who had already raised their voice in support of refugees on humanitarian grounds by unveiling their impoverished condition.⁷⁰

The protection of Bengali officials (who transferred their allegiance to Bangladesh government) remained another grave concern for the Bangladesh Mission due to which Mr. Ali accordingly pleaded to the members of ruling Congress Party in order to convince Pakistan side to

⁶⁷ In a group interview with third secretary Nazrul Islam, Sikander Ali and Mustaffizur Rahman conducted by researcher on June 19, 2009.

⁶⁸ Amirta Bazar Patra, 19th April, 1971

⁶⁹ Hindustan Standard, 1 May, 1971

⁷⁰ Singh (ed.), *op cit.* vol.1.p.35.

take no legal action against Bengali officials' who had defected.⁷¹ While the Mujibnagar Government was formed by Awami League leaders who got the direct mandate from the people of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Mission considered Mujibnagar Government exclusively as the legitimate government.⁷² Other than Mujibnagar Government since there was no acceptable alternative KK Mitra, the food Minister of West Bengal, Sheban Saksina, the Chairperson of Socialist Congress, and other MPs raised their voice to recognize Bangladesh immediately.⁷³

Communication with Non-government Circle

The people of West Bengal, who had the Bengali origin and migrated to East Bengal during the period of partition of 1947, were found sympathetic to the refugees and loud against the atrocities of Pakistan. Because of massive influx of refugees from East Pakistan into India, the Kolkata dwellers got sympathetic towards the victims and destitute of East Pakistan. By comprehending the fact Bangladesh Mission (Information Centre) intended to appreciate that strong Bengali ethos of Kolkata at maximum level to put pressure on the political circle of Delhi, which could not be remained indifferent towards the Bangladesh issue.⁷⁴ Although Delhi was deeply concerned about the creation of the gigantic problem after the massive influx of refugees (whose number had been reached from seven to ten million) its political circles got conscious about the overwhelming sympathy of West Bengalis towards Bengali refugees.⁷⁵

Hence, by taking the full advantage of that situation the defected diplomats started public mobilization campaign by highlighting the issues of genocide and refugees as well as communicated with both electronic and print media. They equally organized visiting program, staged demonstration, and circulated leaflets in order to make an appeal to recognize Bangladesh as a free independent state.⁷⁶

While the defected diplomats including Hussain Ali (Deputy High Commissioner), Rafiqul Islam (first Secretary), Anwarul Haque

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p.56

⁷² *Ibid*, p.62

⁷³ The Statesman, 1 May 1971.

⁷⁴ Kazi Nazrul Islam, interview

⁷⁵ Sucheta Ghosh, *The Role of India in the Emergence of Bangladesh* (Kolkata: Mohan & Chand, 1974), p.68-70.

⁷⁶ Kazi Nazrul Islam, interview

Chowdhury, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Maksud Ali (all Third Secretary) intended to reveal what was happening in East Pakistan to the Indian people, they used to communicate and visit cross section of people including the youth, academicians, intellectuals, cultural activists, journalists and the member of civil society regularly.⁷⁷

In order to narrate how the Pakistani army got engaged in a wanton massacre of the innocent and unarmed people of Bangladesh, they played a significant role in communicating with several organizations, cultural artists, civil society etc. Indeed, both Indian and Bengali civil society and intellectuals already raised their voice against the terror which was created by the ruling elite of Pakistan.⁷⁸ Several organizations including Bangladesh Intellectuals Associations, Bangladesh Teachers Associations, Committee for the Assistance to the Freedom Struggle of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Sarba-kalyan Samity (Bangladesh Welfare Association), Bangladesh Intellectuals Aid Committee, A National co-ordination Committee for Bangladesh, The All-India Bangladesh Assistance Committee had been formed in order to support Bangladesh independence movement.⁷⁹

Through these Associations Bengali intellectuals, artists, literary persons accordingly arranged several processions, rallies and meetings to take moral stand against the ruthless operation of Pakistan army and raised unanimous support for the East Bengalis in their national Independence Movement.

Along with this they simultaneously staged several demonstrations in order to get release of Mujib.⁸⁰ Thus, by expressing grave concern Tarashanker Bondhupday, a famous Bengali novelist urged the world community to come forward for immediate release of Sheik Mujib on August 7 in a big rally.⁸¹

The West Bengal Provincial Farmer Association, Jamayeet-Uil-Ulema in a conference on August 18, the West Bengal Women Association on 11 August in the similar fashion condemned any attempt to

⁷⁷ Kazi Nazrul Islam, interview

⁷⁸ Hindustan Standard, 3rd June, 1971

⁷⁹ Most of these organizations were formed in April after Operation Searchlight after 25th March, Sucheta Ghosh, *op cit*, p.75

⁸⁰ Kazi Nazriul Islam, interview

⁸¹ Mohammad Selim, *The Liberation War of Bangladesh and the Political Parties of India* (Dhaka: Bangladesh Charcha, 2004), p.22

try to Mujib and execute him secretly.⁸² While Hussain Ali, from Bangladesh Diplomatic Mission appealed to West Bengalis for the financial and material assistance, the famous singers including Manna Dey, Salil Chowdhury, and Sabita Chowdhury donated their royalty money for the freedom fighters of Bangladesh.⁸³

Communication with Foreign Delegates

In order to influence the world public opinion Bangladesh Mission had seen several delegations headed by non-diplomatic persons including the educationists, lawyers', civil society representatives, cultural groups to different parts of India, embassies of Europe and America as well as different institutions like UNO, FAO ETC.⁸⁴

Those non-state actors explained how the West Pakistanis crushed the victorious result of National Election, imprisoned Mujib and employed brutal force against the helpless Bengalis of East Pakistan. By roaming several parts of India they disclosed the story of millions of refugees who had poured into India from Bangladesh due to extreme brutality of Pakistani military operation. In those visit programs they used to display the war photos, distribute leaflets, news bulletins in support of their narrative.⁸⁵

While the aim of Bengali diplomats was to portray the image of Bangladesh through the prism of National Liberation Movement, they intended to bring out the focal point of Bengali's right to self-govern and accordingly communicated with the both ruling and non-governing elites of several countries of the world.⁸⁶ In order to raise the conscience of the global community they therefore accompanied the foreign delegates and the distinguished personalities including Senator Kennedy, Senator Saxby, the representatives of Amnesty, World Bank, Oxfam, and the UK and USA who visited Kolkata refugees camps during that time.⁸⁷

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 53

⁸³ Dulal Bhowmik, 'The Contribution of Kolkata University in the Independence War of Bangladesh', in *Bharat Bichitra (The Indian Magazine)* N.9, (Dhaka: The Indian High Commission, 2007), p.18.

⁸⁴ HT Imam, *Bangladesh Government, 1971* (Dhaka: Agamee, 2004), pp.168-169.

⁸⁵ Sikander Ali and Mustaffizur Rahman, interview

⁸⁶ Salam Azad, *Contribution of India in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Ankur Prakashani, 2003), p.225

⁸⁷ Rahman (ed.), *op. cit.* 68-69.

Indeed, by utilising those opportunities they expressed their deep concern to them and made appeal for large scale assistance to provide food, pure water and clothing for the refugees.⁸⁸ The attempt proved successful as Senator Kennedy lent his support on humanitarian grounds and delivered several speeches at Senate with the argument that USA must stop sending arms and ammunitions which would be used to kill more Bengalis.⁸⁹ In addition he called for the increase of the subsidies for East Pakistan. While Senator Saxby and the representatives of World Bank and UNO had been deeply distressed by observing the state of destitute and physical exhaustion in refugee camps, they asked for the suspension of funding to Pakistan in the similar fashion.⁹⁰

Conclusion

The strategy followed by the defected Bengali diplomats in 1971, as defined by academics as, Public Diplomacy, is a successful endeavor to put a political pressure on Indian circles to support Bangladesh cause as well as recognize Bangladesh as an independent state. Instead of following the traditional diplomatic procedure, they pursued a new type of diplomacy known as public diplomacy using press media, procession, meetings, as the main instrument to propagate in favor of Bangladesh independence War. Since India was the most prominent country among the South Asian region so their main target was to get Indian recognition for Bangladesh as soon as possible. The hesitance of Indian government to recognize Bangladesh, embarked Bengali diplomats to make an appeal not only to governments circle but also to non-government circles of India. Through press, media, public mobilizing campaign, cultural program, public speaking program they appealed to the non-government circles to recognize Bangladesh as an independent state. The application of Public Diplomacy strategy thus contributed to draw the attention of the local, national and international actors, both state and non-state actors about the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

⁸⁸ *Relief Problems in East Pakistan and India*, Part 1. No.71. p.23.

⁸⁹ Statement of Senator Kennedy on 22 June, 1971, *Relief Problems in East Pakistan and India*, Part, 1, N. 71.93.

⁹⁰ Yunus, *op cit*.p.43

References

Primary Sources

Documents

- Rahman Hasan Hafizur (ed.), *Bangladesh Documents* Vol. 7. Dhaka, Hakkani Publishers, 1977
- Shebuddin, K. M. *There and Back Again, A Diplomat's Tale*, Dhaka, The University Press, 2006
- Singh Sheelendra Kumar (ed.), *Bangladesh Documents Vol. I* New Delhi, The Ministry of External Affairs, 1972
- Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. II No.1 24 May 1971, p.188
- Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. II No.3, 26 May 1971 pp.220-221
- Statement of Senator Kennedy on 22 June, 1971, *Relief Problems in East Pakistan and India*, Part, 1, N. 71.93

Interviews

1. Shewbuddin Ahmed (Second Secretary) 30th August, 2005.
2. Amjadul Haq (Press Attaché) 16 September, 2009.
3. Nazrul Islam (Third Secretary), Sikander Ali, Mustaffizur (senior non-diplomatic officers), 25th August 2009.
4. Professor Dr. Anisuzzaman- Representatives' of Civil Society, 29 August 2009.

Secondary Sources

- Azad Salam, *Contribution of India in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh*, Dhaka, Ankur Prakashani, 2003
- Batora, Jozef *Multi-stakeholder Public Diplomacy Small and Medium Sized States, Norway & Canada Compared*, 2005(available at: <http://www.diplomacy.edu/conferences/msd/papers/batora.pdf> Retrieved: 31/1/2010)
- Ghosh Sucheta, *The Role of India in the Emergence of Bangladesh*, Kolkata, Mohan & Chand, 1974.
- Huda Zeenat, *Problem of National Identity of the Middle class in Bangladesh and State-Satellite Television*, UK, University of Warwick, 2005.
- Imam H.T., *Bangladesh Government, 1971*, Dhaka, Agamee, 2004.
- Indira Gandhi, *India and Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 1972.
- Leonard Mark and Vidhya Alakeson, *Going Public: Diplomacy for the Information Society*, UK, Foreign Policy Centre, 2000.
- Mamun Muntasir and Mahbubar Rahman, *Media and the Liberation War of Bangladesh* Dhaka, Ahanya, 2010
- Manheim Jarol B., *Strategic Public Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994
- Mellison, Jan, *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007

Nye Joseph S., *Soft power: The Means to Success in World Politics* USA, Public Affairs, 2004.

Palit D. K., *The Lightning Campaign*, New Delhi: Thomson, Press, 1972.

Selim Mohammad, *The Liberation War of Bangladesh and the Political Parties of India*, Dhaka, Bangladesh Charcha, 2004.

Sen Udit, *Refugees and the Politics of Nation building in India 1947-1971*, UK, University of Cambridge, 2009 (Unpublished thesis).

Sisson Richard and Leo E Rose, *War and Secession: Pakistan India and Birth of Bangladesh*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990.

Yunus Muhammad and Shamsul Bari (compiled), *Bangladesh Newsletter*, Chicago, Bangladesh Defence League, 1971

Articles/ Journals/Newspapers

John Brown, 'Public diplomacy During the Cold War' in *GJIA*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2005. P.1
Hindustan Standard, May, 1971

Dulal Bhowmik, 'The Contribution of Kolkata University in the Independence War of Bangladesh', in *Bharat Bichitra (The Indian Magazine)* N.9, Dhaka: The Indian High Commission, 2007

Amrita Bazar Patrika (Kolkata), April 27, 1971.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19th April, 1971

Hindustan Standard, 1May, 1971

The Statesman, 1 May 1971.

SOME LIMITS OF UTILITARIAN GENERALIZATION

Dr. Md. Iqbal Shahin Khan*

Abstract

Utilitarian Generalization (UG) is considered as one of the forms of utilitarianism according to which an assumption of hypothetical generalization is drawn in such a way that what would happen if everyone did the same action. It is a shifting process of utilitarian thinking from a particular action to the generalization of everyone concerned with the act. That's why UG is also called extensionally equivalent to act-utilitarianism. Each form of utilitarianism is emerged on the basis of limiting other forms of utilitarianism. The purpose of the paper is to explore the limits of utilitarian generalization. The limits are identified on the whole by analyzing the terms used in understanding UG, relating to pervasiveness of generalization, justice and utility.

Introduction

According to utilitarianism the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by its consequences – in consequence if the action tends to maximize the net overbalancing sum total of pleasure over pain for all parties concerned then the action is good. One of the significant forms of utilitarianism is act-utilitarianism according to which one should always perform that action which will maximize utility, which will produce the greatest overall utility. Utilitarian Generalization is the view that one should act in such a way that could produce the greatest utility if they were generalized (e.g., acted upon by everyone). It is a form of utilitarianism, which emerges to overcome the limits of act-utilitarianism. Sometimes an act- utilitarianism is criticized just because everyone's acting similarly would be bad. What would happen if everyone did the same? Is often used to raise such criticism. This kind of hypothetical question is a generalization test and is called utilitarian generalization (UG) (Lyons, 1965). In other words, utilitarian generalization is one of the several varieties of indirect act evaluation. In this view, the rightness or wrongness of a particular (token) act derives indirectly from its consequences by way of the general practice of that kind of act.

* Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Chittagong.

"Utilitarian generalization begins with the particular action, generalizes to the abstract "what if everyone acted similarly in similar situations?", and then returns to evaluate the particular action through an examination of the generalization." (Holbrook, 1988, p. 32). UG can be meant in a pervasive way emphasizing the comparability of different situations as Regan (1980, p. 94) maintains "An act is right if and only if the consequences of its being performed by the agent and all other agents similarly situated." Our objective in this paper not to explain the understanding or meaning of UG, rather our objective is to explore some limits of UG which are as follows:

Ambiguity in Terminology

The very common slogan of UG is that what would happen if everyone did the same kind of action or same sort of action. There are two important terms in UG such as "everyone" and "that sort of action" which are ambiguous in its meaning. Goldman (1974) raises the questions about their multiple meanings that might be meant in understanding UG. According to him, the term "everyone" could be taken as referring to every moral agent, or everyone involved in a certain practice, or everyone who has the opportunity to perform the act in question. The term everyone is complex, it can be a collective use in which it is replaceable by something like "everyone together" or "everyone at once", and a distributive use in which it is replaceable by any one." (Griffith, 1963 cited in Sobel, 1970). On the other hand, „that sort of action“ might mean, for example, „voting“, or "voting for candidate A", or "voting for candidate A while the majority votes for candidate for candidate B". Goldman adds, "Since the consequences of "everyone"s performing that sort of action" depend on which of these alternatives is chosen, the interpretation of these terms determines the prescriptions generated by UG."

We know that grammatically the terms "everyone" and "that sort of action" are not related to one another. But the terms used in UG formula "everyone" and "that sort of action" cannot be meant separately but they are used conjunctively. In other words, there is a close relationship between these two terms at least in this UG. For the purpose of showing the relationship between "everyone" and "that sort of action" Lyons suggests, "that class of persons, [everyone] each of whom will have occasion to do the sort of thing specified to each of whom such a course of action is or will be practical possibility" (1965, p. 31).

There is one important ambiguity, in the concept of „everyone“ which can be seen in a statement like theft example. Theft can be divided into two types such as theft in general and theft by a poor man from a rich one who illegally earned wealth. Apparently, it seems to us that theft by a poor man from the rich one is harmless and positively good. On the other hand, theft in general is the useful right of property which will be open to frequent invasion. It can be said that if only this class of theft were generally committed, there would be so many of them (other actions) that we could properly speak of thieving (unqualified) as general.

Stout (1954, p. 11) refers to Austin to clarify the concept „everyone“ by the above mentioned theft example. According to him, Austin does not actually distinguish theft in terms of species- genus division. Yet it may be said that this distinction is important both in principle and in practice.

Stout gives an example to show the concept „everyone“ in terms of its distinctive feature. He takes the example of a starving man tempted to steal as the only alternative to dying of hunger. If thefts in these circumstances only were generally committed, they would be so few as not to have the bad effects on the economy and ultimately on general happiness. Moreover, the special nature and urgency of the motive for stealing in such cases is so plainly marked, so clearly comprehensible and so distinct from other motives for stealing, that there is little risk of its weakening the motives that maintain general honesty (Stout, 1954, p.11.).

The terms "everyone" and "that sort of action" are ambiguous. We know that ambiguity in language creates lots of confusion and problem. By using ambiguous terms, UG also faces similar sorts of limitations. By this example given by Stout we can understand that general framework of any action should be clarified. And in this clarification there is a tendency of imposing modification in the generalization framework. Therefore, it becomes a generalization by degeneralization process.

Rhetorical Idea

Sometimes it is claimed that UG cannot be applied in the concrete situation and as a result it becomes a rhetoric idea. According to C. D. Broad (1916), UG can be a false universalization when it is used in the reasonings of daily life. The false universalization is a false hypothesis in which everybody will be forced to act in a certain way. For this reason, according to C. D. Broad, false universalization forces them to assert "the

rightness or wrongness of many of our actions depends on the probable consequences, not of what we judge to be true, but of what we know to be false." (1916).

By this passage, we can understand that UG is compared here with probable consequence in which it is in fact, not possible to evaluate what is right or wrong. C. D. Broad makes understand us that everybody's action in UG principle cannot be assumed by a priori principle and this can be observed by empirical way. And by empirical way one cannot predict incoming all future actions. The argument of UG is that what would happen if everyone or large numbers of people did the same sometimes becomes rhetorical. The reason is that if the argument is ever valid, is subject to great limitation and doubt. C. D. Broad further adds that for ensuring the result of any action one need not multiply results hypothetically and even one can easily overlook to bring the notion of other agents performing precisely similar acts. We may give an example to make understand this. If someone walks through a flower garden and pluck a single flower. Then a question may arise whether this action is right, wrong or indifferent. If the situation becomes different that means: we may imagine that a million people walked through the garden and each plucked a flower, the consequences would be very bad. Someone's walking through may have done no damage whatever, but it would be physically impossible for a million people to walk through without doing grave damage. It is better, therefore, not merely to drop the reference to everybody, but also to drop the reference to agents altogether and to consider nothing but the hypothetical multiplication of results like the result of my action (Broad, 1916. p. 383).

If we want to rescue UG from the deficiency of rhetorical idea, generalization can be looked from two points of view. One is generalization in unlimited sense what we mean it normally. Another is in relevant sense. If we mean generalization in unlimited sense, then it will be in infinite regress and will be mere rhetorical. On the other hand, if it means relevant case, it will not be rhetorical. For this reason, Gruzalski (1982) mentions, "We need some workable notion of what properties are relevant for the description of an act for applications of UG. We will assume that a property is relevant for such applications only if it is a causal property in virtue of which everyone's doing that kind of act will foreseeable produce utility or disutility."

Problems in Relevant Factors

In the just previous section we have mentioned the relevant factor in the application of UG principle to overcome the problem of its rhetorical idea. But the relevant factor can be also another problem in the application of UG. We find two types of problems in relevance factors in applying UG formula. One is contradictory situation and another is an irrelevant causal chain. In the contradictory case, the relevance factor can be explained in two imaginary situations. In one situation everybody acts on the maxim of disregarding the law since its requirements are inconvenient while in another situation obeying the law (e.g., unjust law) by which one's execution is clear violation of justice. Socrates accepts second situation and uses the generalization argument „what if everyone did the same?“ As a result, harmful consequence of Socrates arises although Socrates did not think it as harmful.

If everyone committed a certain act then there might be disastrous consequences. And for this reason one may conclude that to avoid disastrous consequence one has a *prima facie* moral obligation to avoid that certain act. We will have to maintain for example, that there is a *prima facie* obligation not eating dinner at five o'clock, for if everyone did so, certain essential service could not be maintained. And for similar reasons we will have to maintain that there is a *prima facie* obligation not to produce food. So from this example we see that there arises an irrelevant causal chain from everyone's not eating dinner to not producing food. This irrelevant causal chain is mentioned by Cohen (1946, cited in Singer, 1970, chapter, IV): "humanity would probably perish from cold if everyone produced food, and would certainly starve if everyone made clothes or built houses." Singer tries to resolve this problem by *invertible* technique. This technique is that in a case in which the consequences of everyone's acting in a certain way would be undesirable, while the consequences of no one's acting in that way would also be undesirable (Singer, 1970, chapter, IV).

Now the question arises that when a generalization argument becomes invertible or invalid or inapplicable. According to Singer's view, the arguments becomes invertible in the cases of human being's three basic needs such as producing food, making cloths, and building houses. Except these, there are other instances are invertible, particularly to say, coordination problem in a group, generalization argument is incapable of

dealing with many vital questions claimed by Rahman (1999, p. 103). According to him, the universal acceptance of such a principle of generalization argument would paralyse a group and hence affect on the maximization of utility. So we can claim that generalization argument should be applied with care so that it is not ridiculous.

Justice and UG

We may now examine UG from justice perspective especially when it is discovered by Harrison (1953) that Hume's notion of justice is compatible with UG. Especially we get Hume's compatibility of justice with UG from his distinction between benevolence and justice in terms of virtues. About benevolence he notes that "as the good resulting from an act of benevolence is in itself complete and entire, it also excites the moral sentiment of approbation without any reflection on further consequences, and without any more enlarged views of the concurrence or imitation of the other members of the society." (Hardin, 1980), On the contrary, about justice Hume says, "The case is not the same with social virtues of justice and fidelity. They are highly useful, or indeed absolutely necessary to the well-being of mankind; but the benefit resulting from them is not the consequence of every individual single act; but arises from the whole scheme or system concurred in by the whole, or the greater part of the society." (cited in Harrison, 1953, p. 108).

It means that Hume's notion of the good resulting from acts of justice is distinctively different from the consequence of acts of an individual. According to him, justice consists in the general applicability. For example, if either person does not row, the boat will not progress. Hence, the good, which consists in the progress of the boat, requires infallible participation by all concerned (Hume, 1957, 123).

But this conclusion is a consequence of the logic of the number two in this case, and it need not be generalized to the convention of justice in a society of considerably more than two people with hundred of rowers. Justice is not fragile as to fall with a single miscarriage, but it can fall with frequent enough miscarriages (Hardin, 1980). In addition it can be said that if an irregular driver drives his car in the right lane violating the conventional rules, then it will not hamper the safety of his driving, and in consequence, will not affect the violation of justice.

Harrison (1953, pp.111-112) shows that there are some criticisms against Hume's view about the universal application of the notion justice. Firstly, the view that we must be just in this particular case, so that the good consequent upon the practice of justice as a whole should be brought about, is unrealistic. It is simply false that the performance of every just action is necessary if the good produced by the practice of justice is to be secured. If this were true, the human race would have perished miserably many years ago. An occasional act of injustice here and there does not undermine the whole beneficial effect of the practice of justice, and, if such actions are performed in secret, they may sometimes not even produce any harmful effect at all. Here in this point we can say that Harrison mentions another problem relating justice in terms of private morality and public morality. And it is a debatable issue that cannot be settled easily.

Secondly, the view that we must be just, it is our duty to be just and just actions are severely necessary to the production of the good of justice. Our normal view is like these practices of justice. We think that we should not turn aside from justice whenever it seems that an unjust action would produce some good. But on the other hand, we do think that there are occasions on which unjust actions should be performed, because the good to be gained is considerable. But, if the whole of the good consequent upon the practice of justice were dependent upon the performance of just actions in every particular case, it is difficult to believe that the consequences of any individual unjust action, considered in itself, could ever be good enough to justify me in performing it. I must, therefore, apply rules of justice in all circumstances, however trivial, and however great the immediate good to be gained by neglecting them.

Here Harrison takes a circular argument when he connects the concept of justice with another concept „just action.“ Moreover, he also writes about an important dilemma in maintaining justice and good consequence at the same time. We have to preserve justice and good consequence at the same time. But it is not always possible as sometimes just action produces good consequence and sometimes unjust action produces good consequence. This is really a difficult problem to reconcile UG with good consequence.

Disutility of UG

Normally, utilitarian generalization theory is adopted for the purpose of maximizing utility. If a particular action can bring optimal benefit then there is enough reason why this particular action will not be accepted generally. In other words, to say, why everyone will not consider this particular action in general way. The principle that one should perform actions, the general practice of which would be beneficial, is often used as an argument for pacifism, and with some plausibility. If everybody were to refrain participating in wars, there would be no wars; hence it is one's duty to refrain from participating in wars, whether anybody else co-operates with one or not. But the same principle can be used to justify actions, which even a pacifist would condemn. If nobody were to lay violent hands upon the persons of his neighbours, or upon their property, everyone would live in peace with his fellow men and this desirable state of affairs would be in imagination not in practice.

In practice, we see that maintaining UG gives the result of disutility. There are some actions which we think we have a duty to refrain from doing, even though they themselves produce no harmful consequences, because such actions would produce harmful consequences if their performance became the general rule. I think I have a duty to vote for that person whose party I think would govern the nation best, although I do not think that the addition of my vote to the total number of votes which are cast for him is going to make any difference to the result of the election, simply because I realize that, if all his other supporters were to do as I do, and fail to go to the polls, the man would not be elected. I refrain from walking on the grass of a well-kept park lawn, not because I think that my walking on the grass is going to damage the lawn to such an extent as to detract from anybody's pleasure in contemplating it, but because I realize that, if everybody else who walked in the park were to do likewise, the grass in the park would be spoilt. (Harrison, 1953. p. 107)

Harrison's examples above describe the disutility of UG. But we may find different picture also. There are some actions, which we think we have a duty to do, although they themselves produce no good consequences, because such actions would produce good consequences, if they were generally practised. For example, in the election rule of 2008 in Bangladesh there is a provision of „no“ vote if a voter prefers no candidate, then he or she has an option to vote „no“. We may suppose that

all candidates in an electoral constitution are either terror or corrupted. If any of them wins, then the consequences will be bad. So a particular vote to „no“ option cannot bring good consequences, rather if everyone would vote for „no“ option and as a result if „no“ option wins then there will be a possibility of good consequences.

Sometimes it is argued that the lying and promise breaking might be logically possible in community where false promise and lying are universally practised. It can be said that in a universally lying practised society everything will go on as usual like greetings, curses, questions etc. and these will not hamper utility maximization. In this regard, we may say that lying can be practised if lying can be a model or standard, then it will not hamper utility maximization. For example, if all people call book by ball and ball by book, then it will not hamper utility maximization. On the other hand, if lying is practised as inconsistent phenomena then it will be a problem. For example, if sometimes, we call book by ball and sometimes by glass, then it will be a problem.

However, the application of UG principle in practice will not always produce disutility. Instead we see sometimes a utility maximization such as in practising UG, cooperative enterprise and responsibility to others are established. For example¹, the passengers in a life-boat have a collective task. All should cooperate if they are to survive. It follows that everybody has already got the best possible prudential reason to contribute to the cooperative effort. At the same time a kind of duty and responsibility to others grow in this cooperative task.

UG and the Problem of ‘Difference’

Sometimes our single utility question needs a justification and for this justification the UG principle comes. Especially if we would like to do an immoral act then the question arises how far this single utility act is justified through UG principle. There may have two different situations in applying UG formula. One situation is that „What would happen if I do this“ and „What would happen if everyone does this“. The question arises what will be the difference in two situations. These two different situations can be called the problem of difference and this is one of the significant points for the critical examination of UG. Jonathan Glover and M. J. Scott-

¹ This example is taken from Govert den Hartogh: *Mutual Expectations: A Conventionalist Theory of Law*. 2002, p. 74.

Taggart (1975, pp. 171-209) examine this problem of difference in their article "It Makes no Difference whether or not I Do It." They raise the issue in such way, "Sometimes it is said that the only reason why the scientist's claim, that if he does not work on chemical warfare someone else will, seems plausible as a defense is a mistaken concentration on the consequences of the act of a single person. It is suggested that we should not ask „what difference will make if I do this“, but „what difference would it make if everyone did this?“ Here the generalization test is used as an indirect justification of a single person's act. It can be said that the problem of difference can properly be understood by the generalization test.

On the other hand, Lyons thinks that there is no difference between the first question and the second question. In other words, the question relating to single person's act and question relating to UG answer the same but it depends on adequate formulation. We would probably give different answers to the crude question "what if everyone broke his promises?" and to the slightly more subtle question "what if everyone broke his promises when this was necessary to save someone's life?" Lyons argues that utilitarians applying the generalization test has to include in the description of the act all those features that affect the utility of the outcome. So, in the case of the scientist and chemical warfare, we have to ask, not the odd question, "what would happen if all scientists worked on chemical warfare?", but some such complicated question as "what would happen if all those biologists who had these special skills, and who were offered jobs in chemical warfare accepted the jobs in those cases where, if they refused, someone else equally able would accept?" This question is itself no doubt over-simplified, but it seems that the more complete in the relevant respects the description becomes, the closer the generalization test comes to giving the same answer the one gets to the question "what will happen if I do this?" Lyons here reconciles the question relating to single act and the question relating to generalization test by complex way. By this way, his approach is a kind of attempt transforming from abstract generalization to concrete one.

Similarly, Singer (1970) also reconciles two types of principles: one is the principle of the generalization argument and another is the principle of [simple] consequences. According to his principle of generalization argument, if the consequences of A's doing x would be undesirable, then

no one ought to do x , i.e., everyone ought not to do x . On the contrary, his principle of consequences holds that if the consequences of A 's doing x would be undesirable, A ought not to do. Singer claims that above these two principles do not conflict, for the reason that A also is included in the class of „everyone.“

J. H. Sobel (1970) opposes Lyons and Singer's views. According to his view in applying UG it is important to understand other people's behaviour although it is difficult to understand it. If other people's behaviour is not understood, then two above discussed questions will produce different answers. Sobel uses Prisoner's Dilemma type cases (voting case and disarmament case) to show that such restrictions can result in the generalization test sometimes giving different answers from those obtained by the simple question about the consequences of a single person's act.

But there is a difficulty or difference between the generalization test and the outcome of simple consequence. And this difference produces worse result. This is because the features of other people's behaviour that we think insignificant often in fact alter the desirability of the outcome. Sobel's prisoner's dilemma cases briefly discussed by Glover and Scott-Taggart (1975) which are as follows: If I am not allowed to take into account how many other people are voting, the generalization test is likely to tell me to vote at some inconvenience to myself, even where my vote will not influence the outcome. If a nation in a balance of terror situation is not allowed to take into account the predictable response of other nations, the generalization test may tell it to disarm in a situation where the outcome will be that, as the only disarmed nation, it is destroyed. Such acts may be noble, but in selecting for them we have abandoned consequentialism.

The generalization test could only help us and it depends upon two conditions. One condition is that if there were a version of it that would give answers that sometimes differed from those given to the simple test. Similarly, according to another condition, such cases would not generate a worse total outcome. Until such a version has been found that met the above two conditions, the generalization test will not be popular. In other words, UG version ought to bring good consequence and it ought to have a clear demarcation from the single utility question.

Conclusion

In fine, we may say that one can debate whether UG can be considered an independent theory, rather it is a by-product of other theory especially it is argued that UG is somehow related to act-utilitarianism as UG is extensionally equivalent to AU (Act-Utilitarianism) claimed by Lyons. Similarly, there can be given some arguments in favour of showing equivalence relation between RU (Rule-Utilitarianism) and UG especially on the basis of hypothetically assuming any rule in a more general way. However, we have identified some limits such as ambiguity in terms, rhetorical idea, UG and justice, disutility of UG and problem of difference etc. These limits are overlapping to a great extent. Because, in each limit we have pointed out some counter arguments and these counter arguments refer to some kind of problem.

However, there arises a rich argumentative field in this classification which has attracted more attention among moral thinkers or philosophers.

Bibliography

- Broad, C. D. 1916. "On The False Hypothesis in Ethics", *Ethics*. Vol. XXVI, April.
- Cohen, Morris R. 1946. *The Faith of A Liberal*, New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Glover, Jonathan and Scott-Taggart, M. J. 1975. "It Makes no Difference whether or not I Do It," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volumes. Vol. 49.
- Goldman, Holly S. 1974. "David Lyons on Utilitarian Generalization", *Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 26.
- Griffith, Philips A. 1963. "The Generalization Argument: A Reply to Mr. Braybrook", *Analysis*. Vol. 23
- Gruzalski, Bart. 1982. "The Defeat of Utilitarian Generalization", *Ethics*, Vol. 93.
- Hardin, Russell. 1980. "The Emergence of Norms", *Ethics*, Vol. 90
- Harrison, Jonathan. 1953. "Utilitarianism, Universalization, and Our Duty to Be Just", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. Vol. 53.
- Hartogh, Govert den. 2002. *Mutual Expectations: A Conventionist Theory of Law*, Springer Publishers.
- Hartogh, Govert den. 2002. *Mutual Expectations: A Conventionist Theory of Law*, Springer Publishers.
- Holbrook, Daniel. 1988. *Qualitative Utilitarianism*, University Press of America
- Hume, David. 1957. *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. Charles W. Hendel. New York: Liberal Arts Press.
- Lyons, David. 1965. *Forms and Limits of Utilitarianism*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.
- Rahman, Lutfor. 1999. *Cooperative Utilitarianism and Maximizing Group Interest: Suggested Modification*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chittagong.

- Singer, Marcus. 1970. "Generalization in Ethics," In *Readings in Ethical Theory*, ed. Wilfrid Sellars and John Hospers. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Sobel, J. H. 1970 "Generalization Arguments," In *Readings in Ethical Theory*, ed. Wilfrid Sellars and John Hospers. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Sobel, J. H. 1970 "Generalization Arguments," In *Readings in Ethical Theory*, ed. Wilfrid Sellars and John Hospers. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Stout, A. K. 1954. "But Suppose Everyone Did The Same", *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. XXXII. May 1954. No. 1.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION OF BANGLADESH AND ITS SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Milton Kumar Dev^{*}

Introduction

The Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission (RKM) are twin institutions which form the core of the worldwide Ramakrishna Movement, which aims at the harmony of religion, harmony of the East and the West, harmony of the Old and the New and all round progress of human facilities without any distinction of creed, caste, gender, race, religion and nationality.¹ It is known to us that there were several traditional institutions during the colonial rule of the British in Bengal. Among these institutions, the RKM was truly an epoch-making institution. Never before a similar religious institution was established which specially set before itself the task of bringing socio-economic development of the weaker section of the society. So, as an institution the RKM is a phenomenon; but more important than the institution is its motto. The motto of these twin institutions is *Atmano Mokshartham Jagad-hitya cha*² (for one's own salvation and for the good of the world). In Bangladesh, the RKM figures from 1899 when two monks deputed by Swami Vivekananda³ (1863-1902) founded its first centre in Dhaka, Bangladesh.⁴ Vivekananda, a major personality of the nineteenth century, regarded as a cyclonic monk and pioneer reformer who went upto the USA to preach universal humanism, became the centre of all attraction by giving his stunning speech in the Parliament of Religions, which took place in 1893 at Chicago. The RKM is named after Sri Ramakrishna⁵ (1836-1886), the great nineteenth century saint of Bengal who is regarded as the Master of the Modern Age.

The ideology of the RKM finds expression through their multifarious services. These services cover different areas of human need and social welfare such as education, health, rural development, self employment, women's welfare, interfaith understanding, moral life, and relief to victims of calamities.⁶ All these activities are conducted as service, in the spirit of : 'serve humans as the embodiment of the Almighty'.⁷ It is worth

^{*} Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Dhaka.

mentioning that in Bangladesh, one of the foremost movements in breaking the caste system and educating the downtrodden was the Ramakrishna Movement (or Vedanata Movement). RKM has 187 centres functioning in different parts of the world to carry on its work for the cause of humanity.⁸ In Bangladesh, there are 15 affiliated centres serving to promote education, religion and humanity.⁹

The RKM bases its teaching on Vedanta which preaches – ‘Each soul is potentially divine’ and the divinity may be manifested through unselfish service. In the RKM, service is not restricted to a particular type of activity conducted at a particular time, but is a way of life. The monks, lay devotees and other aspirants take part in the services rendered by the RKM.

Services in Education

In Bangladesh, the RKM has been rendering services for 119 years and its contribution in the field of education is a remarkable one. The RKM is conducting extensive educational services such as operation of schools, computer centers, orphanages and student’s home etc.¹⁰ We are all aware of the inadequacy of the present-day system of education. Educationists – Eastern and Western are engaged for decades, in devising better methods of imparting knowledge and improving the morale of the student community. Despite their best efforts, we are, unfortunately left in the same deplorable condition as we were before, and much worse, as it is generally felt, there is a growing degeneration. If modern civilization has failed us in any domain, it is, without doubt, in the arena of producing human beings of sterling character. There has been little study on how to improve the quality of human beings who form the components of society. Professionals like engineers, doctors, architects, managers, researchers, and such others are trained or programmed in educational institutions. Similarly, is there a way of bringing out human beings with noble character? The answer is in the affirmative, if one recalls the educational thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and follows the educational system of the RKM, which is the efflorescence of moral and spiritual culture.

RKM and the meaning of Education

It is known to us that, the method and process by which knowledge is traditionally acquired by a disciple from a teacher is called education. We all know, the main cause of misery is ignorance. Ignorance is proverbially

figured as darkness, and knowledge as light. The light of knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance. RKM's aim in operating and starting various educational institutions to teach the so-called secular subjects like modern science, arts, etc. on the one hand, and the so-called spiritual subjects like the Upanishads, Vedic literature, etc. on other, was to create a complete human being, all-round and fully developed in the three 'h' s – heart, head, and hand. The entire history of the RKM's educational endeavor should be studied and comprehended against this idea of Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda contributed valuable thoughts on education that are relevant and viable today. In order to understand his thoughts, we should first consider his oft-quoted definition of education, "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man".¹¹ This definition of education is one of remarkable insights. First of all, the word 'manifestation' implies that something that already exists and is waiting to be expressed. The main focus in learning is to make the hidden ability of a learner manifest. As Vivekananda said, "What a man 'learns' is really what he 'discovers,' by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge".¹² According to Vedanta philosophy, knowledge is inherent in a human being, like a spark in a piece of flint, and all that is needed is the strike of suggestion to bring it out. 'Manifestation' indicates spontaneous growth, provided the impediments, if any, are removed.

Next in importance in Vivekananda's definition of education is the expression 'already in man'. This refers to a human beings potential, which is the range of the abilities and talents, known or unknown that he is born with. 'Potential' speaks of the possibility of awakening something that is lying dormant. The word 'perfection' in the Swamiji's definition of education is also very significant. We can see that every act connected with learning, training, etc., is part of process directed towards an end. The english word 'perfect implies completion, or something being made whole. The Greek word *telic* is translated as 'perfect', and suggest the idea of attaining a goal or an end. Drawing on these meanings, one may conclude that perfection in the educational parlance is the goal of actualizing the highest human potential.

Types of Educational Institutions operated by the RKM

The following are the major types of institutions started at different times during the 119 years of Ramakrishna Mission's existence in Bangladesh to actualize Swamiji's educational vision as described above :

1. Schools : pre-primary, primary and secondary levels imparting general education.
2. Sanskrit Schools : imparting knowledge of the Sanskrit language and literature at the secondary level.
3. Junior technical schools : imparting technical and vocational education at the secondary level.
4. Polytechnics : imparting technical education in various branches of engineering.
5. Student's Homes and Hostels : attached to residential schools/institutes run by the RKM as well as by others, attempted to be model on the *guru-griha-vasa* system.
6. Orphanages : housing destitute children and grown-up students, attempted to be modeled on the *guru-griha-vasa* system.
7. Computer Training Centers : imparting computer education and training to school and college students.
8. Rural Developments/Social Workers' Training Institutes : imparting education for rural development work.
9. Non-formal Education Centers : imparting literacy and adult education.¹³

A few thousands of students (children, men, women) are being benefited every year through a few hundred institutions belonging to the above mentioned categories. The main inspiration behind all of these is the educational vision of Swami Vivekananda. It is notable to mention that one of the main characteristics of the RKM institutions, is the active involvement and dedicated service of a large number of the monks, devotees and other aspirants of the Ramakrishna Order.

RKM and the Aim of Education

RKM believes that the aim of education in general or ultimate – is essentially laid down by society and varies from society to society. Even as every society tries to keep pace with the contemporary world, societies with a stable and older tradition cherish some higher goals of everlasting value. About the aim of education Swami Vivekananda said,

The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion – is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs.¹⁴

Education, he said must provide “life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas”.¹⁵ The ideal of this type of education would be to produce an integrated person – one who has learned how to improve his intellect, purify his emotions, and stand firm on moral virtues and unselfishness. As an institution the RKM is concurred with contemporary thinkers when it asserted that the mind – the chief instrument of learning – deserves more attention than it had earlier received. Training the mind should be a student’s highest priority, and not simply the accumulation, the memorizing and the repeating of facts. Yet training of the mind in all its aspects is conspicuously absent in today’s education. Learning to concentrate the mind is the focus in the RKM’s scheme. And Vivekananda said, “To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts.”¹⁶ The RKM expects that the education system should be suitably designed to produce such wholesome human beings. Interestingly, the UNESCO report *learning to be* published in 1972, while defining the aim of education, echoed this same idea. It reads, “The physical, the intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of the individual into a complete man is a broad definition of the fundamental aim of education.”¹⁷

RKM and Value-oriented education

A major personality of the RKM, Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that *manush* need to become *man-hush*, - that is, a man needs to become a true man. ‘He alone is a man’, he said, ‘whose spiritual consciousness has been awakened.’¹⁸ Following Ramakrishna, Vivekananda emphasized that the ideal of all education, all training should be this man-making. Lamenting over the prevailing system of education, he said, “... we are always trying to polish up the outside. What use is polishing up the outside when there is no inside? The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow.”¹⁹

Modern education, which is, more or less, career-oriented, cares little for the cultivation of moral values or the formation of character. It does not teach self-control, or how to be in harmony with friends, colleagues or neighbors. Moreover, it does not emphasise respect for teachers or elders, as it was done in the traditional system. What use is the high position if a doctor, engineer, teacher, technocrat, or some other, disrespects his parents or leaves them to spend the evening of their lives in an old-age home, or under the tutelage of a governess? Increase in the number of old-age

homes in the country shows that parents are no more cared for, going counter to the teaching found in the holy book *Upanishad*, which says, consider your mother as god, consider your father as god.

Character-building is fundamental in RKM's educational scheme, as against career-orientation, which occupies stage in today's education. A person is what his thoughts have made him. Explaining this the Swamiji said, "Each thought is a little hammer blow on the lump of iron which our bodies are, manufacturing out of it what we want it to be".²⁰ That is why one finds that the focus of the RKM's educational programmes was on assimilation of man-making, character-building ideas. Character-building education might focus on teaching what is right and what is wrong. But simultaneously, or alternatively it should teach how to decide what is right and what is wrong. It has been rightly argued that participation in discussion of morality is more instructive than simply hearing about it. In any case, teachers should be moral exemplars if the classroom and the school are to serve as arenas for the teaching of ethics. The students then have the experience of being part of a group of people who take moral values seriously, and this helps them imbibe moral values spontaneously.

In recent times RKM centres, specially its Dhaka centre has organised several value oriented education seminars, where educationist and faculty of University of Dhaka took part to deliver their thoughts for the cause of student community. Nowadays all the centres of the RKM in Bangladesh are putting emphasis on value-oriented education or moral education to create true human beings. Because today human beings, the key component of society, are hardly human in nature. No doubt the present education system has overemphasized the cultivation of the intellect at the cost of the general well-being of humanity and to check this dangerous trend Vivekananda strongly recommended all-round progress of human faculties. In one of his lectures he expressed the desire, "that all men were so constituted that in their minds all these elements of philosophy, mysticism, emotion and of work were equally present in full! That is the ideal, my ideal of a perfect man."²¹

So, RKM is trying to produce true human beings by ensuring character-building education. It will be no odd to say that most students have taken to 'Hello-Hi' culture under western influence, neglecting the traditional salutations like *assalamu alaikum* or *namaskar*. RKM is pointing that without being trained in the art of *viveka* (sense of discrimination between

right and wrong), students are unable to make right choices when they use social networking sites. And without denying the positive impact of IT revolution in all walks of life, it may be argued at the same time that the flood of information on internet has diluted originality; many students succumb to cut and paste method to prepare their assignments. In such a disheartening milieu RKM's view on education come to our rescue, to take education to its ideal state.

Religious education and the RKM

Harmony of religions is a living tradition in the teaching of RKM. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda's principles of harmony are being put into practice in 15 affiliated centres and more than 85 non-affiliated centres of the RKM in Bangladesh. When Swami Vivekananda described religions as "the innermost core of education",²² he referred to its quintessential elements – universal love, purity, freedom, manliness, and selflessness. He wanted religion to serve the noble cause of making everyone pious. Religion, he said, is "the idea which is raising the brute unto man, and a man unto god".²³ By religion, he did not mean any particular sect or dogma but the eternal principles of truth and virtue which lie at the root of all faiths, and which are essential for the spiritual regeneration of humankind. His concept of religion was based on faith – faith in oneself before having faith in God.

RKM, founded by Swami Vivekananda believes that religious education could be greatly useful for inculcating moral values among students, and for making them realise that all life is one. Religion could teach them the art and science of living, and bring them into contact with prophets, mystics, saints, and other great men, who led a selfless life. Evolved souls epitomise lofty ideals which can transform society. If students can hold on to an ideal of their choice, their personality would change for the better. Harmony of religions finds expression in the RKM in several ways, some of which are discussed below. In the first place, the RKM's educational institution admits students belonging to different religions, castes and races. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews and Buddhists, hailing from different parts of the country, study together in mutual love and cooperation like children of the same parents in the educational institutions of RKM.

In all the centres of the RKM the birthdays of the great founders of world religions are celebrated. Novices of the RKM are taught comparative religion and the scriptures of different religions. The students of the RKM institutions have all the freedom to study and derive benefit from the teachings of the saints and sages of all religion. With a view to developing the human inner faculties more stress has been given here to the study of scriptures, practice of various spiritual disciplines, meditation, chanting hymns, prayers etc. everyday. Discourses, seminars and talks on moral values, philosophy and religion held regularly in the campus of the RKM. Scholars of different faiths take part in all these programmes to exchange their views about Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Jesus Christ, Gautam Buddha, Sri Chaitanya and Sri Krishna and other great souls. Besides observance of the birth anniversaries of the Holy Trinity, Nabi-day, Christmas Eve, Buddha Purnima and Puja are arranged throughout the year.²⁴ Furthermore, speaking ill of other religions and religious leaders by the student is not allowed within the bounds of the RKM. Organizing youth convention and interfaith conferences in which student representatives of different religions speak about their own religions is another way RKM promotes the ideal of harmony of religious.

In recent times, it is proved that true religious education could further empower the inner personality of students by developing their hearts, not of course in medical sense, but by instilling into them the feelings of love and compassion for others. And here we recall the social overtone in Vivekananda's concept of religion which distinguishes him from the other nineteenth century thinkers. He once wrote, "I do not believe in a god or a religion which cannot wipe the widows' tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth."²⁵ Through education he wanted to sensitise the youth about the problems facing mankind and to prepare them for leadership roles for bringing about social change. He was not unaware that religious fanaticism, born of narrow outlook, had resulted in conflicts and wars throughout history. Yet he felt that mankind needs to be taught that "religions are but the varied expressions of the RELIGION, which is Oneness."²⁶

Owing to various causes such as the influence of mass media, globalization, the presence of large religious minorities, etc., there is now a growing awareness of the importance of following a pluralistic approach to religion and culture. Modern youths need to develop a true-multi religious,

multi-cultural and even a multinational outlook. The practice of harmony of religions in the RKM has nothing to do with these recent trends. Because, it has been in vogue in the RKM of Bangladesh for more than one hundred years.

Women's Education and the RKM

The RKM regards women as the embodiment of *Shakti* (Power), the Primordial energy of the universe. Swami Vivekananda believed that women could excel in all fields of human activity if treated on par with men and given proper education and training. He further held that they were equally competent to take up intellectual pursuits. In this respect, he questioned the conservatives thus, "In what scripture do you find statements that women are not competent for knowledge and devotion?"²⁷ He wanted to create a class of celibate women, brahmcharinis, who would be instrumental in spreading education among girls. Vivekananda was opposed to such social customs as *sati*, infanticide, child marriage, and the confinement of women at homes. His concept of emancipation of women through education was based on spiritual and social principles. Following the instruction of Swamiji, the women devotees of the RKM in Bangladesh established two *Ashrama* at Sylhet and Khulna after the name of Holy Mother Saradadevi.²⁸ Besides, an association named Sarada Sangha is formed at Dhaka.²⁹ These institutions are working to preach child education and recently a school named *Sarada Sishu Niketon* has started in Dhaka.³⁰ These organizations are operating scholarship schemes for children and working to create women awareness in Bangladesh.

Vivekananda Educational and Cultural Centre

Another institution which bears the stamp of Swami Vivekananda's inspiration is Vivekananda educational and cultural centre, (*Vivekananda Shiksha O Sanskriti Parishad*) Bangladesh. Essentially it is an organization catering to the educational and cultural needs of the student community of Bangladesh. Swami Vivekananda says, "Our life is ephemeral but our souls permanent and when death is must, then come and keep your trace in this transient world. Come and be a real man. Do you love mankind? Then come to be honest and try hard to be sublime." "Responding to this call and being inspired by the then head of RKM, Dhaka Swami Aksharananda, *Vivekananda Shiksha O Sanskriti Parishad* (VSSP) started its journey with

its noble motto ‘Service to the mankind is service to God’ and now to stay beside the oppressed and deprived people. It was established at the instance of some senior students of Dhaka University on 1st December 1989.³¹ The VSSP operates its activities among students and distressed people irrespective of cast, religion and nation.

Ideals and objective of VSSP

1. To build up oneself in accordance with the ideals ‘service to all recognizing as manifestation of God’ of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.
2. To accelerate the consciousness of education and culture among the youth to promote humanity and providing necessary co-operations in this regard.
3. To provide financial aid to poor but meritorious and physically challenged students.
4. To promote education through library and providing literacy to illiterate.
5. To take active part in the service of distressed humanity and medical help for the poor patients.
6. To show due respect to every religions and religious preacher and following the doctrine of fraternity and peaceful coexistence in this regard.
7. To regulate activities for the expansion of the organization in line with its ideals and motto.
8. This organization is completely nonpolitical, so it will refrain itself from taking part in the programme of any particular community or denomination for exacting their claim.³²

Vivekananda History Fund (VHF), Dhaka University

‘Vivekananda History Fund’ was established in the Department of History, Dhaka University on 8 November 2017.³³ RKM, Dhaka in Association with the Vivekananda Study and Philanthropic Centre, USA donated 10 lac Taka to establish this fund. A seven-member committee works to operate aims and objectives of this fund. The salient features of this fund is to provide ‘Vivekananda Educational Stipend’ to the needy students of the department of History. Besides, this VHF organised ‘Vivekananda Memorial Lecture’ every year to focus on Swami Vivekananda’s secular perspective in understanding the religious, social, cultural and educational issues of South Asian studies with an emphasis on Bangladesh society.

RKM's First Educational Service in Bangladesh

RKM's educational services in Bangladesh has a long and checkquered history and in places like Dhaka, Habiganj, Barisal, Sylhet, etc., deserve a mention here. The works of the pioneers at this places are now history, about which the present generation has little knowledge. We came to know that Gauri Ma, a saintly woman – disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, visited Habiganj in 1914 and granted *mantra-diksha* to a few devotees. Inspired by her, many devotes then started a *Sri Ramakrishna Seva Samity* at Habiganj.³⁴ Even before the Samity was started, some of the youths of Habiganj village had begun service activities for the illiterate cobbler folk. In this the pioneer was Yogesh Chandra Datta, who later become Swami Ashokananda and headed the Mission's Northern California Centre for a long time. He was then highly regarded for his intellectual and spiritual attainments. This Band of dedicated young men started a literary campaign in the village with a night school. With the help of a lantern they used to go from house to house in cobbler colony and literally catch hold of the slum children and bring them to school to study.³⁵ From Habiganj, these young man used to cross the river *Khoyai* to go to *Gosainnagar* village in the evenings to conduct their coaching classes. When the boat service used to be suspended during the rainy season on account of flood-fides, these young men would swim across the river. In later days, the monks of the RKM used to do the same.

Table 1.1: RKM's Educational Service in Bangladesh

Institutions	No. of Units	No of Students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
Junior High School				
Dhaka	1	327		
Dinajpur	1	97	96	193
Junior Basic/P. School				
Faridpur and Dinajpur	2	80	71	151
Hostels/Students Home				
Dhaka, Bagerhat, Barishal, Chittagong, Comilla, Dinajpur, Faridpur, Narayangonj and Sylhet	11	584		584
Orphanages				

Comilla	1	70	70	70
Chauspathis				
Faridpur	1	73	73	73
Vocational Training Centres				
Bagerhat and Narayanganj	2	80		80
Computer Training Centre				
Cultural Centre				
Dhaka and Dinajpur	2	60	30	90
Public Library and Reading Room				
Dhaka, Bagerhat, Barishal, Baliati, Chittagong, Comilla, Dinajpur, Faridpur, Habiganj, Mymensingh, Narayanganj and Sylhet	12			

Source: Swami Atmapriyananda, (ed.) *Ramakrishna Mission: A Saga of Service*, 2010, pp. 202-203.

RKM Sangskriti Bhavan, Dhaka

On the cultural side of the RKM's activities, a pride of place is occupied by the RKM *Sangskriti Bhavan* at Dhaka. The pioneer of this project was Swami Akshwarananda, a monk of originality and vision. From its modest beginning, it has come a long way and has now grown into an important centre for learning and research. It was created to actualize Swamiji's vision of combining the best elements of Eastern and Western cultures by making scholars of both the worlds come together in friendly exchange of views. This centre also seeks to educate the younger generation on the glorious spiritual and cultural heritage of Bengal. Its computerized library, having nearly one lakhs books and more than one-hundred periodicals is one of the richest and most modern in Bangladesh. The guest house accommodates scholars and guests from several countries, who come to Bangladesh to study Bengali culture and spirituality. Seminars, symposia and lectures on various topics relating to culture, history, religion and spirituality from the main fabric of the RKM institute's life.

Table 1.2: List of Educational Institutions of RKM in Bangladesh as in the Year

Sl.	Name of the Institution	Place	Name of the Activity	Year of Starting
1	Ramakrishna Math and Mission	Dhaka	School	1899
2	Ramakrishna Mission	Barishal	Students' Home	1904
3	Ramakrishna Mission	Barishal	Students' Home	1911
4	Ramakrishna Mission	Dhaka	Jr. High School, vocational	1914
5	Ramakrishna Ashrama & Seva Samity	Sylhet	Students' Home	1916
6	Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama	Faridpur	Students' Home	1921
7	Ramakrishna Ashrama and Mission Seva Samity	Habiganj	Students' Home	1921
8	Ramakrishna Ashrama	Mymensingh	Students' Home	1921
9	Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama	Dinajpur	Students' Home	1923
10	Ramakrishna Ashrama	Bagerhat	Students' Home	1926

Source: Swami Atmapriyananda (ed.), *Ramakrishna Mission: A Saga of Service*, 2010, pp. 301-302.

The educational services rendered by the RKM, is going on and growing steadily in size. There is great public appreciation of the work. There is also tremendous demand for more institutions, more schools, colleges, students' home, hostels and so on.

RKM, a publisher

The RKM now rank one of the publishers of books in Bangladesh. Three of its most important publishing centres are: Dhaka RKM, Sylhet RKM, and Chittagong RKM. However, the status of the RKM as a publisher

should be judged not merely by the number of volumes or the amount of money realized through the sale of books, but by the intellectual, moral and spiritual quality of the books and the beneficial effect they produce on the minds of people. Through its books the RKM disseminates some of the highest and noblest ideals and ideas of the Modern World. ‘A good book is the precious lifeblood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life’ – this famous statement of Milton is literally true of the books published by the RKM. Since its books are published without any commercial motive, they are priced very low. In recent years books have become very expensive, beyond the reach of the common people. By keeping the price of books low, often by subsidizing them, the RKM make quality books available to people all over Bangladesh. A new encouraging trend as regards Ramakrishna – Vivekananda literature has helped immensely in the propagation of RKM’s ideology. A few publishers have started publishing some selected books at highly subsidized rates so that even an ordinary person can afford to buy them. Also, more and more organizations are making gifts of books on RKM’s ideology to their friends. The Dhaka RKM centre has started distributing books free of charge among students and teachers. During the seminar on value-oriented education, the RKM centre of Dhaka took the initiative in publishing books on Vivekananda and morality. Two books named *Biswavivek Vivekananda* and *Noitikota* (in Bengali) were distributed among the students and teachers when this humble researcher read main article in a seminar held on 2 December 2017 at Dhaka RKM. The programme has received an overwhelming response. Thus a great enthusiasm and awakening was generated in the educational institutions by the distribution of such books. Such attempts, if made on a regular basis, will go a long way in spreading the RKM’s ideology and in uplifting humanity as regards the quality of life.

Salient Features of the RKM’s Books

1. It is non-sectarian, nonpolitical in nature, and negative ideas against any religion or sect or community are not projected in this literature.
2. It has maintained high standards in terms of language as well as literary value. Some of the books are prescribed as textbooks. In a reference book of Dhaka University, *The Philosophers of Bengal*, the author Professor Aminul Islam, former Dean, Faculty of Arts, has introduced a chapter on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.
3. It is equally appealing to the intellectuals as well as the masses.

4. Authenticity is given an important place in the literature. Only authentic material is published in books and journals published by the RKM. Miracle mongering, stories based on hearsay, etc., are avoided.
5. The span of Ramakrishna – Vivekananda literature is very wide. It covers a wide range of subjects including history, philosophy, religion, psychology, self-development, mysticism, etc.
6. Even though it is firmly founded on ancient knowledge and wisdom, it is modernistic in approach.

Table 1.3 : Survey of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Book (RVB)

Summary of RVB published by the major publication centres of RKM as in the year 2015

Sl.	Name of the Publication Centre	No. of Titles	Language	Remarks
1.	Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission Dhaka, Bangladesh	20	English-16, Bengali-4	First title published: <i>The Philosophy of Vivekananda and Future of man</i> by G. C. Dev in 1963.
2.	Ramakrishna Math, Udbodhan, Calcutta	433	English-14, Bengali-416, Hindi-3,	First title published: <i>Ramakrishna</i> (Bengali) in 1899. Popular Books: 1. <i>Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> (Bengali). 2. <i>C. W. of Sw. Vivekananda</i> (Bengali).
3.	Institute of Culture, Golpark, Calcutta	132	English-98, Bengali-31, Hindi-2, Oriya-1	First title published – <i>Sri Ramakrishna and Spiritual Renaissance</i> in 1940. Popular Books: 1. <i>Cultural Heritage of India</i> (6 Vols). 2. <i>Shatarupe Sarada</i> (Bengali).

Sl.	Name of the Publication Centre	No. of Titles	Language	Remarks
				3. <i>Chinanayak Vivekananda</i> (Bengali).
4.	Sir Ramakrishna Math, Madras	838	English-292, Tamil-333 Telugu196, Sanskrit-17	First title published: <i>Inspired Talks</i> in 1908 Popular Books: 1. <i>Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> (Eng). 2. <i>Sri Ramakrishna Upadesh Mozighal</i> (Tamil). 3. <i>C. W. of Sw, Vivekananda</i> (Tamil) 16 Vols. 4. <i>C. W. of Sw, Vivekananda</i> (Telugu) 10 Vols.
5.	Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore	82	English-54, Sanskrit-5, Kannada-23	First title published: <i>Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> (Kannada) in 1925. Popular Books: <i>Secret of Concentration</i> (English)
6.	Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur (W.B)	82	English-7, Bengali-140	First title published: <i>Ma Sarada Devi</i> (Bengali).
7.	Vedanata Society of New York, USA	45	Englis-45	Early Books: <i>Vedanta Philosophy</i> by Sw. Vivekananda. The Real and Apparent Man by Sw. Vivekananda and Spiritual Unfoldment by Sw. Vivekananda published in 1901. Baker & Taylor Co. started publishing many books of Sw. Vivekananda before Vedanata Society started doing do.
8.	Vedanata Society of Northern California, USA	17	Englis-17	Early Books: <i>Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> in 1912. Book edited by this centre but published from Advaita

Sl.	Name of the Publication Centre	No. of Titles	Language	Remarks
				Ashrama have not been included, eg. <i>Swami Vivekananda in the West. New Discoveries</i> (6 Vols.) by Marie Louise Burke.
9.	Vedanata Society of St. Louis, USA	13	Englis-13	Books edited by this centre but published from Advaita Ashrama have not been included. Early Books: <i>Ethos and Religion</i> in 1942.
10.	Vedanata Society of Southern California, USA	12	Englis-12	Popular Books: <i>Vedanata-Voice of Freedom</i> by Sw. Chetananda.
11.	Ramakrishna Vedanata Centre, UK.	7	English-7	<i>Women Saints of East & West</i> published in 1955.
12.	Nippon Vedanta Kyokai, Japan	26	Japanese-19	Early Books: <i>Selected Verses of Sw. Vivekananda</i> (Japanese) in 1962. Popular Books: <i>Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> (Japanese).
13.	Ramakrishna Ashrama, Argenina	26	Spanish-26	Early Books: <i>Conferencias de 1934</i> by Swami Vijayananda in 1935 Popular Books: <i>Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> (Spanish).
14.	Centre Vedantique Ramakrichna, Gretz France.	15	French-15	(no details)
15.	Advaita Ashrama, Cralcutta	283	English-182, Hindi-53 Nepal-2, English-Sanskrit-46	Early Books- <i>The Atman</i> in 1905. <i>C. W. of Sw. Vivekananda</i> (Eng) in 1907. 1. <i>Selections from C. W. of Sw Vivekananda</i> (Eng). 2. <i>Sw Vivekananda – His</i>

Sl.	Name of the Publication Centre	No. of Titles	Language	Remarks
				call to the Nation. 3. <i>Mind and its Control.</i> 4. <i>Will Power & Its Development.</i> 5. <i>Thoughts of Power.</i>

Source: Swami Lokeshwarananda (ed.), *The Story of Ramakrishna Mission*, 2006, pp. 782-797

Conclusion

In Bangladesh and all over the world, The RKM, being a spiritual *sangha* and a service centre aiming at the ‘total uplift of humanity’, has proved itself during the last 119 years by its noteworthy contributions to humanity at all levels. Now the RKM has stepped into the 21st century is in urgent need of an institution which is capable of instilling higher values of life in people from all walks of life, from the poorest to the richest, without being dogmatic and sectarian in nature, and which will be capable of giving wisdom, strength and peace of mind to all. We have already entered the new millennium. People of this new era are looking for global values, a global religion and a global civilization. RKM’s teaching of character-making and man-making education, and universal love have the potential to usher us into a new civilization in this 21st century. Besides, the RKM, as an institution, as I firmly believe, added a dimension to the present day democratic discourse. Democracy is all about pluralism in all spheres of life. Much has been talked about and written for political pluralism as an element of democratization. But nothing or little has so far been said of religious pluralism as another element in the democratization process. But RKM has provided the recipe for religious pluralism by highlighting the truth *jato mat tato path* – so many paths as there are views. To say that this was only a recipe for religious harmony would be doing an inadequate justice to these two proponents of extraordinary perception and farsightness bearing on the issues and problems of the contemporary world. RKM concentrated on and addressed the roots of human conflicts, and sought elimination of which through its empirically deduced truth common to all. RKM’s services and recipe in Bangladesh awaits proper attention and consideration. But as it becomes obvious that the *Seva-*

Dharma (service) of RKM has ample indications for how to achieve interfaith harmony, and which pre-date the recent such endeavours; it is worth mentioning that its teachings and preaching provide a strong antidote to Samuel Huntington's Cassandra like prognosis of a 'Clash of Civilization'. At present, In Bangladesh and all over the world, RKM is growing and expanding rapidly (total 221 centres). It is rendering services for the cause of the distressed and deprived.

Notes and References

1. *The General Report of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission* for the year 2012, Howrah, West Bengal, p. 1 [Henceforth the General Report].
2. *The General Report*, 2012, p. 11.
3. Swami Vivekananda was Sri Ramakrishna's most prominent disciple and the architect of the RKM. He became more widely known for his attempts to defend Hindu ideas and universal humanism in west.
4. East Bengal was a low lying riverined land in South Asia. With its coastline on the Bay of Bengal, it bordered India and Burma. With the decolonization in 1947, India was divided and East Bengal became a part of Pakistan. In December 1971, at the height of the freedom movement for the regional autonomy against the Pakistani military regime, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Father of the Nation, Bangladesh) declared that hereafter the Eastern region of Pakistan would be called Bangladesh instead of East Pakistan. Finally, because of the discriminatory policy of the West of Pakistan, East Pakistan fought a liberation War in 1971 and became Bangladesh.
5. The name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa has become associated with a message of tolerance towards all religions. A Bengali rural brahman and religious ecstatic devoted to Kali, Ramakrishna gathered a core of young disciples and urban householders as disciples. After his death, these followers under the leadership of Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Math and Mission to perpetuate a philosophy of service to humanity and tolerance of all religions.
6. *Activities of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission*, Office of Secretary (Dhaka: Ramakrishna Mission, 2016), p. 2. [Henceforth *Activities of RKM*]
7. *Uddipan*, Sri Ramkrishna Temple Consecration Ceremony Commemorative Volume (Dhaka: RKM, 2007), p. 185.
8. *Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, their History, Ideals and Activities*, Office of General Secretary (W.B, India: 2014), p. 3. [Hereafter *Ideals and Activities*]
9. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
10. *Interview* with Swami Dhruveshananda, the Secretary, Dhaka Ramakrishna Mission, August, 20, 2015
11. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 1993), Vol. 2. [Henceforth CWSV]
12. *Ibid*, Vol. 1, p. 28.
13. Swami Atmapriyananda (ed.), *Ramakrishna Mission: A Saga of Service* (Kolkata: Belur Math, 2010), pp.273-274.
14. CWSV, Vol. 7, pp.147-148.

15. *Ibid*, Vol. 3, p. 302.
16. *Ibid*, Vol. 6, p. 38.
17. Edgar Faure, et. al., *Learning to be* (Paris: UNESCO, 1972), p. 156.
18. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Chennai: RKM), p. 851. [Hereafter *The Gospel*]
19. CWSV, Vol. 2, p. 15.
20. *Ibid*, Vol. 7, p. 20.
21. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, p. 388.
22. CWSV, Vol. 5, p. 231.
23. *Ibid*, Vol. 5, p. 50.
24. *Activities of RKM*, (Dhaka: 2016), p. 3.
25. CWSV, Vol. 5, p. 50.
26. *Ibid*, Vol. 6, p. 410.
27. *Ibid*, Vol. 6, p. 489.
28. *Interview* with Brahmacharini Srabanti, the Principal, Sri Ma Sarada Ashrama, Khulna, May, 14, 2015.
29. *Shaswati*, a yearly periodical of Sarada Sangha, Dhaka (Dhaka: Published by the President, Sarada Sangha, 2017), p. 4.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
31. *Gandip*, a yearly periodical of Vivekananda Shiksha O Sangskriti Parishad, Bangladesh, (Dhaka: VSSP, 2007), p. 3.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
33. Agreement, office of the Chairman, Department of History, University of Dhaka.
34. Swami Atmapriyananda (ed.) *op. cit.*, p. 287.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

LIVES ON THE MOVE: LANGUAGE SHIFT AND MIGRATION EXPERIENCE OF THE GAROS IN DHAKA CITY

Syeda Afsana Ferdousi^{*}

Abstract

The paper explores the situation of Garo language through assessing its vitality and endangerment particularly among the urban migrants of Garo ethnic community. Linguists and anthropologists are concerned about the massive silencing of linguistic diversity on every continent. Language endangerment of minority ethnic groups in Bangladesh is an outcome of complex internal forces (e.g. community's negative attitude towards its own language) and external forces (e.g. economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation), while the internal pressures often have their source in external ones. Similarly, the Garo language is on the verge of extinction in the upcoming days primarily because the language-speakers are currently using the language in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and also hesitant to pass it on from one generation to the next. Many of the Garo respondents of this research tend to abandon their language and culture in hopes of overcoming discrimination, to secure a livelihood, and enhance social mobility, or to assimilate with the global marketplace. Finally, the paper calls for recognizing the importance of documenting endangered languages of small ethnic communities and preserving various aspects of their languages and cultures for promoting and protecting linguistic diversity in Bangladesh.

1. Issues and Concerns

A language is endangered when it is on a path toward extinction. This paper came out of my M.Phil. thesis, which makes the point that the Garo language is under threat of being extinct in the upcoming days primarily because the language-speakers are currently using the language in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and also hesitant

^{*} Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Information Technology and Sciences (UITS).

to pass it on from one generation to the next (Ferdousi, 2021). This Garo language scenario largely reflects the global situation of the endangered languages which are mostly spoken by minorities and indigenous peoples. People learn and transmit their culture through language. Language reflects various aspects of community's life such as arts, beliefs, thoughts, emotions, values, ideas and others. Bangladesh as a country of cultural, ethnic and language diversities, has about 40 ethnic communities, which constitute a little more than 1 percent of its' total population (Shafie, 2000). Many of these ethnic communities have their own languages or dialects belonging to the 4 major language families of the world with or without own scripts. This linguistic diversity in Bangladesh is under threat of being replaced by dominant languages like Bangla and English. This paper explores the situation of Garo language through assessing its vitality and endangerment particularly among the urban migrants of Garo ethnic community. This paper sheds lights on the importance of documenting endangered languages of small ethnic communities and preserving various aspects of their languages and cultures for promoting and protecting linguistic diversity in Bangladesh.

Globally, it is estimated that between 6,000 and 7,000 languages are currently spoken worldwide, of which approximately half, if not more, will disappear by the end of this century because 50 percent of these languages are losing speakers (Jones, 2013; Quattrini, 2019). About 97 percent of the world's people speak about 4 percent of the world's languages; and conversely, about 96 percent of the world's languages are spoken by about 3 percent of the world's people (Jones, 2013). Linguists estimate that, in most world regions, about 90 percent of the languages may be replaced by dominant languages by the end of the 21st century. According to linguists and anthropologists, about 90 percent of all world languages will be extinct or moribund (spoken only by a few older people and unknown to children) within the next 100 years (Whaley, 2003). Scholars are concerned about the massive silencing of linguistic diversity on every continent (Connell, 1998; Ostler, 1999; Whalen & Simons, 2012). The languages of the small ethnic communities fall silent due to economic or cultural reasons, some because of wars and genocide, and others because of language planning, migration, education policy, and persecution

(Comrie, 2001; Wurm, 2001). This situation is especially acute when their speakers are among the most marginalized groups in society, as language endangerment is frequently driven by exclusion in many areas of the world.

The cultural and linguistic landscape of Bangladesh comprise over 45 small ethnic communities and approximately 30 spoken languages (Shafie & Kilby, 2003). Bangla and English as the dominant languages have gained an increasing hold and exert growing pressure on communities speaking minority and indigenous languages in Bangladesh. Language endangerment of minority ethnic groups in Bangladesh is an outcome of complex internal forces (e.g. community's negative attitude towards its own language) and external forces (e.g. economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation), while the internal pressures often have their source in external ones (Ferdousi, 2021). My M.Phil. research reveals that the Garos, like many other indigenous peoples, associate their disadvantaged social position with their culture and gradually come to believe that their languages are not worth retaining. Many of my Garo respondents of my M.Phil. research abandoned their language and culture in hopes of overcoming discrimination, to secure a livelihood, and enhance social mobility, or to assimilate to the global marketplace (Ferdousi, 2021).

The purpose of this paper is to offer a picture of some of the problematics surrounding linguistic shift and maintenance of the Garos for wider audience, readers and researchers. The Garos, a matrilineal small ethnic group of Bangladesh, are at the locus of this paper. The findings presented and conclusions drawn in this paper are the outcome of intensive fieldwork among the Garo living in Dhaka city. This paper is founded upon both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, where most of the sources of selection were done randomly from the Garo migrants in Dhaka city. The quantitative data are collected through using structured questionnaire and checklists, while for qualitative data focus group discussion (FGD), and key informant interview (KII) were followed using separate checklists. The survey adopted snowball-sampling in order to select the respondents for investigation to obtain the necessary data for profiling Garo language. An efficient use of triangulation of different techniques has been done to improve the quality of the data and reduce the chance of bias. These methods of data collection were aligned to different study objectives and situations.

2. The Background: Place and People

2.1. Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a diverse make-up of cultural variations. Although it appears to be mainly inhabited by the Bangalees, peoples having many other languages, religions and cultures live in Bangladesh. This cultural diversity of Bangladesh can be ‘a source of exchange, innovation and creativity’, and according to UNESCO’s Universal Declaration “cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature” (UNESCO, 2002). Before going into the discussion on cultural landscape and diversity of Bangladesh, I would like to shed light on the idea and meaning of ethnic and indigenous groups in anthropology.

The word ‘ethnic’ comes from the Greek ‘ethnos’, which means ‘nation’, ‘people’ and by the word ‘group’ we mean ‘social cluster’ (Fenton, 1999, 2013; Fenton & May, 2002; Phinney, 1989). However, Liddell and Scott’s Greek–English Lexicon (1897), refer to a number of meanings of the term “ethnos” depending on different contexts as well as at different periods of ancient Greek history, and these meanings are: “[n]umber of people living together, body of men; particular tribes; of animals, flocks; (after Homer) nation, people; (later) foreign, barbarous nations; non-Athenians, (biblical Greek) non-Jews, Gentiles, class of men, caste, tribe” (Liddell & Scott, 1897 cf. Fenton, 2013: 14-15). So, different types of human groups or social clusters are called ethnic groups. Each and every human being on earth is a member of some ethnic group. Each ethnic group is different from the other. The border line of differences is always maintained by the ethnic groups. So, in order to identify an ethnic group, we must know the ways of maintaining the boundaries and acquiring membership of the group. Membership of an ethnic group is acquired through maintaining some specific social rules. And the identity and boundaries of various ethnic groups become clear to us distinctively by observing the social procedures of the execution of these rules. Ethnic group membership is not subjected to anyone’s wish or will. All the ethnic groups, be that Chakma, Marma, Santal, Garo or Bangali, maintain their separate social identity and boundaries to determining their membership. We become members of any ethnic group by birth and also have distinctive identities from the members of other ethnic groups (Barth, 1969; Eriksen, 2002; Phinney, 1996). The ethnic groups maintain the uniqueness of their identity through retaining the social boundaries. According to Barth, ethnic group has three general characteristics:

- 1) **Ethnic membership and social recognition of identity:** An ethnic group confers or attributes certain identity on to its members. This means, every human being grows up with the identity of his ethnic group since his or her childhood. This means that any ethnic group and its members have greater social recognition.
- 2) **Consciousness and sense of belonging to the ethnic group:** The members of an ethnic group are conscious and aware of their ethnic identity. This means that perception of self and collective sense of belonging to an ethnic identity exist among all members of the same group.
- 3) **A common field of social activities and interactions:** Members of the same ethnic group have adequate resemblance or similarity in their lifestyle or cultural activities. Usually, they speak and exchange their thoughts in the same language. Their livelihood strategies and their cultural values and ideals are almost similar. This means that all the members of an ethnic group know about different tangible and intangible elements of their culture and practice them accordingly (Barth, 1969, 1981, 2012).

On the basis of these three general characteristics, we can distinguish different ethnic groups. It is also important to note that ethnic groups, language groups, religious groups or religious community, groups of professionals, and human race are not the same. However, it is commonly assumed that there are more than 45 ethnic groups in Bangladesh (Rashid & Shafie, 2013; Shafie & Kilby, 2003). Apart from the Bangalee, the overwhelming majority ethnic group, there are many other ethnic groups in Bangladesh who have different languages, religions, and cultures. Based on population size compared to the Bangalee, other ethnic groups are called “small ethnic group” or “minority ethnic groups” or “ethnic minorities” in Bangladesh. Recently, for the preservation and development of cultural traditions of these ethnic groups, the Parliament of Bangladesh has enacted a law known as “Ethnic Minority Cultural Institutions Law 2010” in April 2010. The law defines the non-Bangalee and traditional ethnic groups living in Bangladesh as the “ethnic minorities”.

2.2. Situating the Garos in Bangladesh

This research addresses issues of ethnic identity and language shift among the city dwelling Garos of Bangladesh. The Garos are among the

peripheral (minority) communities living in Dhaka and have no choice but to lose their language, culture and identity. The Garo are a distinct ethnic community, more known to the outside world for their matrilineal social organization, especially kinship system. Their present population around the world is approximately half a million. Most of them live in the northeast India, mainly in the Garo Hills region. Garo Hills located in the western part of the Indian state of Meghalaya and western portion of the Shillong plateau that divides Assam from Bengal (Burling, 1997). In India their habitat also extends to the adjoining areas of Khasi Hills, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura and West Bengal. In Assam the Garo are located in a few districts of Brahmaputra valley including Karbi Anglong district. But their major concentration is in the southern fringe of the district of Goalpara and Kamrup. In Nagaland, some of the Garo live in Chumkudina area of Kohima District. In Tripura they settled down in the South Tripura, while in West Bengal they settled in the district of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar.

About one-fifth of the total Garo population lives in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh most of the Garo are concentrated in the bordering areas of Mymensingh, Sherpur, and Jamalpur and Netrokona district. In Mymensingh, they are located in Bhaluka, Phulbaria, Muktagacha, Phulpur, Haluaghat, and Dhobaura. In Sherpur, they live in all upazilas (sub-district): Jhenaigati, Sribordi, Nalitabari, Nokla and Sherpur Sadar. In Netrokona, they are found in Durgapur, Kalmakanda, and Purbodhala. A large number of them live in Madhupur forest areas of present Tangail district. Few Garo also live in Sreepur upazila of Gazipur District. About 5000 Garo are now living in Dhaka, mainly for the purpose of service and education. About one thousand Garo are living in Chittagong, the second largest city of Bangladesh, for the same purpose. Some of the Garo are also found living in the districts of Sylhet, Moulvibazaar and Sunamganj.

The Garos use the term Mandi to refer to themselves. The Garos are one of the classic examples of matrilineal people in the subcontinent. Their matrilineality is illustrated by an apparently rigid kinship system where descent and inheritance reckon through the female line. They are divided into different exogamous kinship groups and sub-groups and are geographically sparse to many places of Bangladesh and India. Despite obvious differences that exist between these groups, they follow almost similar kinship system. Every Garo individual belongs to the lineage group

of their mother: they take their mother's family name and are not allowed to marry within their own group. Inheritance follows the matrilineal line of descent and men do not inherit property, either movable or immovable, from their parents. It all goes to the women. Indeed, kinship is the main organizing principle of Garo social organization and it determines the role of women and men in society. As they are surrounded by patrilineal Bangalee neighbors, the uniqueness of a matrilineal kinship system sets them apart from other communities.

Their mother tongue is Garo, which belongs to the Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman stock. The Bodo languages are mostly spoken in the north-east India, some close to the northern and eastern boarder of Bangladesh. Of them Garo, Kok Borak, Kucchhari are spoken primarily in the hill areas (Burling, 1997). "Their language still retains some similarity with Tibetan: and some of their ideas, such as sentimental value they attach to gongs, are identical with those prevailing Tibetan villages" (ibid: 6). Bangladeshi Garo are now bilingual; they speak both Garo Language (*Abeng*) and Bangla. Over the course of many centuries, as the Bangla and Assamese languages have expanded, the area occupied by the Bodo speakers has probably shrunk. In Bangladesh nearly 130 million people speak in Bangla. Influence of Bangla is evident in the day-to-day affairs of the Garo. Bangla words have penetrated to all dialects of the Garo, and they use thousands of them. Without these borrowed words Garos would find it impossible to talk about some topics. According to Burling, the Garo speakers feel free to use thousands of Bangla words, and they easily embed them in Garo sentences. At present, they cannot really speak their own language without the help of Bangla words (Burling, 1997).

Most of the Garo people are bi-lingual because they speak Bangla (the national language of Bangladesh) in addition to *Achchik Katha*, their own indigenous language (mother tongue)- (Bal, 2007). From their childhood, Garo children are habituated to speak both Garo and Bangla and write in Bangla only because in Bangladesh their alphabets are not practiced. They usually speak Garo language although they talk in Bangla language while interacting with the Bangalees. Garo language has different dialects: A·being or Am·being, Matabeng, Atong, Me·gam, Matchi, Dual [Matchi-Dual] Ruga, Chibok, Chisak, Gara, Gan·ching [Gara-Gan·ching] A·we etc. In Bangladesh A·being is the usual dialect, but in India A·chik is used more. A we has become the standard dialect of the Garos. The Garo

language has some similarities with Boro-Kachari, Rava, Dimasa and Kok-Borok languages. Garo literature was mainly transferred from generation to generation and one place to another orally.

3. Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

Languages are repositories of history, languages express identity, languages contribute to the sum of human knowledge and of course, languages are interesting in themselves (Crystal, 2000). According to Dorian (1999), the loss of an ethnic language is far less easily recoverable than other identity markers and its cultural content is never fully recoverable (Dorian, 1999). Close and systematic attention to the relationship between language, identity and ethnicity sheds light on processes of cultural change and continuity (Fishman *et al.*, 2013). During the last five hundred years, particularly in the 20th century, globalization, migration and economy have largely changed the landscape of global linguistic diversity and equilibrium.

Language and ethnic identity are related reciprocally and language is also used as the marker as well as the storehouse of different ethnic identities. On the one hand, language usage influences the formation of ethnic identity at the same time ethnic identity also influences the language attitudes, usage and speech accommodation in several contexts. Giles *et al* argued that language is a highly structured and sophisticated but flexible, subtle process which capitalizes on man's most significant resources including thought, symbolism and emotion (Giles *et al.*, 1977). The interrelationship between language and ethnic identity is well acknowledged and studied in various disciplines and research. Language is one of the major factors used to categorize people (Giles & Johnson, 1981) and language use also plays a major role in the development of social identity in general (Eastman, 1985) and ethnic identity in particular (*ibid*). Ethnic identity is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [or her] knowledge of his [or her] membership in a social group, together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981: 255).

The identification of ethnic minority groups includes many different markers of identity, of which language is an important but not the only one and language is explicitly mentioned in most academic works related to ethnic identity (Schmidt, 2008). Research also indicates that ethnic group

members identify more closely with those who share their language than with those who share their cultural background (Giles *et al.*, 1977; Gudykunst & Schmidt, 1987). Close and systematic attention to the relationship between language and ethnicity illuminates processes of cultural change and continuity (Fishman *et al.*, 2013). Obeng and Adegbiya observed the relationship between language and ethnicity in Sub-Saharan Africa and argued that language is seen as the storehouse of ethnicity (Obeng & Adegbiya, 1999). Each ethnic group expresses and identifies itself by the language it speaks, and its cultural paraphernalia is shaped by its language. Sameness of language and ethnicity creates a bond of acceptance and provides a basis for togetherness, for identity, for separateness, for solidarity, and for brotherhood and kinship. Across the world each language carries a strong and distinct ethnic baggage as well as strong emotional attachment to identity. Fishman *et al.* opine that just as commonly, language is part of the authentic 'doing' constellation and the authentic "knowing" constellation that are recurrently assumed to be dimensions of ethnicity (Fishman *et al.*, 2013). Giles *et al.* tried to conceptualize the relationship between identity and language that in-group speech can serve as a symbol of ethnic identity and cultural solidarity; language is often the major embodiment of this ethnicity (Giles *et al.*, 1977). It is used to remind the group about its cultural heritages, for transmitting group feelings and for excluding members of the outgroup from its internal transaction. Feeling of in-group solidarity can be socialized at a very early age. And dominant groups try to manipulate language in many ways and keep the subordinate position of the subordinate groups.

Language is interrelated with culture, power and identity. Language, religions and knowledge diversities and the environment diversities have been intimately interconnected throughout human history (Maiero & Shen, 2004). "[E]very language is a living museum, a monument to every culture it has been vehicle to" (Nettle & Romaine, 2000: 14). The issues of language shift and maintenance have remained at the focus of investigations of linguists, sociologists, geneticists and anthropologists for long time. Linguists, along with other scientists, believe that languages evolve over time, which is necessary for human evolution as well. Scholars of linguistics consider languages as part of total ecosystem and term the diversity as 'biolinguistic diversity' (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Crystal (2000) puts forward a couple of arguments signifying the

importance of language diversity: (1) Linguistic, cultural and biological diversity are inseparable; (2) Language is an index, symbol and marker of identity; (3) Languages are repositories of history, and means to reach the archive of knowledge, ideas and beliefs; (4) Different languages are ways of expressing different visions and purposes of life, and thereby contribute to the sum of human knowledge; and (5) language itself is important, because it is composed of sounds, grammar and vocabulary that reveal something different about linguistic organization and structure (Crystal, 2000 cf. Baker, 2011: 51-52). Knowledge is passed on to future generations through written and oral dialogues, and therefore language creates a platform of awareness and education of upcoming generations. The linguistic diversity is an essential component of cultural diversity and by losing a language, we lose knowledge of that language and culture (Crystal, 2000).

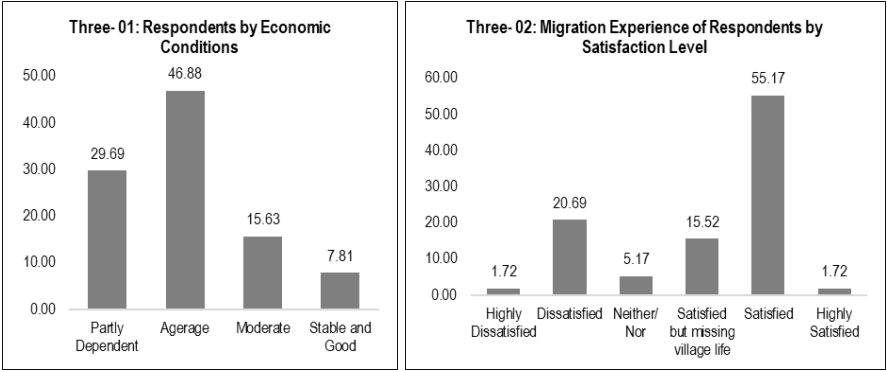
The socio-economic and political factors play a major role in language shift. A high degree of language shift may occur in the areas of high cultural mobility and social instability. The minority languages are at high risk of language shift and extinction. Language shift is faster in urban areas than in rural as the insularity and rigidity of rural life reduce the acceptability of change (Fishman, 1976: 315). Societal bilingualism as a prerequisite for language shift because it is the outcome of the dynamics of language contact (Fasold, 1991). The language contact-induced changes can lead to linguistic homogeneity on one hand and language attrition on the other. The Garo language, like the other minority languages of Bangladesh, is also subject to such linguistic hegemony of Bangla language as the language of the overwhelming majority.

4. The Garo Migrants: Social and Economic Life

The study focuses on migrant Garos in Dhaka city from different parts of the country. Migration of Garos from the different parts of the country to the city areas started during early 1960s during Pakistan period. Various factors instigate this migration like losing land due to illiteracy, ignorance of government, environmental hostility and poor settlement and various discriminatory acts. the respondents of the study chose the Dhaka city as their place of destination for several reasons. Economic security, better job and better education, better facilities etc. allured and made this community to migrate to Dhaka city. There are migrant Garos in Gulshan (Kalachandpur), Badda, Farmgate, Gazipur and many other places of greater Dhaka. The respondents gave and shared different views and

experience about their Dhaka city life. 55.17 percent of the respondents expressed satisfaction and they think that after migration they have far better facilities and they are solvent. Again, 20.69 percent are dissatisfied and feel meaningless to come to Dhaka and also feel existential crises. Realization comes among them that there will be no race over the globe named Garo as they do not have language, own place of living, no union or place to set their opinion regarding crises of the Garo people. However, the Garos in the Dhaka city are doing several paid jobs. Occupational engagement of 29.69 percent of the respondents are private service where only 1.56 percent doing public service. 39.06 percent of the Garo respondents are students at higher educational institutions. Apart from that, many Garo women are also working in the beautification parlours of Dhaka city. About 15.63 percent said that their economic conditions are moderate means above the average conditions and below the well-off condition and they are living happily in the Dhaka city. Majority 46.88 percent said that their economic condition is average means just leading life in the city area.

Momota Chivan is about 70 years old and lives with her daughter. She is a converted Christian. He is a nurse and had training at Bogra. At the time of training she had faced difficulty with Garo but now it's not a crisis to her. She feels comfort to say that she is a Garo. She shared that migration from their original land to the city has changed their life especially their economic life. She worked as nurse that made a great contribution to the family where they had to lead a miserable life in their previous land because their sources of income were constrained by several new technologies and crops to which their access was limited due to financial problem on the one hand, and on the other hand different barriers and restrictions on land and cultivation from the government narrowed their options. As a result, she with family migrated to the city and managed to live well. She also remembered that though she had hard times when she migrated but now, they have a good economic life.



Another respondent named Shaioir Baji came to Dhaka to have economic solvency and he studied up to class eight at village. This family has diasporic tension as we see his parents were in India and left the country at the time of Liberation war and then again came back after war. His economic condition is not satisfactory as he finds life is very expensive in Dhaka.

The social and economic life of migrated Garos in Dhaka city is composed of mixed experiences. Some finds it that migration has made their life easy in contrast to earlier life where at the same time some finds it more difficult to live in the city as it is expensive, unfamiliar, unhealthy, uncomfortable, different economy oriented and as they are not accustomed with it. In consequence for some it results in existential crises and diasporic tensions. Though several factors work behind it such as education, market demand, ethnicity, language competency etc where priority goes to the mainstream population instead ethnic minorities. Therefore, economic conditions, which depends on various variables, of migrated Garos are varied.

5. Garo Experience of Language Barrier

The term language barrier is used to imply all the problems faced by an individual as he tries to communicate with a group of people who speak a different language other than his own. Well, we all are well acknowledged that language is one of the main mediums of communication and in this globalized world some languages always dominate and take control the market where other languages are subordinate and dominated. In this regard, it is known that the migrated Garo people are surrounded by the overwhelming presence of the Bangalee people, having different language and culture. Garo people have their own language named Achik but nearly to be lost with the phase of time and most of the Garo children are bilingual. We know Garos migrate to the urban areas to make their livelihood as a result they come into contact with the Bengalese and need Bangla for communication in all kind spheres in city like job sectors, educational institutions, usual everyday conversation etc. as a result they have little scope to practice their mother tongue in the city areas and they usually use their own mother tongue with other Garos. So, the researcher wanted to know whether Bangla language causes as barrier to them and found that about 31 percent are encountering some or less difficulties to communicate in Bangla language. 9 percent are

facing strongly difficulty, and even not possible to communicate but it is noteworthy that 60 percent are not facing difficulty at all. As some respondents respond the following ways-

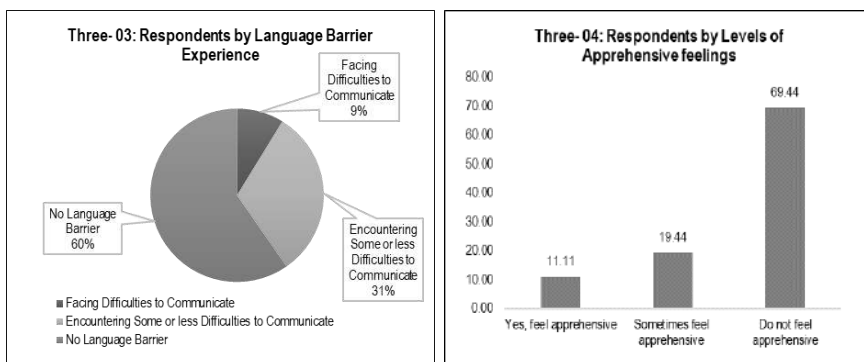
Kriti Rema says, "I am happy to say I am Garo" but to her Bangla is not a barrier now. She did not find barrier whereas she has got lots of help from the people as she came to Dhaka by the help of Squire Program. She is happy here.

Another informant named Sujon Remon is from Pirojpur, Jamalpur. He is 35 years old. He lives at Kalachandpur in Dhaka and works in a private farm. He is a proud Garo as he says "I am Bangladeshi by birth and I am representing Garo indigenous community". After SSC he has left for Dhaka and completed his MA degree from here. He is very clear in one stand that their mother tongue is Achik where Bangla is in second position and English is most important. In that case multilingual effect is pretty clear for Garo people. Multi lingual condition is most difficult for common Garo. He again says it is must for common Garo people because they face difficulty even in workplace. As he says that after migration there are several threats to forget language of their own: (1) Because of less use in Dhaka city; (2) he says other than these three languages Dhaka is suffering from banglish and banggaro language which is also much threatening for all.

Nirom Chism is from Mymansingh, now he is at Kalachandpur, Gulshan Dhaka. He is a converted Christian and works at American Embassy. He has completed education at village and found Bangla as barrier because in his childhood he had found it difficult to learn it as his mother tongue is Achik.

The Majority of the respondents do not feel barrier in regard of language during communication with the Bengalee people in Bangla. But this figure signifies that the majority of the respondents are well adapted and accustomed to the Bangla language though it can be also signified that they are bound to be well adapted. So, there has little or nothing to be appreciating from that statistics because it reminds or signals that in other way is threatening to the Garo language as they are gradually being adapted to Bangla. They are being forced directly and indirectly to be adjusted with the mainstream language for their survival and they are well

acknowledged for their competent ability. In the struggle of life and livelihood they are choosing and adapting Bangla language; as a result in near future it may happen that the small number of Garos who shared about their difficulties would not face anymore as they will try to adapt for their existence. And the adult Garos of first generation faces difficulties, the new second generation does not feel any barrier as they are growing up among Bangalee culture and they are taught that culture to be fit in context of reality. So not facing any barrier or small barrier can result loss of a language in the long run.

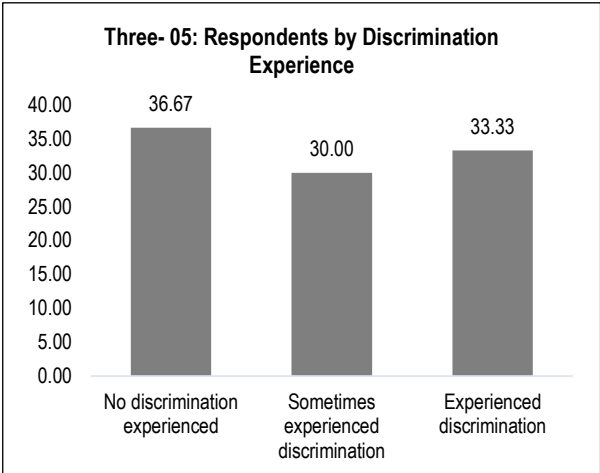


Tobo skitnus kengus thought that it is very effective way to be knowledgeable. But for survival this clearly is burden. Regarding Sujon they are scared to lose their mother tongue and because of language capital situation they are losing it. According to him, because of less use of Achik for long time over the day and because of no written condition the language is in threat. He says Garo has no alphabet so if we want to write Garo, we use Bangla or English. So, they are interested to revive their language. To bring out my insight and existence and make it permanent we need to get back our alphabet. He feels alarming that as only at home they are using Garo language so migration caused huge damage and the young generation will face it terribly.

He has informed that some organizations are now working to save the existence and revive the language. They arrange cultural program like Wangala and they practice Chu drinking. According to his observation as Chakma people got their language back and their language is computerized so why not Garo. He is positive thinker and he says that now a days Wangala is been celebrated with enthusiasm even among the others and government, media, TV channels are also highlighting this program to protect the community's identity. Through Garo song people of different ages are also trying to survive the culture and its literature.

6. Experience of Discrimination Due to Language Barrier

Several languages can exist but their position is subordinate to the main language. This subordinate position of a particular language creates discrimination for the speakers of that language regarding the field of education, professions, daily interaction etc. So, language not always works as the medium of accessibility to several fields rather sometimes for someone works as



barrier. The case is not different in context of Garos living in Dhaka city. due to their identity and accent of Bangla they experience different discrimination in the job sectors, educational sectors as well as in day-to-day life. It is reported that 33.33 percent experienced discrimination in their job sectors and 30.00 percent sometimes experienced discrimination in their job sectors. They told that first of all they do have face discrimination in getting jobs as majority of them are not higher educated and get low ranked jobs. On the other hand, wherever their job sectors or whatever jobs they do in everywhere they experience discrimination. They encounter verbal scolding from their Bangalee counterparts for their accent of Bangla as well as for their skin color and physical structure that's different from the mainstream Bangalee. On the other hand, about 37 percent respondents shared that they did not encounter any discriminatory behavior from their Bangalee colleagues in job and educational institutions rather experience good working environment and support. There are several ways by which they experience discrimination. They are mocked and teased by their friends, classmates, teachers for their language, pronunciation, facial structure etc. They are also told backward, underdeveloped, rural etc. They face verbal abuse and ignorance from their colleagues and mates too. A few of the respondents of this study are cited below.

Rebecca Pathang is 45 years old. She is from Halwa ghat. Because of language barrier she did not want to continue the study at her childhood. Now she works at Dhaka and happy with work. She did not face difficulty regarding identity. A new strain came as Bangla and Garo are mixed with each other and surviving in Dhaka. Another respondent named Rupanjala Kritirama says, "our face cutting is the mirror" so she finds some people who look at them and laugh that sometimes makes her feel alienated in Dhaka.

Shaior Baji another respondent is from Mymensingh, now he is at Kalachandpur, Gulshan Dhaka. He is a converted Christian and works at American Embassy. He has completed education at village and found Bangla as barrier because in his childhood he had found it difficult to learn it as his mother tongue is Achik. He is much conscious about the language of next generation. so, he speaks in Garo language at home with his children. In answer to his identity and existential crises he says his face cutting and nose makes him different than others but he does not feel alienated. He is proud to say that he is Garo.

The experience of discrimination due to language by the Garos in the Dhaka city is varied. Though majority of the respondents shared that they face discrimination but about 37 percent shared that they do not face any difficulties. That's why there is little scope to say that they are leading a happy and peaceful life in their city life in search of what they migrated here. Though they are earning from different income sources but they do not get a healthy environment of living that will be comprised of good mental, physical, social, economic and political life. They are always in constant tensions of being mocked and teased that is hampering their normal way of life that they deserve and sought from their early migration period and resulting to their identity crisis as well as existential crisis.

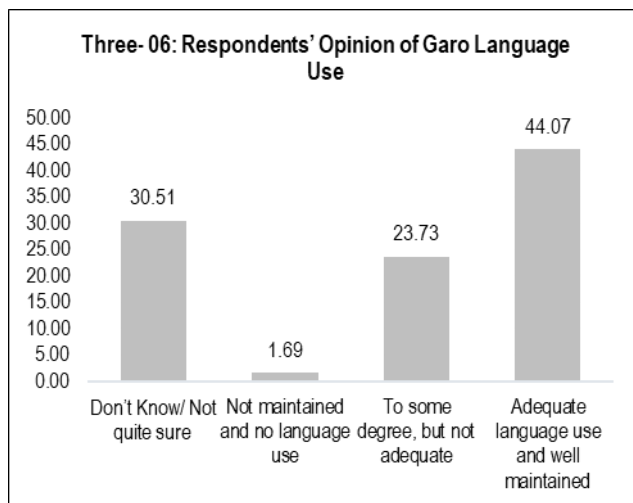
Features of Treatment in Public Interactions	Prevalence or Intensity
○ Mocked and teased by friends and classmates at school.	Very high
○ Teased by friends and teachers at school.	High
○ Mocked for our language	Moderate
○ Mocked for our Bangla accent and pronunciation	Very high
○ Mocking by making physical or facial gestures	High

○ Making comments on different facial construction and appearance	Very high
○ Staring weirdly or giving strange look	Very high
○ Become subject to bullying and teasing	High
○ Being neglected and ignored by friends and colleagues	High
○ Becoming subject to verbal abuse	High
○ Always told or being referred to as backward or underdeveloped	High

7. Assessing Garo Language Shift and Maintenance

Language shift also known as language assimilation is the process where a speech community shifts to a different language, usually over an extend period of time. Languages which are perceived to be higher status stabilize of spread at the expense of other language that are perceived by their own speakers to be lower status. In this study, the present condition or use of Garo language is at the focus. The study pursues to observe how often the language is being used or not. However, on the other hand, language maintenance is a situation in which a group of speech community or speakers continue to use their language in some or all spheres of life in competition with the dominant or majority language to sustain their own language. The present condition of the Garo language is at the bank of being extinct if the present condition of use continues. The study has shown that about 44 per cent respondents reckon that their language is in adequate use in their family and outside. They shared though they are incapable of using their mother language in their work places and at the same time their children cannot use it in their educational institutions but they regularly use their mother language at their home among themselves. They teach their children their mother tongue from the very beginning that they do not forget their mother tongue to maintain their identity. 23 percent respondents consider that to some degree their language is maintained but it is not adequate that can result in the loss of language in the long run. A major portion of the respondents that stands above 30 percent opine that they have no idea about their language so they do not know or not sure about the maintenance and use of their language. This indicates that a large number Dhaka dwelling Garos are not well aware about their own language. It is alarming for a language. The reasons

behind that are varied such as the respondents responded in multiple ways that about 34 percent respondents think cultural assimilation into dominated Bangalee language is the main reason for their language shift. Above 28 percent seem that there is very little scope to use Garo language living and doing their everything in Bangalee community. For surviving and making impression they always struggle about language. Above 15 percent respondents think that medium of learning is affecting their language as they are forced to learn in Bangla which is not their mother tongue. Above 13 percent respondents think that only for the employment purpose they have to learn and practice Bangla as it is official language. Above 9 percent respondents reckon that for communication purpose they are to use Bangla and their communication majorly occur with the Bangalee community so they have no other way without using Bangla. Above 7 percent respondents blame parents' unconsciousness for language shift because many parents do not teach their children Garo language. The following case of Hesting Rema provides further insights into the reasons of language shift.

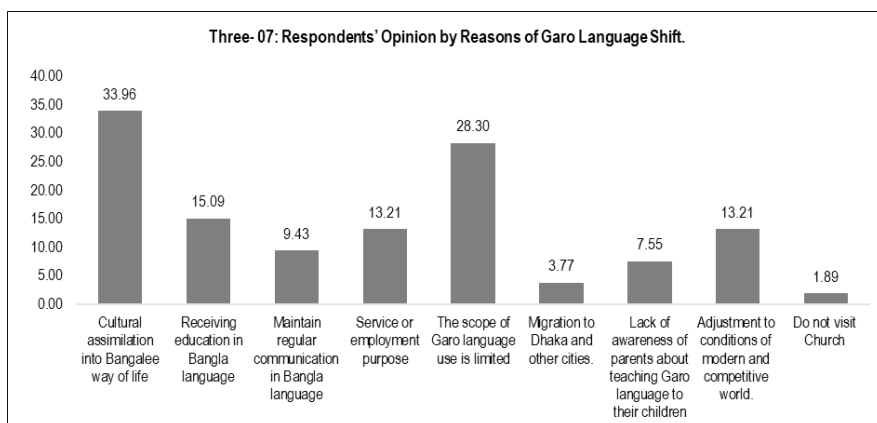


Hesting Rema is 42 years old. He is from Netrokona. He is proud Garo. He has interest about Garo literature. He is a singer he has got the information that one of his uncle Daniel Ruram is trying to get alphabet back and he claims they could get back their relatives. Salina Hossain also worked for them. Prosanto Tripura has worked for them. He is confident that they can revive the language and next generation will learn and write in Achik. Even the common people of the country seem happy about the news. This can be the beginning of some positive growth.

Government may use the clue to have vast research. As in India four skills are used in Garo language so it is not impossible to do the same in our country. As minority threat and language loss has been seen in many countries of the world so he feels still we have time to become conscious about this issue. Garo song and literature are practiced by different clubs like Gashu and Arere and Raray is a band who sings Garo song and Fahmida Nabi is also joining to upgrade the clubs as to save mother tongue of this minority group. He thinks originality of Garo culture is in threat so to save culture and original identity they must be united.

Sohel Nabal argued that Regarding Chu drinking he is different as they are Catholic Baptists so Chu drinking is prohibited. So, a mixture of Garo and Christian culture creates a new stream. So, they are chronologically causing cultural deviation in Dhaka. In Dhaka he thinks he is losing language as in working place and outside of the house they cannot use Garo language so, to him it is a kind of crises where is a chance to loss language soon. So, he thinks that they will have to work together to solve the crises of language loss. He believes because of Bangla the Garo are forgetting Achik. He believes the next generation of Garo in Dhaka are mostly destroyed so they need to bring back their culture back and he is teaching Garo song to his son.

However, an immense influence comes from the globalization where international markets are gaining control of everything for this reason the market which is formed by the native products of the Garo are losing their demands and they are becoming unemployed in a great number and they are making move toward the city for employment. As a result, they are being assimilated with the Bangalee culture and there is no way not to be assimilated as Bangla is used everywhere. On the other hand, In Bangladesh, there has no separate language for the ethnic groups rather they are bound to take education in Bangla. Medium of learning plays a vital role in learning and surviving one particular language but the Garo is derived from this opportunity and in consequence they give priority in learning Bangla thinking future market and as education is one of the best bridges to get a good job which may on the other hand secure future. But it is ubiquitously acknowledged that if the same condition continues at one point it will increase and for sure it will create threat to the existence of the language itself.



8. Suggestions

While the respondents feel that their mother tongue is on the brink of extinction, responses from the respondents about the ways of reviving their language are multiple. Above 40 per cent of the respondents think establishing Garo cultural organization will contribute to the revival of the language (Ferdousi, 2021). The organization will do several awareness raising activities as well as will demand education in their own language and establishment of educational institutions and curriculum in their own language. They think preservation of the cultural activities are most important in reviving the language as it will promote all other things. Such as organizing several cultural activities in their own language without using Bangla or mixing with Bangla. Some respondents have also shared that they have cultural organization but it works occasionally and they hope if it works relentlessly, it will bring a good result. But it is a matter of sorrow that above 32 per cent respondents do not know and have no idea in what ways their language can be revived and promoted. It signifies that they are not aware of their language and possess no idea in term of revitalization and it does not become a concern for them that their language is being extinct that means they are totally indifferent about their language. Above 20 percent assume that promoting different cultural, musical and dance programs may help in reviving the language. They propose that where nowadays many programs are held in Bangla or Garo and Bangla mixed, it can be organized just in Garo language which will create a feeling for the own mother language. Because we know that cultural programs both impact visually and mentally our mind. About 18 per cent respondents think that the most important thing in the process of

revitalization of their language is awareness among the people especially among the family member mention-ably the senior members. If each and every family is aware about their language and its revival and practice it in the family level then it will revive gradually and for that reason awareness is most important. Respondents shared that there are many families that do not use Garo language even in the family gossiping and talking that is the major barrier in the revival. But at the same time there are many families who teach their children Garo from the very beginning and practice it at least in the family level which is important for revival. Some think that international organization can help in this process that deal with the international heritage or international language like SIL. So, they seek cooperation from the international organization for the revival of their language but the percentage is very little. Above 3 percent suggested that establishing Sunday Garo school will be a helping hand in the revival process. Beside the formal education in Bangla, they will learn their mother language by such school practice. About 11 percent respondents consider that they should have indigenous development organization that will deal with the preservation of indigenous rights and will represent to the government, and thereby, can contribute a lot.

Conclusion

Garo axiomatic identity is expressed in the use of their own language. But the scope of their language use is gradually shrinking owing to multifarious factors including economic and socio-political conditions. The management of the relationships across the different languages is a broad and complex field particularly in bilingual and multilingual social conditions. However, this critical field of investigation “includes the study of the nature of the individual plurilingual’s knowledge and use of two (or more) languages as well as the broader social and cultural consequences of the widespread use of more than one language in a given society” (Veltman, 2014: 3). This gives rise to issues, for instances, language maintenance and language shift, language planning, language policy etc. In the case of language shift, code-switching may involve more complex structural integration of the different languages, leading to an eventual base or matrix language turnover (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Veltman, 2014). It is no way acceptable to let a language be extinct since it carries the cultural wealth of the world history as well as it is related to the identity of a community since it is one of the best indicatives of a community so

losing a language is on irreplaceable loss. However, from the above discussion we have observed that Garo language is on the edge of extinction at least in context of the Garo living in the city areas, which may be still rescued taking proper measures and following the respondents' suggestions of reviving and promoting their language.

References

- Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (Vol. 79): Multilingual matters.
- Bal, E. (2007). *They ask if we eat frogs: Garo ethnicity in Bangladesh*: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*: Waveland Press.
- Barth, F. (1981). *Process and form in social life* (Vol. 1): Routledge Kegan & Paul.
- Barth, F. (2012). Boundaries and connections. In *Signifying identities* (pp. 25-44): Routledge.
- Burling, R. (1997). *The strong women of Modhupur*: University Press Ltd.
- Comrie, B. (2001). Languages of the world. *The handbook of linguistics*, 262, 282.
- Connell, B. (1998). *Moribund languages of the Nigeria-Cameroon borderland*: na.
- Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death*: Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Dorian, N. (1999). Linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork. *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*, ed. by J. Fishman, 25-41. In: New York: Oxford University Press.
- Eastman, C. M. (1985). Establishing social identity through language use. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 4(1), 1-20.
- Eriksen, T. H. (2002). *Ethnicity and nationalism: Anthropological perspectives*: Pluto press.
- Fasold, R. (1991). *The sociolinguistics of society*: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Fenton, S. (1999). *Ethnicity: Racism, class and culture*: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Fenton, S. (2013). *Ethnicity*: Wiley.
- Fenton, S., & May, S. (2002). Ethnicity, nation and 'race': connections and disjunctures. In *Ethnonational identities* (pp. 1-20): Springer.
- Ferdousi, S. A. (2021). *Language Shift and Identity: Exploring Migrant Garos in Dhaka City*. (M.Phil.). Bangladesh University of Professionals, Dhaka.
- Fishman, J. A. (1976). Bilingual Education: An International Sociological Perspective.
- Fishman, J. A., Gertner, M. H., Lowy, E. G., & Milán, W. G. (2013). *The rise and fall of the ethnic revival: Perspectives on language and ethnicity* (Vol. 37): Walter de Gruyter.
- Giles, H., Bourhis, R. Y., & Taylor, D. M. (1977). Towards a theory of language in ethnic group relations. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations*.
- Giles, H., & Johnson, P. (1981). The role of language in ethnic group relations. *Intergroup behavior*, 199-243.
- Gudykunst, W. B., & Schmidt, K. L. (1987). Language and ethnic identity: An overview and prologue. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 6(3-4), 157-170.

- Jones, M. P. (2013). *Endangered languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union*. Retrieved from Brussels:
- Liddell, H. G., & Scott, R. (1897). *A greek-english lexicon*: New York: American Book Company.
- Maiero, M., & Shen, X. (2004). Commonalities between cultural and biodiversity. *Unpublished term paper, Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn*.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2002). *Contact linguistics: Bilingual encounters and grammatical outcomes*: Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Nettle, D., & Romaine, S. (2000). *Vanishing voices: The extinction of the world's languages*: Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Obeng, S. G., & Adegbiya, E. (1999). Sub-Saharan Africa. In J. Fishman (Ed.), *Handbook of Language & Ethnic Identity* (pp. 353-368). JA Fishman - New York: Oxford University: New York: Oxford University.
- Ostler, R. (1999). Disappearing languages. *The Futurist*, 33(7), 16.
- Phinney, J. S. (1989). Stages of ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 9(1-2), 34-49.
- Phinney, J. S. (1996). Understanding ethnic diversity: The role of ethnic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40(2), 143-152.
- Quattrini, S. (2019). A rights-based framework for minority and indigenous languages in Africa: From endangerment to revitalization.
- Rashid, A. M., & Shafie, H. (2013). Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis in Disaster Risk Management. In *Disaster Risk Reduction Approaches in Bangladesh* (pp. 343-363): Springer.
- Schmidt, U. (2008). Language loss and the ethnic identity of minorities.
- Shafie, H. (2000). *The Murucha of CHTs: Matrilateral Cross-cousin Marriage in Ritual and Politico-economic Context*. University of Bergen,
- Shafie, H., & Kilby, P. (2003). Including the excluded: ethnic inequality and development in Northwest Bangladesh.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*: Cup Archive.
- UNESCO. (2002). *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity: A Vision; a Conceptual Platform; a Pool of Ideas for Implementation; a New Paradigm: a Document for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 26 August-4 September 2002*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
- Veltman, C. (2014). *Language shift in the United States* (Vol. 34): Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.
- Whalen, D. H., & Simons, G. F. (2012). Endangered language families. *Language*, 155-173.
- Whaley, L. (2003). The future of native languages. *Futures*, 35(9), 961-973.
- Wurm, S. A. (2001). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*: Unesco.

LESSONS OF *NĪTĪŚATAKA* : SIGNIFICANCE AND RELEVANCE

Dr. Sanchita Guha*

Abstract

Sanskrit is an ancient and very rich language. Many more literary genres such as- drama, poetry, anthology of poems etc. have been written in this language. Literature is called the mirror of the society. The images of social, political, economical, ethical, cultural etc. of the then society are reflected in the literature. So, we can learn about these matters from the contemporaneous literatures. Nītiśataka of Bhartṛhari is one of the most important anthology of poems. There are many ethical teachings in Nītiśataka which are very much important and relevant to make our ethical life. To show the importance and relevance of the ethical lessons narrated in Nītiśataka is the aim of this research article.

Key-words: *Nītiśataka*, Significance, Relevance, Ethics, Lessons, Moral Education

Introduction

Indian sub-continent is the repository of the oldest civilizations of the world. Indian sub-continent is also known as the sacred place of the practice of knowledge. Many more intellectuals appeared in the old Indian civilization. They have contributed in the different fields with their own talent. One of the such old intellectual is Bhartṛhari. His approximate time is 1st century B.C (Bhowmik, 2018, p.51). One of the most important anthology of poems written by Bhartṛhari is *Nītiśataka*. There are so many verses in this book which bear various moral lessons and ethics.

Sanskrit poems have been divided into two classes firstly- *Dr̥śyakāvya* (Visible poem) and *Śravyakāvya* (Audible poem). *Dr̥śya* means worthy of being played or acted as if- *Nāṭaka*, *Prakaraṇa* etc. *Śravyakāvya* is divided into two classes- Poetry and Prose. Poetry is divided into various classes, such as- epic, anthology of poems, imperfect poems etc. In the anthology of poems the verses are not dependent on each other. The verses are

* Associate Professor, Department of Sanskrit, University of Dhaka.

independent and bearer of a special thought. That means every verse contains a different meaning. About anthology of poems it is stated in the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* of Viśvanāthakavirāja that –

Chandovaddhapadaṃ padyaṃ tena muktena muktakam. 6/301
(Bandyopadhyā, 2011, p.184)

Śatakakāvya is one kind of anthology of poems. Usually we can see hundred individual verses in śatakakāvya which contain different individual meaning. These kinds of poems are also called the well-organized collection of various meaningful verses. There are many śatakakāvyas in Sanskrit literature such as- *Śṛṅgāraśataka*, *Nītiśataka*, *Vairāgyaśataka*, *Amruśataka*, *Sūryaśataka*, *Śāntiśataka*, *Caṇḍiśataka*, *Apadeśaśataka*, *Amṛtaśataka*, *Apadeśyaśataślokaṃālīkā*, *Kīrtiśataka* etc. *Nītiśataka* of Bhartṛhari is an important well organized collection of different verses which contain different meaningful thoughts. According to different editions the numbers of verses are also different. There are more than one hundred verses (approximately 102-138 according to different editions) in the *Nītiśataka*.

It is clearly apparent from the name of the *Nītiśataka* that there are so many ethical words or instructions in this book. People have to face different problems in daily life. How a person can get relief from these problems or what to do and what not to do in these situations, we can learn these from the verses of the *Nītiśataka*. The teachings or moral lessons of these ethical verses can make our daily life more beautiful and meaningful. In the present time, our daily life is very complicated and it's going to be more complicated day by day. But the importance of these ethical verses has not diminished in our practice of daily life. The ethical proverbs of the *Nītiśataka* are how much relevant and significant in the second decade of the twenty first century also, will be cited in this research article. The subject matter will be discussed in some different points, such as- Importance of education and knowledge, Self-esteem, Characteristics and duties of a good person, importance of money, Importance of action, Duties in our daily life etc. To build our daily life snugly and to build an ethical life the teachings of the *Nītiśataka* is very much relevant. So, to justify the significance and relevance of the lessons stated in the *Nītiśataka* and to shade light on how we can make our daily life meaningful and peaceful by practicing these valuable lessons, is the aim of this article.

Importance of Education and Knowledge

Knowledge is an unparalleled treasure of human life. He who acquires this knowledge adequately is a scholar. Real knowledge can only be achieved by practicing. It is the greatest asset one can have. No kinsman can loot this, no thief can steal this, nor does it get decayed if given. According to Bhartṛhari -

Ambhōjinībananivāsavilāsamēva
 haṃsasya hanti nitāraṃ kupitō vidhātā.
 Na tbasya dugdhajalabhēdāvidhau prasiddhām
 baidagdhyaḥkīrtimaparhatumasai samarthaḥ. 18 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.87)

That is, an enraged God can diminish the merriment of the geese while frolicking in the lotus forest but he can not diminish their natural ability to distinguish water and milk.

Therefore, we should always strive to seek knowledge. We should never get tired of acquiring knowledge. It is true knowledge that makes one, a person of firm temperament and elevated characteristics. External attire and jewels can enhance the outward beauty of a person, but the true knowledge acquired through proper education can make a person pure by mind as well as a real wise person at the same time. A Life without knowledge is invalid. Uneducated people are worse than animals. It is stated in the *Nītiśataka*-

Vidyā nāma narasya rūpamadhikam pracchannaguptam dhanam
 vidyā bhōgakarī yaśaḥsukhakarī vidyā gurūṇām guruḥ.
 Vidyā bandhujanō bidēśagamane vidyā parā devatā
 vidyā rājasu pūjitā na tu dhanam vidyāvihīnaḥ paśuḥ. 20 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.88)

That is, Knowledge is the greatest glory and secretly preserved treasure. Knowledge ensures enjoyment, happiness and fame. It is the master of the masters. It is a friend in exile. It is the absolute divinity. It is knowledge and not wealth that is appreciated in the court. A man without any knowledge is comparable to an animal.

On the other hand, a knowledge deprived imbecile is quite dangerous. Because, it is not possible to please a person who is ignorant or proud of little knowledge. Even it is impossible to conquest a fool even after hundreds of attempts. If a scholar ever try to revive some wisdom in a

foolish person to bring him back to the right path, even he has to endure various reproaches. According to Bhartrhari-

Śakyo vārayitum jalena hutabhuk chatreṇa sūryātapo
Nāgendo niśitāṅkuṣeṇa samado daṇḍeṇa gogardabhau.
Vyādhirbheṣajasamgrahaiśca vividhairmantraprayogairviṣaṃ
Sarvasyaauśadhamasti śāstravihitam mūrkhasya nāstyauśadham. 11
(Bhowmik, 2018, p.85)

That is, fire by water, sunshine by umbrella, maddened elephant by a sharp rod, cows & donkeys by a staff, diseases by herbal medicines, venom by vivid chants can be alleviated. All these has a scriptural remedies but there is no remedy for a foolish person.

A foolish person can do no good to the society. Rather he is completely useless and more of a burden for a society. People of these kind often indulge themselves in hatred towards each other covering their good qualities. Not they can understand the relevance of true knowledge. That's why it's stated in the *Nītiśataka*-

Varam parbatadurgeṣu bhrāntaṃ vanacaraiḥ saha.
Na mūrkhajanasamparkaḥ surendrabhabaneṣvapi. 14 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.86)

The *Nītiśataka* has not only described the importance of knowledge and blamed the foolish but also shown us the actual position of a wise person. If any renowned scholar has to live poorly in a country, it is only the king who is to blame and should feel ashamed. Because, a scholar is rich without having any kind of materialistic wealth. People who do not acknowledge the scholars should be discredited. So, if one can bless himself with true knowledge and become a scholar, he will be felicitated in his own land and elsewhere and he does not have to face any danger at home and abroad.

The lessons mentioned in the *Nītiśataka* are still very much relevant after so many years. Knowledge is bound not only in reading books, it is a matter of practice but also. Because, it is not possible to acquire true knowledge without practicing regularly. Nowadays we are becoming more and more unethical due to the lack in such practice. Our society is hollow from inside because of the malpractice of knowledge. On the contrary, the foolish and ignorant of the society is making chaos with the help of their power and money. The educated mass is being humiliated in the process of imparting wisdom among the foolish. The usual flow of gathering

knowledge is also being hampered in the due process. A wise person is not being acknowledged in the manner he deserves rather he is being deprived. But, even in the ancient time a scholar's position in the society was much higher than that of a king's in order to realize the importance of education and knowledge. So, if we can understand the significance of the moral proverbs of *Nītiśataka*, we will definitely understand the actual value of knowledge. To help a person becoming wise, confident and gain characteristics, these moral proverbs are immense significant.

Self-esteem

True knowledge is a great treasure. A man bestowed with such knowledge automatically become very comprehensive and self-esteemed. He always stays steady. He never discloses any of his feelings like-financial loss, emotional pain, deprivation, humiliation etc. to others. Self-esteem has been explained in the *Nītiśataka* with the help of many examples. Such as- A lion doesn't do anything that is not brave. They do according to their ability. On the contrary, a dog is pleased easily by gaining little things. He expresses his gratitude by rolling over and flipping the tail before his Lord. Then again, Gajarāja (The king of the elephant) never expresses his hardship to God, Rāhu only engulf the sun and the moon of all other stars. Forgetting about his thunder strike father Maināka (Son of the Himalaya) hides himself in the sea. But a lion cub although being very small in comparison to an elephant gets into a fight without hesitating. All these instances prove that self-esteem is a matter of pride. It is the habit of the brave to prioritise self-esteem than insult. A self-esteemed person always thinks before acting upon anything. He never compromises his dignity. He is never corrupted, he never compromises his goals, rather sacrifices his life and wealth for the wellbeing of his country and countrymen. A self-esteemed person does not boost of his family and wealth. It is stated in the *Nītiśataka* -

Parivartini saṃsāre mṛtaḥ ko vā na jāyate.

Sa jāto yena jatena yāti baṃṣaḥ samunnatim. 32 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.93)

That is, in this ever changing world we all come and go. But only those who bring glory to their families are successful.

To a neutral true self-esteemed person the earth feels like heaven. All the time he is unchanged by heart, speech and deed. He does not take a step back during hard times. Their greatest treasure is their qualities and

dignity. Only a man of quality is a man of self-esteem. They rise above all sorts of lust and desire and work for the betterment of humanity.

In our present society people with self-esteem are seldom seen. Social equivalence and un-avaricious is not experienced very often in today's society. Wealth, riches and power are the only desired things of this era. We are much more excited about achieving these earthly things. People are so much invested in these things that they are willing to sacrifice even their conscience and dignity above all the self-esteem. They do not realise that it is better to die than live a life without dignity. Lack of self-esteem is in the roots of all these thoughts. But a self-esteemed person never compromises with injustice and suppression. It is stated in the *Nitiśataka*-

Kusumastabakasyeva dvayī vṛttirmanasvinaḥ.

Mūrdhni vā sarvalokasya viśīryeta vanethavā. 33 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.93)

That is, a dignified person can have two consequences, either he'll be adored by everyone or be wasted in wilderness.

Moreover, there are few dignified people who desire to continue their work for the society, country and humankind, but they are falling among all these chaos. So, the human beings are facing a downfall. Hence, the moral lessons mentioned in the *Nitiśataka* is more relevant and significant than ever.

Characteristics & Duties of a Qualitative Person

A good person is appreciated everywhere in the society. A good person is well-behaved, modest and self-restraint. He always acts according to circumstances. Many more qualities like- extreme patience, indifference, eloquence, bravery, desire for knowledge etc. are seen in a good person. He is never corrupted. Truth is his companion of the course. He continues to perform his duties secretly. They do not show off while doing charity. They consider these things as their duties. On the contrary, a wicked person is generally cruel. Cruelty, quarrel, various addictions are their natural habits. They are jealous of gentlemen and relatives. It is their nature to find faults in all the good deeds of a good person. Let alone evaluating any good deed, they are always trying to figure out how to spoil it. There is no way to please them. Even if a wicked person is scholar, there is no happiness in being around him. According to the *Nitiśataka* -

Durjanaḥ parihartavyo vidyayā bhūṣitoapi san.

Maṇinālaṃkṛtaḥ sarpaḥ kimasau na bhayaṅkaraḥ. 53 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.100)

That is, even if adorned with knowledge, the wicked person should be avoided. For example, even though the gem is adorned, the snake is terrible.

Even after hundreds of attempts, a wicked person cannot change into real human being. So, the wicked should never be trusted.

On the other hand, gentle and virtuous people continue to work for the welfare of the society and the country in silence. The gentleman is adorned like a pearl on a lotus leaf. The sages make them at ease and subdue people, they become merciful to all living beings. The truly virtuous persons live in the present and are always a novice in human welfare. They consider wealth to be grass, but do not bow down in knowledge. It is mentioned in the *Nītiśataka*—

Sampatsu mahatām cittam bhabatyutpalakomalam.

Āpatsu ca mahāsailaśīlāsamghātakarkaśan. 66 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.104)

That is to say, the heart of a good human being in wealth is as soft as a lotus flower and as hard as a huge mountain-rock in danger.

The same attitude is observed in today's society. Even today, the wicked are jealous of others' progress. The society and the country are hampered by the misdeeds of these evil people. Giving advice to all these wicked people means scattering pearls in vain. And in the midst of all these evils, the real gentleman, the virtuous person is seldom seen. However, all these virtuous people are devoted to human welfare in all respects. The real virtuous and noble persons do not shy away from their duties in the temptation of any worldly thing. Therefore, if we can learn from the descriptions of the *Nītiśataka* and identify the real virtuous people and leave the bad company, then our daily path can be very smooth and beautiful. It has been stated in the *Nītiśataka* -

Ārambhagurvī kṣayiṇī krameṇa laghvī purā vṛddhimatī ca paścāt.

Dinasya pūrvārdhaparārdhabhinnā chāyeva maitrī khalasajjanānām. 60 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.102)

That is, the friendship of the wicked and the righteous is like the shadow of the dawn and dusk of the day respectively. The friendship of the wicked is initially extensive, but gradually fades. And the gentlemen's friendship is weak at first and then grows furthermore with the passage of time.

Importance of money

Money means wealth, money is the glory. Importance of money can't be denied in the way of life. This is the root of all earthly happiness. Nothing is fascinating without the glory of money. Heroic person can be valueless without the power of wealth. There is a saying in the *Nīṭisataka* -

Yasyāsti vittaṃ sa naraḥ kulīnaḥ
sa paṇḍitaḥ sa śrutavān guṇajñaḥ.
Sa eva vaktā sa ca darśanīyaḥ
sarve guṇāḥ kāñcanamāśrayante. 41 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.96)

That is, the person who has wealth is the elite, the scholar, the excellence, the orator and attraction to all. Quality revolves around money.

Pleasure of rich is the fruition of his wealth. But it is recommended to donate wealth along with enjoyment. Without donating someday all the wealth maybe destroyed. Even so, many of the rich people deny to donate a single penny. They want to grapple their wealth like Yakṣa and try to increase the amount by any means. Even they adopt unfair ways to gain prosperity. They think that money is everything. Money is the universe to them.

On the contrary, those who have no money, their sufferings have no bound. They are neglected to everyone. Even, their relatives or friends don't give any value to them. It doesn't matter if they belong to a reputed family. Whatever a person is wealthy or poor, he should be patient. He needs to deal with the reality with controlling his temper. Because, the wealth for one's own is specified by God, he will get that at any situation. So, it is not recommended to act as poor in front of rich. Rather it's better to be satisfied with what we have. But sometimes, a poor person can improve his condition with hardworking. In that case, he needs to be empathetic to all remembering his past condition. He should help the other poor people also. Mostly it happens, but sometimes the opposite takes place. Poor becomes rich all of a sudden and loses the knowledge of good and evil. They forget everything about what to do or what to say. World becomes negligible to them like grass. Therefore, it is proven that the value of anything is fixed on the availability or unavailability of money.

The above mentioned issues regarding money reflect in current society also. Like before, rich and wealthy persons are the centre point of power. They can do anything with the power of wealth. Even it doesn't matter if

they are guilty in different cases. Similarly, sufferings of the poor people in current society are beyond description. Poor people are neglected in this age too. Even, suddenly becoming rich by unfair means is not rare now adays. Sometimes it is seen that someone becomes rich all of a sudden and shows off their wealth. So, it is confirmed that the balanced distribution of wealth is not maintained in any age. The discrimination between rich and poor was in past remains same at current age. But it is not worthy to consider money or wealth such important. However, everybody should be satisfied with their condition.

Importance of action

Divinity is an innate human instinct. Divinity depends on fate. When any matter goes beyond the control of man, the word divine dependence is repeatedly heard in the mouth of man. But in *Nītiśataka*, action has been said to be stronger than luck. Because, human destiny is a subject to action. It has been said in the *Nītiśataka* that man's destiny is determined by his deeds- ‘vidhirbandyaḥ soapi pratiniyatakarmaikaphaladaḥ’99 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.115). So it is to say, if man can accumulate virtue by his deeds, then that virtue controls the law of man in reincarnation. Divine dependence can be heard more in the mouths of lazy and inactive people of the society. Action is the main thing for a truly wise person. If we do not act properly, no achievement is possible in human life. It's stated in the *Nītiśataka* -

Naivākṛtiḥ phalati naiva kulamnaśīlam
vidyāpi naiva na ca yatnakṛtāpi sevā.
Bhāgyāni pūrvatapasā khalu sañcitāni
kāle phalanti puruṣasya yathaiva vṛkṣāḥ. 101 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.116)

That is, beauty, lineage, knowledge, service etc. are not fruitful at all, but the previously accumulated good deeds bear fruit in time like a tree.

By action man is able to improve his own destiny and also to do great good for the world. Good deeds can turn the wicked into good, the fool into a scholar, the enemy into an ally, the indirect into direct and even the sharpest poison into nectar. As long as people live in good health, they will have to continue doing good deeds. Because, action connects between this world and hereafter of a man indeed. Being born as a human being on earth is a very virtuous aspect of life. So, even if a person is born without

work in this working land, then there is no one as unfortunate as him. Because, no one is liberated without action. Therefore, every action should be performed thoughtfully. Because, the action which is done in extreme haste can lead anyone to death. The destiny of man in this world is determined according to his deeds. Just like wise people rely on fate for their own destiny, so they rely on action to improve their destiny. Action is the key to them. It is through action that they improve their destiny.

Even in our society, there is a constant conflict between action and destiny. Some people sit idle, sacrificing everything of life to fate. They always sit down for blaming fate, and even blame fate for all the accidents that happened to them. But in no way do they try to improve their destiny. But if they tried to improve their fortunes by working, it would be very beneficial not only for themselves but also for the society and the country. On the other hand, in today's society, it is not uncommon for people who are not only dependent on fortune but are always engaged in work for their own betterment. They believe that the welfare of society, nation and country is possible only through the real good deeds. If man continues to work relentlessly, then his fortune is inevitable. Therefore, the conflict between the deeds and the destiny described in the *Nītiśataka* is also observed in the present society. So, just as the predominance of action is especially evident in the *Nītiśataka*, so too, if we give precedence to action in life, then destiny will be auspicious. And, good fortune means the development of human life. Hence, the development of the country and the nation is inevitable.

Duties in Our Daily Life

In our everyday life we have to go through different situations. Some of them bring happiness, some bring sorrows. So, we have keep patience in our daily life. Patience is a great virtue. People can achieve success through patience. It is mentioned in the *Nītiśataka*-

Ratnairmahārhaistuturṣurna devā
na bhejire bhīmabiṣeṇa bhītim.
Sudhām vinā na prayayurvīrāmaṃ
na niścītārthādvīramanti dhīrāḥ. 80 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.109)

That means, the deities were not happy after finding jewels from the sea. They keep searching for the nectar with patience. Like that, person with patience never get happiness until he has found his nectar.

Patient persons can cope up with every situation of life. If necessary they can live on vegetables and sleep on muddy floor, as well as if they have the opportunity, they can take delicious foods and sleep in royal palace also. So, he may lead a poor life when needed and he can also cope up with the elite class. They do not feel depressed in bad moments. Good characters and good manners are their basic qualities. They never show pride about their wealth, money, knowledge. They never go astray. They can achieve everything. They never feel down. It's also mentioned in the *Nītiśataka*-

Kadarthitasyāpi hi dhairyavṛtte-
rṇa śakyate dhairyaguṇaḥ pramārṣtum.
Adhōmukhasyāpi kṛtasya bahne-
rṇādhaḥ śikhā yāti kadācīdeva. 84 (Bhowmik, 2018, p.110)

That means, virtue of a patient person never get destroyed. A fire never low down its head so does a patient man.

So, we have to keep patience in our daily life. We have to be aware about our duties and responsibilities. We have to keep connection with many people in our daily path and we must know about all kind of people. We need support from the good people as well as we should keep distance from the bad people. But we should not judge people according to their character rather help them both. We should have a good knowledge about the religious scriptures and help the poor. We should not avoid the bad people totally rather we may advise them to be good. On the other hand, we have to strive to serve the good people, to appreciate and praise them among the society and we should not disclose their secrets rather their good qualities. It is our duty to try to help other people always in daily life. Without these we should always tell the truth, abstain ourselves from sin and keep in touch with the knowledgeable people. We should not fall for greed. Many people have gone astray for their greed.

We should get up and give up our laziness. Many people just care about their own interests but the real people are those who leave their own interest for the sake of people. People have to be polite, helpful and keep away from saying bad words. They should take proper care of their parents, wives and children and also perform the needful duties to their families. It is also necessary to show due respect to all of the people of the society and to be committed to do good deeds. They should be strict about truth and never leave truth at any cost. People get inspired by seeing the works of others and become aware of their own duties to the society. They should not aware of their own benefit only, but they have to be aware

always about the rights of the other people, wellbeing of the society and country as well.

In the course of daily life, all these lessons learned from the *Nītiśataka* are so relevant and significant in the context of present society. One has to know thyself, know about the surrounding society and human beings. We have to live our life keeping our heads high and awaking our conscience. We should never ask for the help of others under any circumstances. Because, it destroys our respect. We should be always in the path of truth and justice. The struggle for the truth and justice cannot be abandoned, no matter how difficult it is. We have to serve the humanity with all the obstacles. Instead of leaving the bad people, we have to keep in touch with them and try to get them back to the right path with patience. We have to make proper use of all of our good qualities. If every duties and responsibilities are done properly then life would be easy, beautiful and smooth. And that is why, the importance of the learning of *Nītiśataka* is immense to beautify the way of daily life and to ensure the welfare of the country and the nation.

Our society is changing in tandem with the changing times. We are coping up and moving forward with the advancement of science and technology. But keeping pace with all the modern conveniences, we should not forget our real position, real education and past learning. If morality and sense of duty are connected with modernity and increasing development, then the trend of development is bound to be pioneering. That is, if the classical learning match up with the modern learning then development is a must. The topics covered in the article are as relevant today as they were in ancient times. That is why, it is very important to understand the real teachings of morality in the context of the present age. Therefore, we believe that all these lessons of the *Nītiśataka* are very relevant and significant for maintaining the discipline of the society and reaching the highest peak of development of the country and world as well.

References

- Bandyopadhyaya, SriAshokkumar (ed.). *Sāhityadarpaṇaḥ*. Kolkata: Sadesh, 2011. Changed edition.
- Bhowmik, Dulal (ed.). *Bhartrihari Nitishatak*. Dhaka: Jatiya Sahitya Prakash, 2018.
- Shastri, Dr. Gourinath (ed.). *Sanskrit Sahitya Sambhar* (16th khanda). Kolikata: Navapatra Prakashan, 2014. 4th print.
- Bandyopadhyaya, Dhirendranath. *Sanskrit Sahityer Itihas*. 2nd edition. Kolkata: Pascimbanga Rajya Pustak Parshat, 2012. 5th reprint.

DEVELOPMENT OF BANGLADESH-CHINA RELATIONS (1975-2017): PRIORITIES AND REALITIES

Dr. A.T.M. Shamsuzzoha *

Introduction

The Relationship between Bangladesh and China dated back to more than thousand years; and the affable relationship continued through centuries by the promising bilateral trade activities and socio-cultural exchanges between these two countries along the Southern Silk route and Water Silk route.¹ In order to acknowledge such a friendly relationship, China, after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, had given recognition to Bangladesh in 1975; and formally commenced diplomatic relationship by opening up a consulate in Dhaka in October 1976. From the very beginning of this diplomatic relationship, various politico-economic and socio-cultural essentials were exchanged and disseminated between these two countries. Since the inception of the foreign relationship between Bangladesh and China in 1975, these two countries have celebrated 40 years of their relationship in the year of 2015. The relationship between Bangladesh and China demonstrates a peaceful and vigorous atmosphere on the basis of mutual social, economic and political activities. With a view to maintaining affable relationship, Bangladesh has wholeheartedly supported *One China policy* in the international arena like the United Nations Organization. Such an exemplary support from Bangladesh has helped China become a trusted friend thus providing significance to the Bangladeshi diplomatic issues in the world forum. But, at the very beginning, this solicitous type of relationship was not so warm and it had experienced ups and downs for a period of time. Therefore, this paper sheds light on the argumentative issues to evaluate the historical development of bilateral relationship between these two countries. In order to understand their bilateral and multi-dimensional relationship properly, it has also attempted to show the real scenario of diplomatic, political and economic ties between Bangladesh and China.

* Associate Professor, Department of Islamic History and Culture, University of Dhaka.

Theoretical Groundwork and Methodology

Understanding and examining the reality of Chinese foreign policy along with its top priorities in terms of dealing with Bangladeshi diplomatic policies will be a challenging task. But if we critically examine the nature of Chinese attitudes to the third world country like Bangladesh, then we would be able to evaluate its approach to Bangladesh through realistic overview and its applications. According to Colin Elman, the dominant worldview is a concerned thinking of realism.² Kenneth Waltz (1979) observation of realistic foreign policy depends on offensive and defensive formation of realism that may explain the case of China policy and its world politics. Waltz's defensive realism indicates to build up moderate policies and to accomplish domestic and foreign policy objectives of a country to achieve diplomatic goals in the world bodies.³ This is also observed by Colin and Jack Donnelly; and used as a relationship building framework between Bangladesh and China.⁴ However, it is argued that Bangladesh-China relationship can be evaluated within the theoretical framework of realistic view point. Keeping this in mind, this paper has summarized relevant empirical findings and analyzed arguments in the process of making foreign policy decisions between China and its tiny friend Bangladesh. This paper is mostly based on secondary sources and the researcher's own knowledge and experience. The main objective of this paper is to deliver a comprehensive study and provide a critical analysis of the multi-dimensional diplomatic, socio-economic and political relationship between China and Bangladesh. The objective also includes finding out the diplomatic challenge and its influence on foreign policy of Bangladesh. In order to conduct a reliable research on the reality of relationship between Bangladesh and China, the researcher has followed qualitative method. While conducting this research work, a good number of books and original documents including news articles, journal articles and encyclopedias were also consulted.

In order to examine the foreign policy of Bangladesh and China, the researcher has analyzed the key issues in relation to the applicability of respective foreign policies. To make it much more comprehensible, further political, economic, military and socio-cultural ties between Bangladesh-China have been discussed below:

1. Diplomatic Relations

In terms of diplomatic relations, Bangladesh has a glorious past with the Asian Giant China from the ancient past. Those relations were

maintained till the Pakistani era and several diplomatic missions were exchanged between themselves. However, this relationship was disturbed due to Chinese alignment with Pakistan during the liberation war of 1971 and good relationship of East Bengal (Bangladesh) with India and the USSR. On the other hand, the global politics of USA and USSR and regional politics of India, China and Pakistan also set the fate of Bangladesh.⁵ For those reasons aforementioned, after the independence of Bangladesh China, Pakistan and their allied friends didn't give recognition to Bangladesh for a long. Finally Pakistan gave recognition to Bangladesh in 1974 for arranging OIC conference in its premises, but China did not recognize Bangladesh until the brutal death of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 15 August, 1975.⁶ Even after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, when Bangladesh tried to enroll its name in the United Nations and other world forum, China took its stance against the membership of Bangladesh and exercised its Veto Power while Bangladesh tried to obtain the membership of the United Nations in favor of Pakistan.⁷ John F. Copper mentioned that, China did these due to their concern about Tibet and Xinjiang and also concerned about the future of Taiwan.⁸ According to Copper, China was anxious about the fate of Tibet, Xinjiang and Taiwan; and they thought that if Bangladesh could receive membership in the United Nations, then China's hostile parts might be influenced by the tidal force of independence in Bangladesh which would ultimately destroy the integrity of China.⁹ But, after the signing of a tri-party treaty on 9th April, 1974 between Bangladesh-India and Pakistan in New Delhi, China stopped its opposing attitude in the world forum and finally gave recognition to Bangladesh on 4th October, 1975 by opening up a consulate in Dhaka in 1976, which paved the way for the formal inception of diplomatic relationship between Bangladesh and China.¹⁰ After the inception of the diplomatic relationship between Bangladesh and China, both the countries had maintained friendly relationship between themselves. But, factually the relationship was dependent on their foreign policy. For these reasons, a brief introduction needs to be given about the foreign policy of China towards Bangladesh and foreign policy of Bangladesh towards China in this regard. This part will be focusing on China's foreign policy pattern over the time and its implications for Bangladesh.

a. Chinese Foreign Policy towards Bangladesh

Foreign policy pursued by a country is usually considered as the extended version of its domestic policy where national concern always gets first priority. So, the duty of analyzing foreign policy of a particular country is challenging and ambitious that requires rigorous kind of procedures of managing foreign policy- the actors and their influences shape and determine the outcomes of the policy taken or implemented.¹¹ According to the international relations theory, Chinese foreign policy can be categorized into two segments. First one is pursuing with assertive techniques to protect its political and economic security, and strategic interests to become the dominant power in the region- Asia. And second one is to trying confidently upholding its policies towards the United States and European powers.¹² Before emerging as the People's Republic of China replacing the then Republic of China in October 1949, China had experienced imperialistic aggression and repression for more than 100 years.¹³ Therefore, preservation of the heard-earned independence becomes the basic principle of Chinese foreign policy which has never been changed after 1949. After the foundation of PRC by the leadership of Mao Zedong, China adopted Policy of "Lean to One Side" (1949-1959). At that time, China built a philosophy of maintaining one to one relationship with the other nations.¹⁴ But in the early 1960s, the Chinese government started to reconsider the changing pattern of the balance of power, which was shifting from Soviet Union to the United States. Chinese foreign policy then began to focus on maintaining a communication channel with Washington was commonly known as the policy of Revolution towards Self-Reliance (1960-1969).¹⁵ At that time, China had given priority in maintaining a strong coalition with the Third World and it came into the light when China was present at the Bandung Conference of Asian and African states. China had taken strategies to provide support "national liberation struggle" for Third World countries into a 3rd force in global politics during the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁶ During this period China started a friendly relationship with Pakistan and as a part of the then Pakistan, Bangladesh (the then East Pakistan) also maintained friendly relations with China. Plenty of great leaders from Bangladesh visited China. Among them Hussain Shoheed Shuhrawardy, Mawlana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani and Father of the Nations Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman paid two times political visit in China.¹⁷ On the other hand Zhou En Lai, the then Prime Minister of China paid a friendly

visit in East Bengal and received the most prestigious *Honors Causa* 'Doctor of Laws' from the Oxford of the East, University of Dhaka in 1956.¹⁸ That friendly relationship was continued till the War of Independence of 1971.¹⁹

In the early 1970s Mao Zedong lifted restrictions over the United States to improve bilateral relations perceiving grave threat from the Soviet Union. As a result Henry Kissinger had visited to Beijing in July and October 1971 which was then followed by high-profile meetings with the Chinese leaders by Nixon in February 1972 to extend mutual cooperation over Soviet threat issues.²⁰ That was the inauguration of U.S.-China-Soviet triangular diplomacy though later Mao did not pursue the strategy of *détente* (cooperation) with the U.S. to its fullest coverage. Mao wanted to make China the role model for the "liberation" of all the exploited nations and inhabitants of the world throughout his life.²¹ As a friend of Soviet-Indian block, Bangladesh suffers some sort of mistrust from China and on the other hand due to Pakistan policy China was working in favor of Pakistan and opposing Bangladesh joining to the world bodies like United Nations. Another factors also worked in behind the opposing of Bangladesh by China for Soviet influence on this country and to eradicate the risk of movement in Xinjian and Tibet.²² According to V. K. Tyagi, these hostile situations prevailed till the brutal murder of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Father of the Nations, Bangladesh. Because, after the assassination, Bangladesh come out from the Soviet-Indian block and gradually started participation in the shadow of the U.S.A and its partners, which gave a confidence to China. And after the assassination of Bangabandhu China gave recognition to Bangladesh and started diplomatic mission.²³

After Mao's decease in 1976, Deng Xiaoping (1978-1990) the architect of China's foreign policy became China's de facto leader following a small power movement.²⁴ Continued the notion of CCP (Chinese Communist Party) Deng took initiatives to promote a planning for China's rapid economic progress.²⁵ In 1982, Deng took a sovereign overseas policy at the 12th National Congress of CCP which aimed at balancing between the two superpowers (the USA and the USSR) and reducing China's support to the Third World to make an end to the revolutionary movements abroad.²⁶ Under Deng's leadership China gradually appeared as a promising superpower by adopting the policy of

*Low-profile Diplomacy.*²⁷ During this period Bangladesh-China ties became started in smooth motion and it has created a tri-polar balance in this region. Because, Dhaka repeatedly declared its policy to seek balanced ties with the entire major actors of world politics like the USA, Soviet Union and China as well. Beijing actually accepted that stand to offset which had eradicated Soviet hegemonic position in South Asia and also Soviet-Indian influence in Bangladesh.²⁸ Due to Chinese friendly policy of Bangladesh and their low profile foreign policy, China started trade and commerce in Bangladesh which enhanced their ties.

With the cease of the Cold War, China carried the *Tao guang yang hui* (韬光养晦) policy- concealing its capacities, focusing on public strength-building, in addition to propositioning its time setup by Deng Xiaoping in early 1990s.³⁹ To generate a nonviolent regional atmosphere and favorable economic progress, China devised a ‘*mulinzhengce*’ (i.e., good neighborhood policy) for maintaining ties with other Asian countries.³⁰ China’s foreign policy behavior has altered towards a further forceful direction after it has experienced quick economic enlargement over the previous three decades and after it surpassed Japan as the world’s 2nd biggest economy within 2010.³¹

Assuming the position of CPC chief in late 2012 incumbent Chinese president Xi Jinping announced the branded of his administration as *The Chinese Dream* to put forward by the policy of Hu Jintao *Harmonious World*.³² This foreign policy motto was adopted by the current leader of PRC that resemblances *American Dream*.³³ Under “Chinese Dream” prophecy the foreign policy of China has been conceptualized into two segments, one is “New Type of International Relations” (NTIR) and the other is “New Type of Great Power Relations” (NTGPR). Using NTIR which looks like a provisional Chinese overseas policy initiative, China is trying to develop relationship with Russia and India for preserving mutual core interests. On the other hand using NTGPR concept China is trying to build incorporative relationship between key powers in the 21st century. Thus, *Chinese dream* can be thought of as a revision of China’s foreign policy approach from ‘keeping low profile’ to ‘appropriate profile’.

During the period of this research (1976-2017), China with the abovementioned foreign policy, acted specially neighborhood policy and soft power policy to the South Asian nations. By focusing on the neighborhood policy, China adopted policy of peace and stability to the

South Asian nations.³⁴ Currently China's policy towards South Asia is concerned about 1. Preserving Chinese interest to the world body, 2. Improving bilateral relations with South Asia (which dependent basically on three factors, they are; a. Sino-Indian relations, b. Sino-Pakistan relations and c. relations with other South Asian states and d. special attention to peace and stability of South Asia).³⁵ China's policy towards South Asia is an ongoing notion of theory and practice of contemporary geo-political changes of the world, which also depends on various challenges like trust/mistrust, universal prosperity, regional peace and progress and mutual developments. Though, some scholars opined that China is now bearing soft power diplomacy towards South Asian nations and working on youth exchange program, cultural exchange program and enhancing people to people connections. Another scholar noticed that, China's continuing goals of South Asia are to balance India and preserve Chinese interest in this region though there is a perspective of India-Pakistan and China-Pakistan relations.³⁶ Now it is also shown that the relationship lies within the fold of China-Myanmar relationship due to Rohingya issues.

Adopting neighborhood policy and soft power policy to the South Asian states especially in Bangladesh, China always formulated its friendly and peaceful policy.³⁷ So, from the very beginning, China followed peaceful and harmonious foreign policy to its near neighboring country.³⁸ But geographically, Bangladesh is covered by India of its three sides and there are 4,096 kilometer border crossing between the two states has good relations with India from the historic past. According to the inland demand, Bangladesh is semi dependent upon its big neighbor, India. So, according to the dependency on India the nature of Bangladesh-China relations are interrelated to the relationship of Bangladesh and India.³⁹ In this regard, when China has adopted any foreign policy towards Bangladesh it should make remarks on the Bangladesh-India relationship that means 'India Factor'. According to Zhang Xianyi, the honorable Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh, China despite some barriers always maintained mutual respect, good neighborhood, and friendly ties with its trusted friend Bangladesh. China always seeks common ground while resolving differences remain the basic and significant characteristics of state to state dealings.⁴⁰ He also mentioned, in recent years China also believes in people to people connection from both parties and they believe that it will strengthen the friendly relations between Bangladesh and China

and nowadays China's foreign policy towards Bangladesh is in a new avenue of friendship. Actually to implement the Chinese interest in South Asia and to furnish *Chinese Dream* to the world order China as strategically and politically keeping the friendly relationship with Bangladesh and taking initiatives to made an interfaith relationship.⁴¹

Bangladesh Foreign Policy towards China

Foreign Policy of a state is principally an outcrop of its social, economic and political impulse in world politics. According to *Business Dictionary.com*, Foreign Policy is a course of accomplishment which implement by one country with regard to its state connections with other states. Foreign policies of states are established as a methodical way to contract with various issues that may occur with other states.⁴² According to the definition as a state, every country must need to have a foreign policy of its own. From that standpoint Bangladesh as an independent state endure a foreign policy to deal with the other nations. According to the Constitution of Bangladesh, the foreign policy of Bangladesh holds the policies prescribed bellow:

- a. As a sovereign state, Bangladesh should base its international relations on the principles of respect for national sovereignty, and equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of the other countries, peaceful settlements of international disputes, and respects for international law and the principles pronounced in the United Nations Charter and basis of those principles.
- b. The state shall endeavor to consolidate, preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity.⁴³

On the basis of the motto, Bangladesh nourishes its foreign policy as "Friendship to all, malice to none" in the world body and working together. For this reason after the independence Bangladesh, it adopted various foreign policies for the last 48 years due to its transitional period. According to Imtiaz Ahmed, Bangladesh carried several stages to develop its foreign policy. According to him, the first stage could be considered as the Diplomacy of Recognition; second stage was Economic Diplomacy; third stage is about Soft Power Diplomacy which is working with energy, climate diplomacy and cultural diplomacy.⁴⁴ In the first step, Bangladesh was working hard to receive its recognition from the sovereign states.

After winning the independence war against Pakistan in 1971, which was aided by India and its friend Soviet Russia, many countries due to the world politics did not recognize Bangladesh as a sovereign state.⁴⁵ During that period China as a trusted friend to Pakistan and a power to anti Soviet allies did not recognize Bangladesh at once and finally recognize Bangladesh in 1975 and started its mission in Dhaka from 1976.⁴⁶

After getting recognition from the world bodies, Bangladesh as a lower income country started working for its second foreign policy to develop its economy. To fulfill this policy Bangladesh attached positively with China and several diplomatic initiatives had been furnished. To make a strong diplomatic relation, Bangladesh adopted a de facto looking *East Policy* and *One China policy* to bring itself closer to the Chinese part.⁴⁷ During the time of being, China started engaging to the economic development program of Bangladesh with significant contributions to its communication and infrastructural development.⁴⁸ With the business dealing and development work China started aid and investment in Bangladesh. Now total FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) of China is higher than that of other outward FDI's in Asia and Africa. According to the Board of Investment of Bangladesh, (BIB) there were 219 foreign investment projects running till 2011 and a large number of them from China.⁴⁹ That indicates the great economic relations between Bangladesh and China.

In the third stage, Bangladesh adopted the policy of energy and climate diplomacy as a part of Soft Power Diplomacy. Taking the shortage the energy sector in perspective Bangladesh undertakes the policy of energy and climate diplomacy to ensure its energy climate haggard like; flood, erosion, cyclones, and storms.⁵⁰ According to Chinese ambassador Mr. Li Jun, China wholly understands and respects the anxiety of Bangladesh over it. In the international negotiate bodies, China always acted as a supportive force for Bangladesh and tried to carry some responsibility in its own.⁵¹ In this regard, Bangladesh and China exchanged two letters. The main issue of that exchange program was to exchange on technical teachings to the 2nd Batch of disaster salvage and sharing equipment's and related feasibility learning of flood prevention and organization in Bangladesh, which can play a potential role to enhance the environmental security of Bangladesh.⁵² With this, in the last visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in June 2014, both Bangladesh and China

decided to undertake realistic initiatives towards security, encouragement and expansion of marine wealth and its further developments. They also made consensus to obey the international law through maritime specific survey, explore and concentrate on the acute climate issues and observing transformation on ocean acidification.⁵³ In this visit, China also agreed to support Bangladesh in identifying climate change barriers as well more cooperation on maintaining natural calamities, which also includes urban adversity rescue activities, assistance and rehabilitation support between the both countries.⁵⁴

With the above discussion it's give us a partial data of Bangladesh policy towards China and its impact on the common life of Bangladesh which is more charitable and more furnished. On the other hand Bangladesh as a peaceful state carrying the friendship relationship due to preserve its economic, social, cultural and political interests. According to Bangladesh Embassy, Beijing, China:

Bangladesh-China relations are based on shared values, commonalities in core national objectives, mutual respects, and similitude in history ... both our countries relentlessly strive to ensure peace and prosperity for their respective peoples through hard work and international collaboration with a spirit of mutual respect and share.⁵⁵

Munshi Fayeze Ahmed, an ex-Ambassador of Bangladesh who worked in the Beijing Embassy of Bangladesh said, "the relationship between Bangladesh and China is a time-tested, all-weather friendship."⁵⁶ According to the Chairman of *Centre for Foreign Affair Study* and former ambassador to China of Bangladesh Mr. Asfaque Rahman, China is a very safe choice for determining foreign policy. Bangladesh should reward China for their policy towards their neighbors. China works with their neighbors on the basis of mutual understanding. As a responsible Power, China has been building a very good relationship with its neighboring countries in various aspects that includes; trade and commerce, cultural affairs, investment and security relationship etc...

2. Political Relations

China and Bangladesh is now a trusted partner in world politics. Since 1976, the political relationship between Bangladesh and China has been running with various folds, which can be defined by a mixture of noteworthy factors. Firstly, the small state dilemma; secondly, ideological

and regional basis; thirdly, same way of path which means developing and less developing process of the both countries; fourthly, Chinese policy of 'Peaceful Co-existence' and finally, keen interest of the government of the both countries.⁵⁷ According to Chinese Ambassador Mr. Li Jun, closer comprehensive partnership between Bangladesh and China from strategic point of friendship, parity and mutual settlement are the fundamental motto of Bangladesh-China political relations.⁵⁸ With those policies both Bangladesh and China enhance their bilateral relations in various aspects. It was formulated by nurtured through high level frequent visit and share some common issues in international politics. By adopting those policies during the period of Ziaur Rahman (1977-1981) an overseas policy of non-alignment and vigorously developed good relation with China has been carried out.⁵⁹ To improve the relation, he made a visit to China in January 1977 as the Chief Martial Law Administrator and in July 1980, when treaties of covering loans and aviation's was signed by the both countries.⁶⁰ There was a reciprocal visit by the Chinese Vice-Premier Li Xiannian to Bangladesh which led to further development between the ties. During the period of Ziaur Rahman, the agreement of Economic and Technological Cooperation, agreement of Trade Payment, agreement on Loans and agreement of Aviation Transportation were signed between the administration of Bangladesh and the management of China followed by a discussion about the allocation of Ganges water issues was signed.

After the inception of relationship by General Zia assuming the state power on March 24, 1982, General H. M. Ershad (1982-1990) paid great attention to maintain bilateral relationship with China. This can be guessed from the fact that he visited China five times; 1st time in Nov 1982, 2nd in July 1985, 3rd in July 1987, 4th in Nov 1988 and finally in June 1990.⁶¹ During Ershad regime Chinese President Li Xiannian paid a friendly visit in Bangladesh on March 1986 and Nov 1989. Premier Li Peng also paid an official visit to Bangladesh during this period. Within those visits several agreements on mutual cooperation and agreement of trade were signed. In 1983, a joint commission was formulated between Bangladesh and China due to expansion of economic relations, exchange of trade, technical and scientific cooperation's. From that period, within the field of trade relations military affairs in border perspective was set up and Bangladesh purchased military weapons and got technical support from China.⁶² President Ershad maintained whole hearted good relationship with China during his government, on the other side China also maintained warm

relations with its counterpart. So, some researchers considered Ershad's regime as a breakthrough in the relationship between Bangladesh and China.⁶³

In March 1991, there was a major change occurred in Bangladesh, that was the beginning of the democratic government in Bangladesh. After the wining of the general election of 1991, Begum Khaleda Zia upheld the state policy of maintaining and improving relations with China. After securing the state power of Bangladesh Khaleda paid an official visit in China in June 1991 and got recognition from the China.⁶⁴ Later in October 2001, June 2002 and May 2004 she paid official visits in China. In 2002 the Premier of China Mr. Zhu Rongji made a visit in Bangladesh. In April 2005 Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao made another fruitful visit and both countries declared the year 2005 as the "*Bangladesh-China Friendship Year*". Besides these, many visits of high officials of the two parties including Speaker, Ministers and Party leaders of China and Bangladesh paved the way for good relations. During Begum Zia's 10 years regime (1991-1996 & 2001-2006), various MOUs, Agreements and bilateral deeds were signed between the two states.

After ascending to the state power, the incumbent Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina maintained a very strong relation with China. During her three times regime (1996-2001, 2009-14 and 2014 to till date), she tried to keep very friendly relationship with China. For this reason, after securing the state power in 1996, she paid an official visit in September 1996 and expressed gratitude to China. Later she continued her visit and met Chinese leaders in September 2000, March 2010, June 2014 and June 2019. In those visits, she tried to stress on maintaining very cordial relations and signed various bilateral agreements. From the China's side Mr. Li Peng, Chairman of the Standing Committee of NPC (National People's Congress of China) visited Bangladesh in April 1999. The then Vice-President of China Mr. Xi Zinping made an official visit to Bangladesh in June 2010. Member of CPC Political Bureau, Secretary of CPC Beijing Municipality Committee, Yunan Province Governor, High officials paid a visit to Bangladesh during this time span. Currently, Bangladesh-China are enjoying the prime time and so that the development agendas are furnishing in right time with right person.⁶⁵ In the present, China is going to implement its 12th Five Year plan with scientific improvement and economic development, on the other hand,

Bangladesh is going to implement its *Digital Bangladesh* and *Vision 2021* to become a developed nation where China as a development partner wants to work with Bangladesh to fulfill its dreams.⁶⁶ Apart from that, in May 2015, Chinese Vice-Premier Liu Yandong visited in Bangladesh and paid a short visit in Dhaka University and North South University and gave public lectures about educational development program and bilateral affiliations between the two countries. The President of China His Highness Xi Jinping made a friendly visit in Bangladesh in 2016 and the Premier of China Mr. Li Keqiang is also interested to visit Bangladesh in the near future which would enhance this bilateral relationship and open up newer horizon of the socio-cultural relations.

3. Economic Relations

Bangladesh and China have been maintaining a healthy economic relationship through three silk Routes from the historical past. However, China's great economic rise in last three decades and the steady economic growth of Bangladesh since the early 1990s have strengthened the trade relation and expanded the economic ties between the two nations. Currently China is a great economic partner of Bangladesh. To continue their economic relation, they established a joint economic commission in Nov 2, 1983. As an instance of economic relations, several agreements of economic cooperation were signed between the two countries. According to the Board of Investment of Bangladesh up to April 2015, there are 291 Chinese projects are constituting investment in Bangladesh and that of 642 million US\$ and among the projects 104 are conducted by complete FDI from China and 187 are in joint venture program.⁶⁷ There are 26 Chinese projects are also in operation in April 2015 while 10 other projects were under implementation and 8 are in the pipeline. As mentioned above the Chinese Government had already funded Bangladesh in their big projects like China-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge, China-Bangladesh Friendship Centre and so on. With these, China provided soft loans to Bangladesh to establish its Detail Area Plan (DAP) project in 2005, Friendship Exhibition Centre project in 2008.⁶⁸ China was interested in funding Bangladesh for the Padma Bridge project but the Government of Bangladesh has decided to establish this project by its internal funding, though the project was furnishing by the direct technical support of China.

China is the major business partner to Bangladesh according to its imports and exports. Though, during the years of 1974-1991 there was a very poor trade relations and economic exchange between Bangladesh and China. In that period there have just \$1.41 billion free trade and \$232 million barter trade export from China to Bangladesh and \$55 million free trade and \$272 million barter trade export have been done from Bangladesh to China.⁶⁹ From the mid of 1980's, the bilateral trading activities are being enhanced each year. Bilateral trade relations between Bangladesh and China witnessed quick expansion in the last decade. Total trade volume between the two countries exceed 10 billion US\$ in the calendar year of 2013. Among them Bangladesh exported 605 million US\$ and imported 9.71 billion US\$ products from China.⁷⁰ Though there have a disparity in the mutual trade relation is in favor of China is existing till date. A chart showing bellow last 25 years bilateral trade statistics between Bangladesh and China:⁷¹

Table 3.1 Bilateral Trade Statistics

Fiscal Year	Export (BD to China)	Import (China to BD)	Trade Ratio
1990-1991	2,012 (\$25.15)	9,929.6 (\$124.12)	1:4.93
1991-1992	1,696 (\$21.2)	11,725.8 (\$146.91)	1:6.92
1992-1993	1,306.4 (\$16.33)	17,204 (\$215.05)	1:13.16
1993-1994	516 (\$6.45)	16,325.6 (\$204.07)	1:31.63
1994-1995	955.2 (\$11.94)	23,945 (\$299.32)	1:25.06
1995-1996	1,464.8 (\$18.31)	48,048 (\$600.6)	1:32.80
1996-1997	1,550.4 (\$19.38)	51,312 (\$641.4)	1:33.09
1997-1998	4,630.4 (\$57.88)	49,771.2 (\$622.14)	1:10.74
1998-1999	2,220.8 (\$27.76)	43,726.4 (\$546.58)	1:19.68
1999-2000	652 (\$8.15)	42,711.2 (\$533.89)	1:65.50
2000-2001	764.8 (\$9.56)	53,400 (\$667.5)	1:69.82
2001-2002	443.2 (\$5.54)	61,792 (\$772.4)	1:139.42
2002-2003	1,560 (\$19.50)	75,060.8 (\$938.26)	1:48.11
2003-2004	2692.05 (\$45.65)	66762.83 (\$1132.72)	1:24.81
2004-2005	3448.85 (\$56.07)	101092.00 (\$1643.77)	1:28.58
2005-2006	4324.96 (\$64.35)	139485.90 (\$2078)	1:32.31

2006-2007	6420.35 (\$92.97)	177587.9 (\$2572.62)	1:27.67
2007-2008	7336.49 (\$106.95)	215178 (\$3136.70)	1:29.33
2008-2009	6677.73 (\$97.06)	237461 (\$3451.47)	1:35.56
2009-2010	12357.69 (\$178.63)	264217.9 (\$3819.28)	1:21.38
2010-2011	22750.06 (\$319.66)	420796 (\$5912.55)	1:18.49
2011-2012	31793.45 (\$401.94)	508867 (\$6433.21)	1:16
2012-2013	36612.95 (\$458.12)	505460 (\$6324)	1:13.8
2013-14	57927.35 (\$746.2)	586805.4 (\$7559.00)	1: 10.13
2014-15	61437.28 (\$791.00)	639456 (\$8232.99)	1:10.41
2015-2016	855092 (\$10,427.95)
2016-2017	1023760 (\$12,484.88)

*The chart shows millions in Bangladeshi Taka (in US Dollars)

This table mentioned above is showing huge trade gap between the two countries bilateral dealings. The table shows Bangladeshi trade volume has increased 5 folds in the last 10 years. In order to overcome this vast trade deficit, China grants a number of economic aids and signed the Asia-Pacific Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) to eliminate tariff obstacles from various products imported from Bangladesh to China.⁷² To reduce this big trade gap, Bangladesh Government always requests China to provide duty free access of its goods to China. As a result of bilateral diplomatic dealings, China said, China would build up closer comprehensive partnership with Bangladesh and they had already exempted 4,721 products duty free enter in Chinese market since 1 July, 2010 under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA). Bangladesh also exported duty free products in China \$690mn in the last three years which was 45% of its total export amount and the duty saved value was \$361.5mn.⁷³ Considering these, Bangladesh needs comprehensive and sympathetic consideration to improve huge deficit of trade gap with China.

4. Military Relationship

In recent years Bangladesh enjoys a broad-based cooperation with China in defense sector. Bangladesh armed forces maintains a very cordial and friendly relations with People's Liberation Army (PLA), China. High level delegations from both sides conduct visits at regular interval. In the recent years, Chief of all three services from Bangladesh paid visits to

China on several occasions. The Chief of Army Staff of Bangladesh also paid a visit in China in December 2015. Every time they had elaborate discussion on bilateral defense cooperation with the senior military officials in China, including members of the Central Military Commission. A sophisticated Chinese armed forces delegation headed by the Vice Chairman of Central Military Commission of China (CMC), General Xu Qiliang paid an official visit in Bangladesh from 11 May to 13 May 2014. During his visit four protocol/agreements were signed. China has been playing a great role to the development of security in Bangladesh. In the sector of military equipment and military training of Bangladesh, China has been playing more important role than any other country in the region. Bangladesh and China have signed a Defense Cooperation Agreement in 2002 that have helped the south Asian country to institutionalize and modify the prevailing concurrences in the defense sector. The deal has assured to provide Bangladesh a complete outlines for collaboration in training, preservation and some other areas of armed forces hardware manufacture. Being India as a powerful neighboring country, this agreement was supposed to be an insurance policy for Bangladesh and from Chin's part it was an attempt to building pressure on India by strengthening the Military relationship with India's immediate neighbor Bangladesh. According to Ruksana Kibria a noted international relation analyst, the terms of the stated deals were intentionally left unspoken, bendable, and abstruse, to allow Bangladesh getting the benefits of a strategic partnership with a nuclear power meanwhile not getting involved in any formal defense arrangement, which could pose threat to its economy and defense in near future.⁷⁴

As a part of greater cooperative effort between the two countries, China provided Bangladesh with police equipment in March 2006. It was based on a mutual understanding between China's Public Security Ministry and Ministry of Home Affairs of Bangladesh. In addition, Dhaka has also procured 16 F-7 BG war planes from Beijing. China and Bangladesh decided to extend law enforcement cooperation during a visit of Home Minister of Bangladesh to China. In May 2006, Army Chief of Bangladesh met Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan. General Cao Told that, "China and Bangladesh have formed an excellent and well tested teamwork and synchronization on different international agendas and China will collaborate continue its relations with Bangladesh to maintain regional and peace and stability of the globe." He also opined

that, the forthcoming friendly military cooperation among the armies of Bangladesh and China will enhance the bilateral relationship. A noteworthy official visits in armed forces issues between Bangladesh and China provide us important evidence that, Bangladesh put much importance on military relation with China and in the same way; China also gives much importance on military relations with Bangladesh. Since 1974, there have been 84 visits to Bangladesh in comparison with 60 or 70 visits to India in the same periods.⁷⁵ Though, according to prominent security analyst Arnold Zeitlin, “It is an ordinary data among political circles in Dhaka that the armed forces of Bangladesh is not pleased with the excellence of Chinese ammunitions and it is likewise familiar that it cannot discover other merchandise as cheap”.⁷⁶

Overall, the main goal of the Dhaka’s sub-continental policy is to enhance its security. And China is only pleased to react and reaffirm its strategic existence in South Asia. China has become a key supplier of military hardware to the Armed Forces of Bangladesh. In 2006, Bangladesh Army was provided with 65 large caliber artillery systems and 114 missiles and related equipment by Beijing.⁷⁷ They also sold huge amount of armored personnel carriers (APCs), missiles, small arms and special weapons to Bangladesh. The South Asian Country also had a plan to buy 155mm PLZ-45/Type-88, 122mm Type-96 and MBRLs from China by 2011 which includes transfer of respective military hardware technology. Since 1977 China has been supplying fighter aircraft for Bangladesh Air Force. In later years China has provided Bangladesh F7, Q5 and PT Trainers fighter plane. In 2005 Bangladesh ordered 16F-BG and in 2006 China supplied that. In 2005, Bangladesh Air Force ordered 16 Chinese made F-7BG fighter planes and the deliveries began in 2006. Liang Guanglie, the Defense Minister of China stressed that, China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) always gives importance on building a trustworthy and cooperative relation with the Armed Forces of Bangladesh. Sino-Bangladesh defense cooperation is also very strong. China has appeared as a key supplier of military hardware to Bangladesh Armed Forces. Majority of the tanks (T-59, T-62, T- 69, and T-79), a greater number of artillery pieces, armored personnel carriers (APCs), small arms and personal weapons used by Bangladesh Army are made in China. The erstwhile commander of PLA Navy Admiral Zhang Liang Zhong has assured that, Bangladesh Navy has the same tactical and sophisticated security management as China. The capacity Bangladesh

Navy is enhanced by Chinese made Huang Feng class missile boats, 053-H1 Jianghu I class frigates with 4 x HY2 missiles, Type-024 missile boats, Huchuan and P 4 class torpedo boats, Shanghai class gun boats, Yuchin class LCUs and Hainan class sub chasers. China is a major supplier of Bangladesh navy.

Bangladesh-China relations enjoyed very warm status in their diplomatic arena from 2009. As a result of very warm diplomatic relations, Bangladesh imports its most arms and ammunitions from China and now Bangladesh is one of the major arms importers of China. On the other hand China also provided utmost support to strengthening the security affairs of Bangladesh and provides various training programs. Here a table is given below to shown the present status of Bangladesh-China military relations according to the weapons retailing and dealings amount. According to the Stockholm's International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Bangladesh import of weapons data are given below:

Table 3.2 Bangladesh weapons import from China (1991- 2016) (In million US\$)⁷⁸

Year of Import	Import from China	Import from other States	Trade Ratio
1991	61	18	3.38:1
1992	87	26	3.34:1
1993	5	39	1:7.8
1994	20	41	1:2.05
1995	9	110	1:12.22
1996	7	-----	-----
1997	-----	25	-----
1998	-----	-----	-----
1999	33	152	1:4.61
2000	11	192	1:17.45
2001	2	264	1:132
2002	-----	41	-----
2003	-----	8	-----
2004	7	25	1:3.57

Year of Import	Import from China	Import from other States	Trade Ratio
2005	1	9	1:9
2006	184	37	4.97:1
2007	66	22	3:1
2008	10	3	3.33:1
2009	-----	-----	-----
2010	12	27	1:2.25
2011	102	35	2.91:1
2012	172	34	5.05:1
2013	506	156	3.24:1
2014	198	3	66:1
2015	436	189	2.30:1
2016	252	186	1.35:1
Total	2181	3817	1:1.75

From the above table it gives us a strong data and apprehension about Bangladesh-China well shaped and warm bilateral relationship. And believed that this relationship will help to build strengthen social and cultural relationship between the both countries.

5. Social and Cultural Relations

Contemporary Asian dynamics indicate that, China is very good friend to Bangladesh. Strategic position of Bangladesh has paid a great attention to the great power of Asia. China as a good friend of Bangladesh and a rising power of the world, China is formulating its strategic point of view for maintaining well shaped relationship to its South Asian friends e.g. Bangladesh. After being recognized by China, a cultural tie at the government level was established on 17 November of 1979. In that agreement, six spheres of cultural cooperation were specified. These were (a) Literature (b) Visual and Performing Arts (c) Education and Research (d) Science and Technology (e) Media, (f) Sports and Tourism. One of the notable sides of this deal was delegation exchange and goodwill tour of both sides.⁷⁹ On 18 November 1989 an Agreement on Mutual Exemption of visas between Bangladesh and China for their diplomats and officials

was signed for the indefinite period and till date these facilities have been enjoyed by their concerning classes.⁸⁰ To escalate the notion of the relationship an executive exchange program of the cultural agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has renewed on 11 January 2002, under the agreement of 1979 for the session of 2001-2003 which was effected on the same date of first signing.⁸¹ In December 2003 an Executive Exchange Program on Cultural Agreement between Bangladesh and China was renewed under the agreement till the consecutive years 2004-2008. Later this Cultural Executive program was renewed under the Bilateral Cultural Agreement for the year of 2009-2012 on 11 December 2008, and for the later years on 28 May 2014.⁸² With the cultural exchange program several education exchange MoUs and deals have been signed between Bangladesh and China during this time span as strengthen diplomatic relations.

Priorities and Realities

According to the discussion aforementioned some questions may arise; 1. Has Bangladesh-China relationship reached its height or zenith? 2. What are the outcomes of Bangladesh-China ties after 44 years of its formal inception of diplomatic relation? 3. How does Bangladesh-China diplomatic relation influence other relationships between these two countries? Drawing attention on those questions, we firstly need to clarify the priorities those are formulated from Bangladesh side to achieve really. To find out the answer to the query of concern, we need to concentrate on Bangladesh's approach to *One China Policy* and *East Policy*. To examine the policy of Bangladesh, we need to focus on Bangladesh's interest in *Chinese Dream*, *One Belt One Road* (OBOR) initiative and BRICS.

From the very beginning of the establishment of diplomatic relationship, Bangladesh has concentrated on *One China Policy* and *East Policy* due to respect for China along with its interest. When China formulated *Triangular Diplomacy* (1970-1989) in the early-mid of 1980s, Bangladesh showed respect to China's foreign policy and supported its policies in the international organization like UNO. Later, during the period of *Taoguangyanghui* (তাও কুয়াং ইয়াংকুঙ্গী/hiding its capabilities/Low Profile Policy) (1990-2010), Bangladesh maintained strong ties with China and exchanged various economic deals. In the era of Chinese latest foreign

policy based on *Chinese Dreams* (2010-present), Bangladesh has wholeheartedly supported Chinese policy and observed its notions. Within the foreign policy framework of Chinese government, Bangladesh is working and supporting China in policy making issues like OBOR (One Belt One Route), BRICS etc.

On the other hand, some questions may arise regarding the responsibility of China to make the tie fruitful .e.g. is China supporting Bangladesh in the international forum like UNO? Is Chinese participation in Bangladesh helping its development? Following these questions, we need to examine whether Chinese participation helps different development programs of Bangladesh and supports other activities of Bangladesh.

China as an actor of Asian politics concentrates on South Asian politics and tries to engage in geo-politics from the very beginning. As a good friend of Pakistan and geo-politically an enemy of India, China is trying to elevate its position in South Asian politics. So, in order to hold its strong position and establish Chinese policy (rejuvenation of Silk Route and keep maritime position with BRICS establishment) in South Asia, China is providing various infrastructural facilities and financial supports to Bangladesh, Srilanka, Nepal and Pakistan. Importance of China to Bangladesh depends on basically economic, strategic and defense cooperation and its facilities.⁸³ As a development partner, China is working on Padma Bridge project, Chottogram River Dam project. Other 291 projects in Bangladesh are run by Chinese investment worthy of 642 million US\$ and among the projects 104 are conducted by complete FDI from China and 187 are in joint venture program.⁸⁴ According to import and export in the field of trade and commerce, China is a major business partner of Bangladesh. As seen a great deficit of trade, China exempted 4,721 Bangladeshi products as duty free for getting access to Chinese market since 1 July, 2010 in order to make a trade balance. But still a huge deficit is detected in this field.⁸⁵ In the formulation of political agenda, China concentrates on its own interest. As Kaplan observes, China is not still friendly to its perception about Ganges water sharing as well as Rohingya issues that need to be taken into consideration from Chinese part.⁸⁶

On the other hand though Bangladesh is a small country but it has priorities to China because of its geo-political strategic position. As a

country standing on the banks of the Bay of Bengal and its geo-physical location (surrounded by India on three sides) Bangladesh emerged as an important country to China. China's priorities also lay on about India-China relations basically the factor of Siliguri corridor and Assam. Another priority also get impetus from the Chinese side is to building a Deep Sea Port in the Bay of Bengal which is near to be abandoned due to the pressure of India. With the geo-physical importance Bangladesh imports most of its military weapons and emergency credential (food, beverage, machineries, garments products, accessories etc.) from China which includes heights imports of Bangladesh in a fiscal year also important to China. Moreover, there are more than 291 projects are running with the direct affiliation of China which is also a priority of China and they achieved as per their demand.

Conclusion

From the discussion aforementioned, it can be said that Bangladesh-China relationship depends on particular bi-lateral interests. In this regard, China always seeks its own interest which requires more attention from Bangladesh part. Though the priority lies in various economic dealings along with political issues like Rohingya crisis, Indian relations with Bangladesh and maritime regulatory process of China, and transboundary water sharing perspective of Ganges basin and Jangmu Hydropower; but there remains a trusted relationship between these two countries. If the above mentioned priorities get positive response from China side, the tie between Bangladesh and China will remain at its best; and it will influence other expected dealings for optimum outcomes in the near future. And if Bangladesh priority regarding economic cooperation will be increase with the fold of trade and development projects will help to construct balanced relations between them which will help to furnish an all-weather friendship between Bangladesh and China.

Referances

1. *Bangladesh and China Four Decades of Partnership.*"Bangladesh-China Relations: Four Decades of Partnership." November 2015, p. 2.
2. Colin Elman, *International Relation Theory for the 21st Century*, Ed. By Martin Griffiths, Routledge, New York, 2007, p. 11
3. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Addition-Wesley Publishing Company, California, 1979, pp. 88-99
4. Colin Elman, *op.cit.*, pp.11-20; Jack Donnelly, *Theory of International Relations*, 3rd edition Palgrave MacMillan, 2005, pp.29-54

5. Ahmed, S M Shafiuddin. "Bangladesh-China Relations: Scope for attaining new heights." *BISS Journal*, Vol. 34. No. 4 , 2013, pp. 273-274.
6. Ahmed, Imtiaz. "Bangladesh Foreign Policy: Constraints, Compulsion and Choice." *BIIS Journal (Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies)*, Vol. 32, No. 3 , July 2011, p. 209.
7. Ahmed, S M Shafiuddin. "Bangladesh-China Relations: Scope for attaining new heights." *BISS Journal* Vol. 34. No. 4 , 2013, p. 275.
8. Copper, John F. "China's Policy toward Bangladesh." *China Report*, 1973, pp. 11-17.
9. *Ibid*, p. 17.
10. "The Genocide Bangladesh." www.genocidebangladesh.org. December 12, 2016. Source: <http://www.genocidebangladesh.org/text-of-the-tri-patriate-agreement-of-bangladesh-pakistan-india/> (accessed December 12, 2016).
11. Martins, Dora. "China's Rise: Some Considerations ." In *From Early Tang Court Debates to China's Peaceful Rise*, by Friederike Assandri and Dora Martins, Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press, 2009, pp. 121-141.
12. Jakobson, L. and Knox, D. *New foreign policy actors in China*. Solna: Sweden: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2010.
13. Friedman, E. "Chinese Politics as a Source of China's Foreign Policy." *Asia Policy*, 9(1), 2010, pp. 185-188.
14. Guo, B. and Teng, C. *China's quiet rise*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011.
15. Bijian, Z. *China's road to peaceful rise*. Abingdon: Oxon: Routledge, 2011.
16. Callahan, W. and Barabantseva, E. *China orders the world*. Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011.
17. Rahman, Sheikh Mujibur. *The Unfinished Memoir*. Dhaka: The University Press Limited (June), 2015, p. 294.
18. "www.du.ac.bd." *University of Dhaka*. April 12, 2017. http://www.du.ac.bd/main_menu/the_university/honoris_causa (accessed April 12, 2017).
19. *Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Bangladesh and China*. "Bangladesh and China: Four Decades of Partnership." November 2015, p. 02.
20. Carde, F. *The making of Chinese foreign policy*. Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 1979.
21. Daoyu, L. "China's Foreign Policy on Global and Regional Issues." *American Foreign Policy Newsletter*, Vol.14, Num.5, 1991, pp. 1-6.
22. Copper, John F. "China's Policy Toward Bangladesh." *China Report*, 1973, p. 17.
23. Tyagi, V. K. "China's Bangladesh Policy." *China Report*, (July-August) 1980, pp. 21-23.
24. Guihong, Z. "China's Peaceful Rise and Sino-Indian Relations." *China Report*, Vol. 41, Num.2, 2005, pp. 159-171.
25. Fairbank, J. "China's Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 47, Num.3, 1969, p. 449.
26. Feng, H. *Chinese Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Decision-Making*. Hoboken: Taylor & Francis Ltd., 2007.
27. Martins, Dora., *Op.cit.*, p. 45
28. Tyagi, V. K., *Op.cit.*, p. 23.

29. Lynch, D. "Securitizing Culture in Chinese Foreign Policy Debates." *Asian Survey*, Vol. 53, Num.4, 2013, pp. 629-652.
30. Reilly, J. *Strong society, smart state*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
31. Bhattacharya, A. "Revisiting China's Peaceful Rise: Implications for India." *East Asia*, Vol. 22, Num.4, 2005, pp. 59-80.
32. Glaser, B. S. "Chinese Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping: Continuity and Change." *Criticle Issues Confronting China Seminar Series*, 2014, pp. 1-2.
33. *Ibid*.
34. Saleem, B. G. "China's Policy Towards South Asia-An Appraisal." *China and Asia (Spring Session)*, 2013, pp. 8-9.
35. *Ibid*, pp. 9-11.
36. Small, A. "Regional Dynamics and Strategic Concern in South Asia: China's Role." *Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)*, January, 2014, p. 8.
37. Jinping, Xi. *The Governance of China*. Beijing, China: Foreign Languages Press, 2015, pp.325- 328.
38. Xianyi, Zhang. "China's Foreign Policy on Neighbouring Countries and China-Bangladesh Relationship." *Dhaka Courier*, December 31, 2010, p. 26.
39. Sayeed, D. S. "Jostling under the armpits of giants." *Dhaka Courier:Time, Space & Dimension*, August 15, 2014, pp. 17-18.
40. Xianyi, Zhang. *Op.cit.*, p. 26.
41. *BIISS Country Lecture Series, Part. I*, by Li Jun, Ambassador of China in Bangladesh, Edited by. Major General S M Shafiuddin Ahmed, Eskaton, Dhaka, 23 April, 2014, p. 67
42. "Defination of Foreign Policy." *www.businessdictionary.com*. December 7, 2016. <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/foreign-policy.html> (accessed December 7, 2016).
43. "Constitution of Bangladesh." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh*. November 22, 2016. . <http://www.mofa.gov.bd/content/foreign-policy- bangladesh-0> (accessed November 22, 2016).
44. Ahmed, Imtiaz., *Op.cit.*, p. 207.
45. *Ibid*, p. 208.
46. *Ibid*, p. 209.
47. Islam, M. Shahidul. *China-Bangladesh Relations: Contemporary Convergence*. Diplomatic, Dhaka, Bangladesh: The Daily Star, January 25, 2012.
48. Selim, Sharif M. Hossain and Ishtiaque. "Sino-Bangladesh Economic Relations: Prospects and Challenges." *BIISS Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 4, October 2006, p. 339.
49. Islam, M. Shahidul. *Op.cit.*
50. Ahmed, Imtiaz., *Op.cit.*, p. 211.
51. Jun, Li, interview by The Daily Star Diplomatic Correspondent Rezaul Karim. *Exclusive Interview on 'China-Bangladesh relations have become the model of friendship between countries with different social systems and different cultures'* (July 19, 2012).
52. Zaman, S. S. " Hasina's China Tour No consensus yet on deep sea port ." *The Dhaka Tribune*. June 10, 2014. <http://www.dhakatribune.com/politics/2014/ jun/10/no-consensus-yet-deep-sea-port#sthash.EV5CWKts.dpuf> (accessed November 21, 2014).

53. "Bangladesh-China joint statement." *The Daily Star*: June 12, 2014. www.thedailystar.net/.../bangladesh-china-joint-statement-28234 (accessed November 26, 2014).
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Bangladesh and China*. "Bangladesh and China: Four Decades of Partnership." November 2015, p. 03.
56. Rahman, Dr. Tareque Shamshur. "Some Saying about China-USA Relations (in Bengali)." *The Daily Ittefaq*, July 20, 2011: Editorial.
57. Rahman, Tareque Shamsur and Uddin, Mohammad Jasim. "Bangladesh and China: A Review of 35-Year Relations." *Journal of Internal Affairs*, Vol. 15, Num.1 & 2, 2011, pp. 49-64.
58. Jun, Li, interview by The Daily Star Diplomatic Correspondent Rezaul Karim. *Exclusive Interview on 'China-Bangladesh relations have become the model of friendship between countries with different social systems and different cultures'* (July 19, 2012).
59. Franda, Marcus. "Ziaur Rahman and Bangladeshi Nationalism." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.16, Num. 10-12, 1981, p. 358.
60. *OPTIMISM as Xi Jinping flies in Dhaka*. Diplomatic, Dhaka, Bangladesh: The Daily Star, 2016.
61. *OPTIMISM as Xi Jinping flies in Dhaka*. Diplomatic, Dhaka, Bangladesh: The Daily Star, 2016.
62. Ehsan, G. C. "Bangladesh-China Relations in the 21st Century." *NDC Journal* , Vol. 11, Num.1, 2012, pp. 133-134.
63. *Ibid*, p. 134.
64. Ehsan, G. C., *Op.cit.*, p. 134.
65. Jun, Li, interview by The Daily Star Diplomatic Correspondent Rezaul Karim. *Exclusive Interview on 'China-Bangladesh relations have become the model of friendship between countries with different social systems and different cultures'* (July 19, 2012).
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Bangladesh and China*. *Op.cit.*, p. 07.
68. "Agreements/MoUs between Bangladesh and the countries of East Asia and Pacific." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh*. May 9, 2015. <http://www.mofa.gov.bd/media/agreementsmous-between-bangladesh-countries-east-asia-and-pacific> (accessed November 4, 2016).
69. Chakravarti, R. "China and Bangladesh." *China Report*, Vol. 30, Num. 2, 1994, pp. 149-159.
10. *Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Bangladesh and China*. *Op.cit.*, p. 05.
71. "DCCI Research cell." *Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries*. December 18, 2016. http://www.dhakachamber.com/home/Asian_trade (accessed December 18, 2016); Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
72. "China Centre." *University of Calcutta*. 2014. <http://www.caluniv.ac.in/academic/China%20Study%20Final/Relations%20between%20China%20and%20Bangladesh.html> (accessed December 30, 2014).

73. Chowdhury, S. I. "China will build up closer comprehensive partnership with Bangladesh." *Dhaka Tribune*. June 06, 2014. <http://www.dhakatribune.com/foreign-affairs/2014/jun/06/china-will-build-closer-comprehensive-partnership-bangladesh#stha> (accessed August 3, 2015).
74. Kibria, Ruksana. *Strategic Implication of Bangladesh-China Relations*. Editorial, Dhaka, Bangladesh: The Daily Star, February 19, 2005.
75. Aneja, Urvashi. "China-Bangladesh Relations: An Emerging Strategic Partnership? IPCS Special Report ." *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS)*, Vol. 33, 2006, pp. 1-11.
76. Zeitlin, Arnold. "Bangladesh Ambivalent Relations with PRC." *China Brief (The Jamestown Foundation)*, Vol. 5, No. 5, March 2005, p. 21.
77. *China Supplies Low Quality Arms in Bangladesh*. International, Assam, India: Assam Tribune, October 2007.
78. "Stockholm's International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)." www.armstrade.sipri.org. December 31, 2016. <http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/values.php> (accessed February 22, 2017).
79. Uddin, A. K. M. Jasim. *Bangladesh-China Relations (1971-1981)*. An unpublished M. Phil Thesis, Dhaka: Jahangir Nagar University, Savar, Dhaka, 2002, pp.108-132.
80. Pacific, Agreements/MoUs between Bangladesh & the countries of East Asia and. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh*. May 9, 2015. <http://www.mofa.gov.bd/media/agreementsmous-between-bangladesh-countries-east-asia-and-pacific> (accessed November 4, 2016).
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.*
83. Ahmed, S M Shafiuddin, Bangladesh-China Relations: Scope for attaining New Heights, *BISS Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 4, October 2013, pp.277-282
84. *Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Bangladesh and China*. Op.cit., p. 07.
85. Chowdhury, S. I. "China will build up closer comprehensive partnership with Bangladesh." *Dhaka Tribune*. June 06, 2014. <http://www.dhakatribune.com/foreign-affairs/2014/jun/06/china-will-build-closer-comprehensive-partnership-bangladesh#stha> (accessed August 3, 2015).
86. Kaplan, D. Robert, *Monson: The Indian Ocean and Future of American Power*, Random House, New York, 2010, Chapter Eight: Bangladesh the existential Challenges, eISBN: 978-0-679-60405-1

RELIGIOUS REASONING BEHIND THE PRECISE FORMATION OF THE UNIVERSE: A PERSPECTIVE OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Shafiul Islam^{*}

Abstract

The creation of the universe has left unlimited marks through its physical manifestations. Undoubtedly, those traces have been triggering the human curiosity a lot in cosmological study since the very beginning of existence. Scholars, from different branches of knowledge, have attempted to analyze the truth about the universe's formation, but science and religion have been quite extraordinary in this regard. Every field of philosophy has its unique way of finding the ultimate outcome. Focusing on the issue, religion and science have their analyses based on particular systems of explanations. Importantly, no philosophical direction is intended to search for either similarity or difference with another branch of knowledge but aims at the objective understanding following the established guidelines. Consequently, logical explanation finds its way in no direction but only to meet the right outcome sticking to distinctive methods. The Contemporary world is being designated after science for its gradual progress, but the appeal of religion is also finding its influences in human psyche more than ever. Both religion and science have been contributing in the field of studying the universe providing vital information about its formation and mechanism. Therefore, analyzing the very construction of the universe requires both of these philosophical approaches have a clearer understanding.

Keywords: Universe, Quran, Bible, Religion, Science, God, Islam, Allah, Christianity.

Introduction

Religion provides much information about creation including the moral code of conduct for human lives. It always refers to crucial knowledge about the precise formation of the universe through its sacred texts and scholarly reasonings. Natural creation is vastly occupied with proofs of creation which are mostly compatible with the writings of

^{*} Assistant Professor, Department of World Religions and Culture, University of Dhaka.

different sacred texts. Even the critical scientific theories and laws are explained and found significantly in those sacred sources.

Here, the ultimate focus is given on the analyses of Islamic religious traditions and its sacred text regarding the reasonings in support of the universe's precise formation. Additionally, the textual and scholarly contributions of Christianity are considered to make strong monotheistic arguments on the same affair. Consecutively, the basic scriptures of those religious traditions are called the Quran and the Bible (or New Testament). They are miraculously occupied with reasonable explanations related to the concrete formation of the universe. More specifically, the Quran is treasured with diversified knowledge on this formation mechanism, which has covered all feasible understanding of the universe. Sometimes, the scientific world has found the beauty of creation much later than those already existing writings in the Quran and the Bible. Throughout the Quran, Almighty *Allah* (Creator) is put forward as the cause of this construction. The same indication of creator or God is found in the Christian tradition also.

Precise Formation of the Universe and Its Philosophical and Religious Basement in Islamic and Christian Traditions

In today's scientific world, several world religions have justifications regarding this finely tuned universe, but Islamic and Christian religious traditions are found to be quite extraordinary about it. Intellectuals have been explaining the cosmos in the light of those traditions indicating the religious viewpoints on the universe.

Theistic Grounds

The very first question about the formation of the universe lies on the creation mechanism behind it. Either a creator has created everything or it has just happened naturally. Religious believers and scholars of Islamic and Christian traditions have been arguing to establish that very creation basing on their sacred texts. Apart from them, many scientists found these texts worthy of believing in many issues. Since 1970, religious believers have been presenting their arguments from two possible explanations regarding the fine-tuning aspects: God or chance (Kuhn, 2007, p. 2). They also have their counter arguments on the same aspects from scientific scholars. Richard Dawkins is a well-known atheist in contemporary time and has suggested different reasonings from scientific analysis. He pointed

through the *anthropic* principle against the God supporting reasons. According to him, this *anthropic* principle has strong evidence against the motion and is enough to justify a perfect world without God (Halvorson & Kragh, 2010, pp.17-18). This is just one example among many intellectuals like Dawkins who does not believe that the creation was an act of God. Needless to say, theists have countered the argument that the *anthropic* arguments possess no threat on support of the divinely created world. For example, renowned philosopher John Polkinghorne and William Lane Craig pointed otherwise that the *anthropic* principle is compatible with divine design (Ibid). The viewpoints of different scholarly figures have engaged themselves from logical grounds to justify the perfection of the universe by active participation of God behind it.

Philosophical Arguments from Religious Scholars

Religious scholars like Thomas Aquinas, Maimonides, Avicenna and Averroes proposed four philosophical reasoning on this behalf.¹ Firstly, creation of the universe is not a temporal event but denotes a relationship of ultimate dependence. Therefore, God should not be conceived as cause of an interaction or physical force but which involves a permanent relationship of dependence. This is the *creation continua* aspect of *creatio ex nihilo*². This concept is identical with the monotheistic theological traditions where creator is sustaining or conserving. God is shown as the ultimate cause behind this creation but is not the cause of changes in the creation (Carroll, 2008, pp. 592-3). Secondly, Creator is better to conceive as the force or action rather than an Entity. It might be said that the whole creation is the limited participation of existence in the pure, self-subsisting activity, being and creativity of the Creator. Traditionally, theologians and philosophers have referred to God as that pure act (Burrell, 2010, pp. 11-12). Thirdly, this concept of universe discourages humans to conceive the Creator as intervening or controlling the dynamisms within it. On the other hand, God is believed to endow the processes and relationships in nature

¹ For details, see LaCugna, 1993, pp.158–67; Gilkey, 1990, pp.226–41; Carroll, 2008, pp.582–602; Stoeger, 1992, pp. 254–69; Stoeger, 2008, pp.225–48.

² ‘*Creatio ex nihilo*’ is a Latin saying which has two parts: ‘*creatio*’ and ‘*ex nihilo*’. ‘*Ex nihilo*’ means out of nothing and ‘*creatio*’ means creation. ‘*Creatio ex nihilo*’ states that ‘creation out of nothing’. There is a long discussion about that matter of universe’s creation. Generally, creation out of nothing points to two basic aspects: firstly, all-natural things are ontologically depended upon God and secondly, the entire universe had a beginning and it did not always exist like today. (Peters, pp.273-74).

with their very being and abilities of autonomous activities. Metaphorically, God is the cause behind all the natural mechanisms not by controlling but by empowering them to operate. Every action or natural occurrence is free to function without His intervention. Fourthly, this relationship of ultimate dependence is highly differentiated and not uniform (Stoeger, pp.152-75). All reasonings have two vital aspects: God is the reason of the universe and He does not intervene the natural law.

Creation in Natural Theology

Natural theology³ is inherent in every aspect of the Quran and the Bible. *A priori* reasoning of the ontological argument defines no reference to the physical cosmos and it reminds that nature, not the object, is the source of natural theology (Jolley, 1992, pp. 393–423). Contrarily, *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas developed a *posteriori* argument which refers the role of natural phenomena. Aquinas proposed a few ways in support of belief in God consistent with philosophical thought but mainly focused on the cause of creation (Ibid). He opined that there must be a first cause behind the creation and that cause has justification to possess divine creation (Ibid). Most of his arguments are included in his proposed cosmological argument which denotes a chain of causes accountable for the phenomena of the universe. His other part of argument is called the teleological or design argument. The later one has pointed that the perfect design of the universe is compatible with a divine creator (Ibid). Logically, the precise design and order of the natural phenomena requires as supreme divine creator like God. This sort of creation is totally impossible by any other being and only matches with the attributes of God. Same evaluation was done by other fellow scholars also. 17th century Anglican cleric Thomas Sprat, for example, asserted that the attributes of God like the Divine, All Powerful and the Creator are displayed in the order and design of the creatures (Nauta & Vanderjagt, 1999, pp. 243–67). Natural manifestations and formations made things explainable to religious scholars who have literary support from the sacred scriptures. Similarly, Christian naturalist John Ray felt the urge of serving religion and suggested that the related study of the universe could be a religious vocation. He explained that the natural phenomena are a result of Godly works in his

³ 'Theology' is a Greek term which has been using to refer the study or rational expression about God. The term is derived from '*theos*' and '*logos*' which consecutively mean 'God' and 'rational expression'. (Ryrie, 1986, p.13).

famous book *Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation* (1691) (Gaukroger, 2006, p. 506). Islamic and Christian backgrounds are well furnished in their sacred texts about the concept of Creator, Who is solely responsible to create all of these intelligent creations.

Creation of the Universe in Monotheistic Theology

Both Islam and Christianity are famous for their monotheistic approaches. Throughout the world, this is commonly titled as ‘God’, which is the widely accepted terminology for the Christian believers. In Islam, Muslims use the term ‘*Allah*’ to call or identify the one creator. Although, the Christian concept of God slightly differs from the Islamic concepts but broadly, both traditions convey the message of monotheism. In logical understanding, ‘God’ is the widely used term to refer the monotheistic concept opposing the polytheism⁴. Each of these traditions agrees that everything in this universe is created by God or one Supreme Being. Many scholars from time to time have supported the arguments on behalf of one Supreme Creator. Conway in his book, *The Rediscovery of Wisdom* tried to describe the classical conception of philosophy. According to this conception, “the explanation of the universe and its broad formation had been a creation from supreme omniscient and omnipotent intelligence, which is commonly referred as God. This God has created things in proper order” (Conway, 2000, pp. 2-3). Natural law in Islam and Christianity are settled by God. All fine-tuning arguments are resolved through textual explanations on particular issues. In addition, the ancient sayings from the traditions acknowledged the creation and human responsibility within it. The Bible states: “And God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth” (The Holy Bible, Genesis 1:28; p. 4). The statement of the Bible conveys the message of God for the mankind and their responsibilities in this universe. Mankind was commanded to act as a steward in this earth and all provisions are at their service in due manner. Notably, Modern Science owes in a great deal to this traditional religious reasoning of creation and creator to percept the very formation of the universe.

⁴ ‘Polytheism’ is a term which is used for believing in the plurality of god or deity. Simply, it means ‘belief in more than one deity’. Hinduism, Greek religion and Egyptian religion are some of the examples of polytheistic tradition. (Introduction to Theism, p.3).

Finely Created Universe in Religious Reasonings

Many scientific discoveries and theories are found compatible with the Islamic and Christian literary information. It is noteworthy that religious information found in those sources are very logical to justify different precise creation of the universe. The religious texts are treasured with outstanding inner mechanism of the universe, its perfect laws of governance, its concrete mixture of elements and reasonings in support of every precise creation. Few of them are considered, here, to show strong religious arguments about the preciseness of this universe.

Theory of Big Bang and Ever-expanding Universe

In Islam and Christianity, the creation of the universe was occurred by no one but God as explained above. The Big Bang theory is also religiously argued quoting from the sacred texts. Actually, the theory introduced some scientific explanations about the possible beginning of the cosmos and those explanations are quite compatible with those two religions. The New Testament rightly stated that: "Thus saith the Lord God that created the heavens, and stretched them out..." (Ibid., Isaiah 42:5; p. 922). The verse focuses on three special points: God is the Creator, everything is created and the universe is in motion. Almost same message is written in another verse of the Bible that: "Who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and walketh upon the waves of the sea." (Ibid., Job 9:8; p. 645). The Bible is, therefore, not only saying about the origin but also is being supportive regarding the expansion of the universe. Likewise, the Quran states, "And the sky We have built firmament with might: and We indeed have vast power. And We have spread out the (spacious) earth: how excellently We do spread out!" (Q. 51:47-48; Ali, 1987, p. 447). Supportive information on precise universe is found in many verses of the Quran. In chapter thirty-one, it is said: If thou ask them, who it is that created the heavens and the earth. They will certainly say, "*Allah*". Say: "Praise be to *Allah*!" But most of them understand not" (Ibid., Q. 3:25; p. 204). The Quran in other verses added more information about the mechanism of creation from Almighty *Allah*. In two consecutive chapters, the origin of creation or the original action in the time of creation is put forwarded in a quite similar fashion. The Quran testifies that: "To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: When He decreeth a matter, He saith to it: "Be," and it is" (Ibid., Q. 2:117; p. 8). And one verse from chapter three stated: "Even so: *Allah* createth what He

willeth: When He hath decreed a plan, He but saith to it, 'Be,' and it is!" (Ibid., Q. 3:47; p. 24). These two different verses possess the same message of creation. Moreover, chapter 6: verse 73, chapter 16: verse 40, chapter 36: verse 82, chapter 40: verse 68 and other verses in the Quran included the similar arguments. Those verses also included information about the causes of material construction. The ultimate cause is occupied with *Allah* only. In Islam, when Almighty *Allah* wants to create something, He just asks for it and it happens and this is one of the infinite qualities of God in Islam. It is not so unlikely to understand if the Big Bang theory is studied. According to the scientific explanation of this theory, the creation time was incredibly short and like a blink of eyes. The explosion happened so quickly to perceive, but the creation gets visible to us now. Before the creation, everything was just covered with a formless shadow. God described the Bible: "And the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved over the waters. And God said: Be light made. And light was made" (Op. cit., Genesis, 1:2-3, p. 3). Then the darkness was removed by the light. Gradually, other things got shaped and settled in a perfect manner. The divine designer has precisely created things for the survival of living creatures. Likewise, the Quran did not stop with the creation of creatures and other phenomena but described the aftermath of it also. The Quran has a very well decorated verse regarding the expansion of the universe. *Allah* says: "Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together [as one unit of creation], before we clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?" (Op. cit., Q. 21:30; p. 156) The theory of Ever-Expanding Universe is not even a hundred years old but the Quran showed the proof around 1400 years back.

Perfect universe is not always a matter of belief, when it is well justified to those who like to understand reasonably. The beauty of the creation is well preserved in the verses of the Bible and the Quran with logical understanding. Information about the creation, planetary laws, formation of matters and shape of objects made the beauty of the universe more viable to the reasonable persons.

Precise Laws of Heavenly Bodies

The holy Quran referred to the laws of physical world and planetary objects, which had revealed another dimension of the precise formation

before the intellectuals. Science has done a long investigation about several laws of heavenly bodies. Some of the important scientific queries are as follows,

- a. Are planets or stars moving or static?
- b. Are these heavenly bodies moving in their own axis?
- c. Is earth at the center of the universe or the sun?
- d. Is the sun static or moving like other objects?
- e. Are planetary objects orbiting through maintaining a calculative gap between each other or not?
- f. Is there a systematic mechanism regarding the orbiting rules?
- g. Is the moon providing its own light?

These questions have taken a long time for the scientists to prove, but religion has reasonable answers in their sacred scriptures. The holy Quran explained these laws and mechanisms in various verses. The Moon light, for instance, is a reflected version from the Sun on this Earth. In the Quran, it is said that: “Blessed is He Who made constellations in the skies, and placed therein a Lamp and a Moon giving light” (Ibid., Q. 25:61; p. 177). Similarly, *Allah* stated that: “It is He Who made the sun to be a shining glory and the moon to be a light [of beauty], and measured out stages for her; that ye might know the number of years and the count [of time]. Nowise did *Allah* create this but in truth and righteousness. [Thus] doth He explain His Signs in detail, for those who understand” (Ibid., Q. 10:5: pp. 93-94). In chapter ten of the Quran, the Moon is appreciated as a sign of beauty. This verse again reminds the believers about their Creator *Allah*. Likewise, the Quran again pointed: “See ye not how *Allah* has created the seven heavens one above another. And made the moon a light in their midst, and made the sun as a [Glorious] Lamp?” (Ibid., Q. 71:15-16; p. 298) The writings of the Quran are not easily comprehensible to all and they require expertise to understand. The Arabic term ‘*Shams*’, in those verses, indicates the Sun and is referred to as ‘*siraaaj*’, ‘*wahhaaj*’ and ‘*diya*’. The term ‘*Siraaaj*’ means ‘a torch’, ‘*wahhaaj*’ denotes ‘a blazing lamp’ and ‘*diya*’ means ‘shining glory’ (Naik, p. 11). These terms and their meanings suit exactly for the Sun and have no incompatibility with the scientific reasonings. Differently, the Moon, in Arabic, is called as ‘*qamar*’ and is used as ‘*muneer*’ in the Quran. The word ‘*muneer*’ describes about a body which gives light (Ibid.).

Linguistically, this light is a reflected light and that reflection requires the heat of the Sun. The Moon, therefore, has no light of its own but needs the sunlight to process that reflective system. It is mentionable that the Quran in nowhere designated the Moon as *siraaj*, *diyaor wahhaaj* (Ibid). Islam justifies the different designs of the Moon and the Sun which are agreeable to the actual chemical processes in them. Chemical processes and laws are bestowed in each matter of creation. Everything is running in order without any clash for a possible destruction. Science already showed the necessary data that planetary objects follow own axis to rotate. This systematic order is found to be very authentically written in the Quran as well. Fortieth verse of sura *Yasin* rightly described that: “It is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: Each [just] swims along in [its own] orbit [according to Law]” (Op. cit., Q. 36:40; Ali, p. 219). The verse verifies several aspects which are as follows,

- a. The sun and moon are complementary with the regulations of day and night.
- b. Both have their distinctive axis to orbit and cannot clash upon each other.
- c. More importantly, they have precise laws to operate.

In Quran, verse number 18 of chapter 22 says the same orbiting formula of the heavenly bodies. It is added further that: “It is He Who created The Night and the Day, and the sun and the moon: All (the celestial bodies) swim along, each in its rounded course” (Ibid., Q. 21:33; p. 156). Other heavenly objects are also likely to move like the Moon and the Sun. The laws are not for particular stars, but everything is under certain systems to act in order to maintain the harmony of this universe. The term ‘*Yasbahûn*’ is used in the 18th verse of that chapter, which is derived from ‘*sabaha*’ (Op. cit., Naik, pp. 12-13). The Arabic term has various descriptions basing on the use of it. It refers the idea of motion and not about any static situation. For example, if the word is used for man in a pond that describes a swimming man and not a floating one. If it is used in a ground level, then the man is not obviously rolling on the ground but is walking or running. The verse mentions another important aspect and that is about the rotating style. Celestial bodies are running in a circular motion and therefore their shape must be round like (Ibid). Science has been researching on this round like planetary objects for long. Referencing the

theory of Big Bang, it can be told that the beginning of everything is followed by a possible end after an uncertain time period. These stars and creatures in this universe along with all the finely tuned laws have a limited phase of time. All are gradually running to a physical extinction in some point of future. Science, calculating the construction of cosmos, can suggest a probable time limit but still is unable to find out the exact moment of that end. On the contrary, Islamic scholars follow the Quran and believe in the true happening of an end. Undoubtedly, the Sun is one of the most valuable stars on this perfect universe. If the Sun does not survive, the life on earth won't last for along with other associated stars. That Sun is indeed not a permanent object and the holy Quran rightly says: "And the Sun Runs its course for a period determined for it; that is the decree of (Him) The exalted in Might, The All-Knowing" (Op. cit., Q. 36:38; Ali, p. 219). The scientists also agreed to the motion as it loses its energy level in every moment. The Arabic word '*mustaqarr*' is used in the verse which means a determined place and time for the sun (Op. cit., Naik, p. 15). As a result, the depended stars and existences with the Sun will be affected and extinguished eventually. The beautification of the laws of this universe has no doubt and the precise direction of it as well.

Spherical Shaped Earth

The stars and planets have prescribed laws to orbit in their axis and these mechanisms give another clue to the mankind about their shape. The planet Earth is one of the most discussed topics among other stars or objects of this universe. Scientists have been explaining the Earth's design along with its other living organisms. In the same way, religious texts also showed some exclusive data on this regard. All heavenly bodies are round in shape and maintain laws to sustain for a destined period of time. Each one of the systems of this universe proves nothing but a precise formation of it. Above all, humans have been researching about the shape of the Earth for a long period of time. The existence of the Earth is always preferred by the scientists than any other external scenario. Like the previously referred verses, the Quran states: "He created the heavens and the earth in true [proportions]: He makes the Night overlap the Day, and the Day overlap the Night: He has subjected the sun and the moon [to His law]: Each one follows a course for a time appointed. Is not He the exalted in Power - He Who forgives again and again?" (Op. cit., Q. 39:5; Ali, p. 231) This verse may look like the other verses where planetary laws are

mentioned regarding the day and night, but it has other significances when the Arabic meaning is explained. Especially, the used Arabic word '*Kawwara*' has changed the entire explanation. '*Kawwara*' means 'to coil' or 'to overlap' which gets resemblance to the use of turban around the head. The entire explanation refers a spherical shaped Earth only (Op. cit., Naik, p. 10). In verse number 30 of sura number 79⁵, the Quran directly said about the shape of the planet Earth like an egg. Therefore, religious reasonings are very objectively done to reveal the exact design of the universe.

Finely Formed Atom

Fine tuning is available in every matter of the universe starting from the big heavenly bodies to a microscopic object. Atom is one of the tiniest particles of nature and the Arabs have this belief from ancient times. Arabian people use the term '*dharrah*' for atom (Op. cit., Naik, p. 17). Modern science advanced even further on this regard. Nature is beautiful and the beautiful Quran explains everything in nature. Therefore, Islam has touched that latest development many years prior to science. *Allah* remarked on this matter that: "In whatever business thou mayest be, and whatever portion thou mayest be reciting from the Qur'an, and whatever deed ye [mankind] may be doing, We are witnesses thereof when ye are deeply engrossed therein. Nor is hidden from thy Lord [so much as] the weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven. And not the least and not the greatest of these things but are recorded in a clear record" (Op. cit., Q. 10:61; Ali, p. 97). It is again said that: "The Unbelievers say, "Never to us will come the Hour": Say, "Nay! but most surely, by my Lord, it will come upon you; by Him Who knows the unseen, from Whom is not hidden the least little atom in the heavens or on earth: Nor is there anything less than that, or greater, but is in the record perspicuous" (Ibid., Q. 34:3; p. 211). This is not just about mentioning the existence of atom but its orderly formation too. Even the forces of nature are designed perfectly by *Allah*. Thomas Aquinas and Alain de Lille studied the nature of the micro level design and the formation it possesses. They attempted to define nature and argued that: "Nature is a system of determined laws and secondary causes that disclose an intelligent fabricator and 'Unmoved Mover' (God) who is responsible to set the forces of nature in motion" (Taylor, 2005, p. 210).

⁵ "And the earth, moreover, hath He made egg shaped" (Q. 79:30; Ali, pp. 8-9).

Orderly Water Cycle and Systematic Natural Barrier

Different scientific results have been discovered on different watery processes in this universe. Its orderly behavior on distinct situations and the tuned transformation resulting from physical laws are the two most crucial occurrences among many.

Islamic tradition and its textual argumentations are logically ordained to explain and identify these watery procedures. The holy book of *Allah*, for instance, mentioned the laws of water cycle that operates through the nature. The Quran reminds: “It is *Allah* Who sends the winds, and they raise the clouds: then does He spread them in the sky As He wills, and break them into fragments, until thou seest raindrops issue from the midst thereof: then when He has made them reach such of His servants as He wills, behold, they do rejoice!” (Op. cit., Q. 30:48; Ali, p. 202) Rain drops on earth as *Allah's* will for the benefit of His creatures. A similar description is found in the Quran that: “And We send the fecundating winds, then cause the rain to descend from the sky, therewith providing you with water [in abundance], though ye are not the guardians of its stores” (Ibid., p. 121). These verses from the Quran have two basic aspects: *Allah* caused the cycle of water and the mechanisms of it as well. The Arabic word ‘*lawâqih*’ is used in the later verse and this is the plural form of ‘*laqih*’ from ‘*laqaha*’ which means ‘to impregnate or fecundate’ (Op. cit., Naik, p. 19). Through this meaning, the Quran explains the pushing of clouds caused by the wind which makes them condensed to cause lighting and rain after all (Ibid). The scientific analyses of rain are very much compatible with the Islamic explanations. The proper water cycle is described in several verses of the glorious Quran which include verse number 9 of chapter 3, verse 57 of chapter 7, verse 17 of chapter 13, verses 48 to 49 of chapter 25, verse 34 of chapter 36, verses 9 to 11 of chapter 50, verses 68 to 70 of chapter 56, verse 30 of chapter 67, verse 11 of chapter 86, etc.

In addition, the Quran has necessary information about the study of the ocean and sea water. Water from distinctive sources, for example, are mingled in many points losing its features. This is a vital aspect of study in the field of religion and science. Like others, several writings are included in the Quran which follow the precise chemical processes in water sources like the sea. In the Quran, verses numbers 19 and 20 of sura 55 pointed: “He has let free the two bodies of flowing water, meeting together:

Between them is a barrier which they do not transgress” (Op. cit., Q. 55:19-20; Ali, p. 273). Earlier, it is observed in the planetary system that heavenly bodies maintain law and order prescribed by Almighty *Allah*. Similarly, these verses are enough to show the laws of the seas and ocean. The Quran clearly stated that two different sources of water have meeting places, but they cannot transgress. Two Arabic words are provided to explain this system. They are: ‘*maraja*’ and ‘*barzakh*’. The term ‘*maraja*’ means that ‘they meet and mingle with each other’ and ‘*barzakh*’ means ‘a partition or barrier’ (Op. cit., Naik, p. 22). Therefore, two sources meet at the point and mix in between but hold their distinctive barriers also (Ibid). Scientists became amazed with the designed manner of the natural sources and the Quran’s indications on the process. A well-known marine scientist Dr. William Hay confirmed that this proven phenomenon is rightly written in the holy Quran (Ibid). In verse number 61 of sura 27⁶ and verse number 53 of sura 25⁷ also indicated the system of partition between two water sources.

Biological Mechanism of a Child and Its Religious Explanations

From heavenly bodies to the ocean and from a big elephant to a human child, nothing is unnoticed in the sacred scripture of Islam. In biological science, the procedure of how a child is born is well explained and this explanation is put forwarded to observe the fine processes of procreation. During rightful physical intercourse, all spermatozoa are not necessary for the fertilization of ovum. The Quran said on this occasion that: “And made his progeny from a quintessence of the nature of a fluid despised” (Op. cit., Q. 32:8; Ali, p. 205). In this verse, the Arabic term ‘*sulalah*’ means the best part of a whole, quintessence or gentle extraction from a fluid (Op. cit., Naik, p. 39). Only one spermatozoon from man is enough, out of several millions, to penetrate the ovum (Ibid). This precise single drop of mingled sperm is pointed again in the Quran that: “Verily We created man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him: So We gave him [the gifts], of hearing and sight” (Op. cit., Q. 76:2; Ali, p. 304). With the grace

⁶ The Qur’aan mentions this phenomenon also in the following verse: “Who has made the earth firm to live in; made rivers in its midst; set thereon mountains immovable; and made a separating bar between the two bodies of flowing water? [can there be another] god besides Allah? Nay, most of them know not.” (Q. 27:61; Ali, pp.188-89).

⁷ “It is He Who has Let free the two bodies of flowing water: One palatable and sweet, And the other salty and bitter; Yet has He Made a barrier between them, And a partition that is forbidden to be passed.” (Ibid., Q. 25:53; p.177).

of Almighty *Allah*, humans get rewarded with children and this is the most precious gift for any human on earth. Mingled sperm or mingled liquid is called '*nutfatinamshaajin*' in Arabic word (Op. cit., Naik, p. 39). The Quran mentions several times about the human being from '*nutfah*' which means a minute quantity of liquid that remains after emptying a cup of water (Ibid). This is mentioned in several other writings of the Quran including verse 4 of sura 16, verse 37 of sura 18, verse 5 of sura 22, verse 13 of sura 23, verse 11 of sura 35, verse 77 of sura 36, verse 67 of sura 40, verse 46 of sura 53, verse 37 of sura 75, verse 2 of sura 76, verse 19 of sura 80, etc. Modern science has further advanced to the sex determination level and Islam is well ahead here too. It can be a male baby or a female one but depends on the generated sperm from the male. *Allah* is great and said: "That He did create in pairs – male and female, from a seed when lodged (In its place)" (Op. cit., Q. 53:45-46; Ali, p. 270). Same message of different sex is mentioned in verses 37 to 39 of chapter 75 in the Quran. The Quranic writings on this procreation issue also pointed the very intelligent processes within it. It is written that: "Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (In lowly form)? Then did he become a clinging clot; Then did (*Allah*) make and fashion (him) in due proportion. "and of him He made two sexes, male and female" (Ibid., p. 303). *Allah* stated through the verses about the due proportion of production. The ever-conscious Creator made all things in proper fashion including human beings. In these verses, the sperm quantity is written by the word '*nutfatan min maniyyin*' (Op. cit., Naik, p. 40). This word explains that the determination of sex is dependent solely on the man and not the woman (Ibid). The indications and explanations of the Quran are proved as absolutely true before the concerned scientists. It is the Great *Allah*, Who sets things in due proportions and which is impossible for any human on Earth.

Evaluation of Religious Reasoning

Almighty *Allah* must be honored and extolled for what He does. It is not necessary to say or prove that He created all of the universe. Religion does not demand acceptance from any other branches of knowledge like science. The holy Quran is the word of *Allah* for His best creation to know things properly without any misconception. Humans just need to believe it and not by blind faith but by reasoning. Few examples are drawn, here, to prove religious reasonings about the precise construction of the universe. Religiously, uncountable examples can be added but the results will be

same for all. The universe is a fine creation and is in a precise order as well. Religion completely supports this fine-tuning and preserves the reasonable justifications for a reasonable man. In this way, science and religion have put forwarded many crucial explanations of the orderly universe. Furthermore, this new field of studying the universe brought diversified research areas to work on.

Conclusion

Religion and science are the most relevant and authentic sources of knowledge among many philosophical branches to study the precisely formed universe. Universe, religion, science, God and cause of creation are inherently related to each other. Religious scholars and scientists have been trying to figure out these relations of the intelligently designed universe since the beginning of early history. It is one of the most important and earliest topics of human history also. With the passing of time, things have been getting clearer day by day, but the mystery has not yet revealed completely to us. Perfect formation of the universe has not only provided many human thought processes but also brought different fields of study in a common discussion. Therefore, in today's world, studying the formation of the universe is not right from a particular philosophical analysis, rather requires analyses from different philosophical understandings like religion and science.

Works Cited

- Ali, A. Y. (1987). *The Holy Quran*. (tr.) King Fahd Holy Quran Printing Complex, (Accessed on 11th January 2021 at: <http://www.streathammosque.org/uploads/quran/english-quran-yusuf-ali.pdf>), 24-447.
- Burrell, D. B. (2010). (Eds.). *Creation and the God of Abraham*. UK: Cambridge, 11-12.
- Carroll, W. E. (2008). Divine Agency, Contemporary Physics, and the Autonomy of Nature. *The Heythrop Journal* 49, no. 4, 582–602;
- Conway, D. (2000). *The Rediscovery of Wisdom: From Here to Antiquity in Quest of Sophia*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2-3.
- Gaukroger, S. (2006). *The Emergence of a Scientific Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 506.
- Gilkey, L. (1990). *Creation, Being and Nonbeing*. in Burrell, D. B. and McGinn, B. (Ed.). *God and Creation: an Ecumenical Symposium*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 226–41.
- Halvorson, H. & Kragh, H. (2010). Theism and Physical Cosmology. (*Preprint*), (Accessed on 3rd April 2021 at: <http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/id/eprint/8441>), 17-18.
- Introduction to Theism. (Accessed on 12th January 2020 at: <http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/35488/1/Unit-1.pdf>), 3.

- Jolley, N. (1992). The Reception of Descartes' Philosophy. in John Cottingham (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes*. UK: Cambridge University Press, 393–423.
- Kuhn, R. L. (2007). Why This Universe? Toward a Taxonomy of Possible Explanations. *Skeptic*, Vol. 13 Number 02, 2.
- LaCugna, C. M. (1993). *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*. San Francisco: Harper-San Francisco, 158–67.
- Naik, Z. The Quran and Modern Science: Compatible or Incompatible? Islamic Research Foundation. (Accessed on 20th February 2021 at: [file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/UGC-%2016%20April%202020/New%20folder%20\(2\)/Quran%20and%20Modern%20Science.pdf](file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/UGC-%2016%20April%202020/New%20folder%20(2)/Quran%20and%20Modern%20Science.pdf)), 8–40.
- Nauta, L. and Vanderjagt, A. (Eds.). (1999). *Between Demonstration and Imagination*. Leiden: Brill, 243–67.
- Peters, T. On Creating the Cosmos. In Russell, Stoeger and Coyne, (Eds.). *Physics, Philosophy, and Theology*. 273–74.
- Ryrie, C. C. (1986). *Basic Theology*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 13.
- Stoeger, W. R. (1992). *The Origin of the Universe in Science and Religion*. in Margenau, H. and Varghese, R. A. (Eds.). *Cosmos, Bios, Theos: Scientists' Reflection on Science, God, and the Origins of the Universe, Life and Homo Sapiens*. La Salle, IL: Open Court, 254–69.
- Stoeger, W. R. (2008). *Conceiving Divine Action in a Dynamic Universe*. in Russell, R. J., Murphy, N. and Stoeger, W. R. (Eds.). *Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action*. Vatican City State and Berkeley, CA: Vatican Observatory Publications and the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, 225–48.
- Stoeger, W. R. (2010). The Big Bang, Quantum Cosmology and *Creatio ex Nihilo*. UK: Cambridge University Press, 152–75.
- Taylor, B. (2005). Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature. (Accessed on 1st April 2021 at: <http://www.religionandnature.com/ern/>), London & New York: Continuum, 210.
- The Holy Bible. (tr.) Douay-Rheims Version 1609, 1582, (Accessed on 15th May 2021 at: <http://triggs.djvu.org/djvu-editions.com/BIBLES/DRV/Download.pdf>), 3–922.

SAID NURSI'S UNDERSTANDING OF PROPHETHOOD: A STUDY IN THE *LIGHT OF RISLA-E NUR*

Dr. Md. Abdullah Al Mahmud*

Abstract

Due to the Enlightenment movement (1685-1815), rational thought and reason ('aql) were injected into the mind of the young generation of Europe. It encouraged the human psyche to think about politics, philosophy, science, and communications related issues based on reason only. Even though, it raised a voice against the authority of religious creeds and dogmas of Christianity. When Mustafa Kemal subscribed to the post-Enlightenment spirit blindly for Turkey, the theological concepts of Islam like Tawhid (oneness of Allah), Nubuwwah (prophethood) and Hashr (resurrection) were neglected and denied in the name of modernity and progress. Previously, traditional ulema addressed these theological issues based on tradition (naql); very few of them on reason ('aql). Nursi articulates these theological issues containing both 'aql and naql to address the demand of the age, but mostly referred to 'aql. He further argues the authority of divine revelation and the necessity of prophethood for human needs to introduce with Allah and for the guidance of humanity. On the other hand, the existing discipline and the order of the universe also necessitate prophets to preserve their solidarity and maintain its unity. This article investigates the views and methods of Said Nursi on the concept of prophethood and the necessity of divine revelation. This article also examines the position of Nursi where he blended metaphysics with the rational quest and satisfied the modern men's questions regarding Islamic theological issues like tawhid and prophethood. The paper concludes that the Risale destroys disbelief, atheistic currents and communist attacks on Islam, Oneness of God (tawhid), Prophethood (nubuwwah) and Day of Judgement (hashr) from the society and boosts the belief of the people of Turkey and all around the world. Thus, it eliminates atheism, disbelief and doubt from Turkey and revives the faith and importance of prophethood and defends prophethood, the important tenets of Islam. In this regard, this paper covers the following issues: (1) Nursi's Contribution to the discourse on prophethood; (2) the necessity of sending prophet; (3) humanity and

* Assistant Professor, Department of World Religions and Culture, University of Dhaka.

prophethood; (4) The Signs of Prophethood; (5) Miracles (m'uzizat); (6) Prophet Muhammad's Unique Role in the Legacy of Prophethood; and (7) Finality of prophethood (Khatam al-nubuwwah).

Keywords: *Prophethood (nubuwwah), Risale-i Nur, Said Nursi, Finality of prophethood (Khatam al-Nubuwwah), Prophethood (nubuwwah) and Oneness of Allah (Tawhid).*

Introduction

Allah has conveyed his message through messengers and prophets to guide humankind as the sign of His Divine plan and favour. The messengers of Allah made awareness of the straightway (*Sirat al-Mustaqim*) and set examples of how to follow it. They have the prime duty of introducing Allah SWT to humankind. All human beings did not accept the preaching of the messengers. That was the common scenario from the first messenger to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It should be noted that from the very beginning to the last breath of Prophet Muhammad, the vested interested group negated him. This Qur'anic verse 25:7-10 points out the behaviour of the contemporary Arabs who undermined Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The *Qur'an* quotes, they say: "Why does this Messenger (Muhammad SAW) eat food, and walk about in the markets (like ourselves). Why is not an angel sent down to him to be a Warner with him?" However, Allah (SWT) intentionally sent many messengers to every nation, so that no nation can argue about not sending the guide from Him." (*al-Qur'an*, 25:7-10)

A group of philosophers from the North and the West, like Dr Reinhart Dozy (1820-1883) (Nursi, 2013b, pp. 302, 311, 391) did not accept the inevitability of revelation and prophethood for the guidance of humankind rather they depended on 'reason ('*aql*) of human being, not on the chain of messengers. They further claimed human intellect is sufficient for guiding all affairs of human life. Criticisms of prophethood are not raised by the Orientalists only, but also by the so-called Muslims of Turkey. However, when students were sent abroad for higher studies by the Ottoman Empire, they got some modern ideas and came to contact with French and some European atheistic ideas. As they now look differently towards their religion and religious practices. It was very sad while some non-Muslims admire and praise Prophet Muhammad in such a word. "It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel

entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.” (Hart, 1992, p. 10)

Previously, ‘ulema of Islam had presented Islam from a classical point of view and that was sufficient at that age. But the questions of time were not addressed elaborately. Therefore, Nursi understood to addressing the prophethood and its related issues are more important for a modern technology-oriented youth with a scientific and philosophical explanation. All of their questions are answered and compiled in the *Risale-i Nur* (henceforth *Risale*). However, observing the emergence of the modern scientific and post-Enlightenment theological dilemma of Turkey, Nursi argues that in our worldly life we see leadership is everywhere, even in the ant and bees who lead the group to the destination. Nursi articulates, “Prophethood is Essential for Mankind. Divine power does not leave the ant without leader, or bees without a queen; it surely would not leave mankind without a prophet or code of laws. In any case, the order of the world demands this.” (Nursi, 2010, pp. 98–99, 2013c, p. 734, 2014, p. 543)

As Nursi attempted to revitalize and restore true discourse on prophethood addressed by so-called intellectual encounters of his time. This paper emphasizes the contribution of Nursi towards eradicating disbelief and atheistic ideas about prophethood from society. In addition, He articulated prophethood related argumentation, proofs and general discussion from the argued the ‘*wājib al-wujūd*’ (necessarily existent) perspective. His discourse on prophethood is very much significant not only during his time but also more significant in the present world today. This paper, therefore, will answer the following questions:

1. What is meant by prophethood in the *Risale*?
2. What are the contributions of Nursi towards the discourse of prophethood?
3. What are the proofs of prophethood?
4. Why is prophethood necessary?
5. What is the meaning of the finality of prophethood?

Objective of The Research

This paper will consult the *Risale* to understand the views of Nursi on the concept of prophethood that constitute the essence of this paper. In this regard, this paper covers the following issues: (1) Nursi's contribution to

the discourse of prophethood; (2) the necessity of sending prophets; (3) humanity and prophethood; (4) The signs of prophethood; (5) Miracles (*m'uzizat*); (6) Prophet Muhammad's role in the tradition of prophethood; and (7) Finality of prophethood (*Khatam al-Nubuwwah*).

Methodology of The Research

This qualitative research will be analyzed using the content analysis method of some books of the *Risale* by Said Nursi; *the Word, the Flashes, the Letters, the Rays, Rational Arguments: A Prescription for the 'Ulema, the Damascus Sermon, and the Staff of Moses*. The *Risale* will provide the primary source and other relevant research works will be the secondary source for this paper. The English translated version of *Risale* by Şukran Vahide from Sözlery publication, Istanbul, Turkey is accessed in this work.

Background of The Study

Some historians and social scientists closely observed Turkish society. Hakan Yavuz mentions, "The Kemalist elite presented themselves as secular, progressive and in opposition to Islam." (Yavuz, 2000, p. 23) He continues, "The Westernization project was presented as emancipatory and anti-religious, without the critical post-Enlightenment thought on tolerance, liberalism and democracy." (Yavuz, 2000, pp. 23–24) Abdülhak Adnan Adıvar argues, "the Kemalist conception of secularism, similar to the positivism of the West, became the 'official dogma of irreligion' and was 'imposed on [Turkish society] just as Islamic dogma had been imposed in the past.'" (Adıvar, 1951, p. 128) Observing Kemalist reformation, Yavuz further continues, "After Islam was ripped out of Turkey's social fabric by the reforms of Mustafa Kemal in the 1920s, the rhythms of this religio-political activism have been modulated by the changing policies of the Turkish state." (Yavuz, 2000, p. 22) Şerif Mardin acknowledges Nursi's works and his fighting against unbelief. To him, "Nursi insisted that books, not people, 'have waged a battle against unbelief.'" (Mardin, 1989, p. 4)

The Kemalist era was the champion for negating revelation and prophethood by all means. Even they negated the authenticity of the *Qur'an*. Turkish society to some extent freed from the Islamic tradition, heritage and practices. Most of the writings of Nursi answer his students' questions, these were put forward to Nursi; especially the Letters consists

of criticisms against the slanderers who attacked Islam and Islamic beliefs and those hostile to religion and Islam. (Nursi, 2014, p. 577) Nursi continues, "This is a defence of the *Risale-i Nur* against atheism and absolute disbelief." (Nursi, 2011b, p. 11) Nursi articulates,

"The *Risale-i Nur* has for thirty years killed at the root absolute disbelief, which destroys eternal life, turns the life of this world into a ghastly poison, spoiling all its pleasures; it has successfully killed the atheistic ideas of the Naturalists; has proved brilliantly with wonderful arguments the principles that will bring happiness to this nation in both this life and the next; and is based on the *Qur'an's* reality, from the Divine Throne." (Nursi, 2013b, p. 377)

Analysis and Findings

Why Prophethood?

Humankind has given intellect and reasoning from the very beginning. Allah (SWT) created Adam (PBUH) as the first man and blessed him with knowledge, what did not give to the Angelic world. (*al-Qur'an*, 2:31) Besides, Allah also creates *Satan* (the Devil), an evil force that can deceive humankind. However, to guide humanity, Allah also sends hundreds of thousands of messengers and prophets to rescue and guide humanity from this terrible situation. (*al-Qur'an*, 2:38) Someone may think that may be prophetic line and prophethood is superfluous and meaningless while humankind has given intellect and reasoning. Moreover, because of prophethood, there were some bloodshed and warfare that happened in human history, and some of the nations are less favoured. (Fakhry, 1991, p. 34, Quoted from 2000, p. 32.)

The Prophethood (*Nubuwwah*)

After Tawhid, prophethood is a must in Islamic tradition. *Al-Kalima al-Tayyib* (the purest word) is the fundamental proclamation for being a Muslim. To Esack, "The Qur'anic focus of the early stages of Muhammad's prophethood was essentially threefold; the absolute unicity of God (*tawhid*); Muhammad's own prophethood (*risalah*); and the ultimate accountability (*hisab*) of all people to God on the Day of Resurrection." (Esack, 2005, p. 45) In Islam, after believing in *tawhid* (the Oneness of Allah) *nubuwwah* (prophethood) is the next strong pillar for anyone to be a Muslim. Without accepting Prophet Muhammad as the

Messenger and his leadership, nobody is considered a Muslim. (*al-Qur'an*, 3:31) Allah further says, "Say (O Muhammad to mankind) if you (really) love Allah then follow me (i.e. accept Islamic Monotheism, follow the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*), Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.") Therefore, believing in *tawhid* is considered as the spiritual ties with Allah and accepting Prophet Muhammad as His Messenger and Slave is the guide who and whose teachings should be followed in the earthly life for '*sirat al-Mustaqim*' (Guide us to the Straight Way)." (*al-Qur'an*, 1:6)

History has recorded that, throughout the Prophetic history from the very inception of human civilization, people refuted the messengers and denied their true messages. In this regard, the *Qur'an* has recorded the situation of the people of Arabia and they say, "what sort of a messenger is this who eats foods, and walks through the streets? Why has not an angel been sent down to him to give admonition with him? Or (why) has not a treasure been bestowed on him, or why has he (not) a garden for enjoyment? The wicked say, "Ye follow none other than a man bewildered." (*al-Qur'an*, 25: 7-8)

It should be noted that the prophet is none other than the chosen one who accepted the presence of Allah on this earth and conveyed His message, made people aware of Allah and guided them on what to do and not to do. (*al-Qur'an*, v. 21:2) But the fact that, whenever there was a messenger or messengers, people underestimated and humiliated them and declined to follow their divine instructions but rather, they remained on their forefather's paths although these were not on the true paths. (*al-Qur'an*, v. 53:23) Allah says, "They are but names which you have named, you and your fathers, for which Allah has sent down no authority. They follow but a guess and that which they themselves desire, whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!")

During the Kemalist rule in Turkey, Nursi observed the atheistic waves coming from Russia. He understood the time and geopolitical mechanisms and for this, he went to complete seclusion and wrote different treaties to save the *Ummah* from the atheistic attacks on the foundation of *Tawhid*, *Nubuwwah*, and *Hashr* (resurrection) with philosophical, scientific and natural explanations followed by '*aqal* (reason) and *naql* (proof). In this regard, Said Nursi argued that "divine power does not leave the ant without a leader, or bees without a queen, it surely would not leave

mankind without a prophet or code of law.” (Nursi, 2013c, p. 734) Nursi emphasizes sending messengers to humankind as Allah created the universe beautifully. For this, there must be a messenger who will lead humankind to Allah who is the Creator of all of us. Nursi argues, “The sacred Creator of so ornamented a cosmos must of necessity have a Noble Messenger, just as the sun must of necessity have light. For the sun cannot exist without giving light, and Divinity cannot be without showing itself through the sending of prophets.” (Nursi, 2013c, p. 72)

Humanity and Prophethood

Throughout history, Muslim theologians and philosophers have seriously embarked on the discourse of prophethood, its need, possibility, and implications. The discourse was necessary because of its application and importance on Muslim societies in getting pure and sound knowledge about God and humanity through the prophets. Said Nursi had brought together different aspects of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) in his discourse through the *Risale-i Nur*. He addressed all the possible issues connected to prophethood and the prophet.

Nursi's discourse had illustrated the concept of prophethood and provided examples, analogies, metaphors, and pieces of evidence from scientific, philosophical and natural phenomena. His discussion is not like other traditional *Kalamic* discourses about prophethood but rather, he imported natural and biological sciences into his discussion. Though he applied ontological and teleological argumentations, he did not follow the traditional system of reasoning.

As has been mentioned earlier, the prophethood related discussion would not be found in any specific treaties by Nursi because of his long exile from one place to another. Sometimes, alongside his argument over *tawhid*, Nursi had discussed the contents of prophethood in the same paragraph, sometimes on the same page under the same topic. His main target was to dignify and elevate the status and position of Prophet Muhammad before the people and fight against the materialist and secular philosophies. (Nursi, 2007, p. 37, 2013c, pp. 61–62, 120)

In his discourse, Nursi followed a very simple method to address prophethood and *Tawhid* in the same line and relate this with *tawhid* as both were correlated with each other. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 247) To attract the general audience, Nursi extracted ‘proofs’ (*dala'il*) of prophethood, relevant analogies and stories.

In the *letters*, a collection of questions and answers of Nursi, he put forward rational arguments and teleological arguments for proving the essentiality of prophethood for mankind by using the analogy of an ant. (Nursi, 2010, p. 98, 2013c, p. 755, 2014, p. 530) Nursi argues that "Divine power does not leave the ant without a leader, or bees without a queen, it surely would not leave mankind without a prophet or code of law." Given all these observations and arguments, the order of the world necessitates the existence of the prophets to preserve its solidity. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 755)

Through this analogy, Nursi expressed the 'essential need' for prophethood as the obvious leader for humanity. In the everyday world, we see many kinds of leaders, such as *maddi* (material) leaders, but for Muslims, their leaders must possess both *maddi* (material) and *manavei* (spiritual) qualities, and those leaders are none other but the Prophets. He articulated prophets as having both qualities for humanity. (Nursi, 2014, p. 530)

Generally, for a better understanding by a layman, he will follow 'the Qur'anic method' i.e. the simplest method to make anything clear. Without going deep into a philosophical discussion, he usually extracts natural and simple examples to explain. For example, there are many prophets and many prophetic laws that exist in the world, which look complex and with critical issues. But Nursi equated this issue with the change of seasons in our everyday examples and explained them in a very simple way. (Nursi, 2013a, pp. 31–32)

In every community and tribe, Allah has sent messengers who accordingly claimed themselves to be the Prophets of God, and then told the people about God. (Nursi, 2014, p. 377. "But thou art truly a warner, and to every people a guide." (*al-Qur'an*: v. 13:7, v. 10:47) For Nursi, after the coming of the prophets to humankind, it would be difficult to negate or reject the existence of God, because they have given every detail about God. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 574) People know about the real God and God's oneness. Fabricated beliefs about God could happen only when there exist no prophet. (Nursi, 2011b, p. 89, 2013b, pp. 290, 650)

Nursi's discourse on prophethood elaborately covers the scope of prophets, prophetic duties, and their functions. He also rationalized the need for prophethood for humankind based on logic (*mantiq*) and reason ('*aql*). God sent messengers to guide human beings, purify them from

superstitions and sins. For Nursi, human beings are created for the specific purpose of worshipping God (*ibadah*) and prophets have taught and demonstrated the right ways to do so. He continued, "we were not created only to eat, drink, and reproduce; these are natural facts of our life, and natural needs, our main purpose is to recognize and serve God." (Nursi, 2013c, pp. 87, 97, 98) He further explained, all prophets were sent to demonstrate the right ways to worship and praise Him for His uncountable bounties, and those who follow the prophets will achieved the 'Divine Plans' and succeed in the here and hereafter (*akhirah*). (Nursi, 2013c, p. 219)

Prophethood: Saviour of Humanity

Before coming to Muhammad (PBUH) to this world, there was indiscipline, antagonistic and unfriendly humanity with one another. They were like enemies to one another. A single guide was not sufficient for them to guide. They were about to annihilate themselves and the beautiful world. Even, instead of following prophets, they killed some of them. In that situation, Allah (SWT) has sent Muhammad (PBUH) to them as the saviour of humanity. The new Era of Bliss has started on the foundation of the chaotic Era. People became brothers to one another. They became united and the world transformed for the first time the real global village for all. A single command and single guide are sufficient for them. He came with miracles and a unique Divine book in hand. (Nursi, 2014, p. 115) Not only that, the previous revealed book: the Torah, the Bible, and the Psalms testified and proved it. (Nursi, 2014, pp. 200–201) So, without sending prophets, this world could be Hell for humanity earlier. For Nursi,

"Before the Era of Bliss all the nations of the world of humanity were extremely distant from one another and hostile to each other, both physically and emotionally, and by instinct and upbringing. A single sort of education was insufficient for them and all could not be drawn to a single cause. Then, when humanity was awakened in the Era of Bliss and subsequently, and people felt a desire to come together due to the exchange of ideas and swapping of characters, and the intermingling of peoples, and some of them investigating the conditions of others, and time was churned up by the many means of communication and transportation; - then the globe of the earth became like a single country, or a province, or a town, and the people of the world came together; and then a single mission, a single prophethood was sufficient for all of them." (Nursi, 2013a, p. 59)

Prophets: the teachers and Guides to Humanity

From the very beginning of humanity: Adam (PBUH) to till now, there are two lines of thought and way of life. One is the prophetic way of life and religion that is guided by Allah through messengers and prophets and the other one is the philosophy and different philosophical findings in the name of modernity, progress and so-called happiness. If the second one is being separated from the first one, there will be no good for humanity at all. There will be anarchy, idolatry, polytheism, and misery of life. But, if both of the lines are united in human society, there will be peace and tranquillity in a real sense. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 575) That is the hidden formula for progress and happiness in both of the worlds. A prophet usually helps humanity to guide not only in this world but also the life after death.

On the other hand, Prophets always show the best way of life and not only have they indicated the way, but they follow first and they inspire and guide to follow that way to humanity. This way is nothing from the prophets but the resemblance of Allah's order that is moulded by Allah-given ethics, good character and cherished way of life. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 577) It is also called the vicegerent of Allah (*Khalifa*). Humanity understands its real self and being. They willingly and devotedly surrender before Allah and follow the line of prophethood. Thus, this way of submission saves humanity from being a tyrant, dictator and unjust.

Benefits of Following The Line of Prophethood

The great benefits of following the line of prophethood in comparison with another way that is not the way of Allah are as follows. To Nursi there are **some examples** to make this discourse clear:

Human's Weaknesses

Humanity is composed of blood and flesh, but behind these compositions, there are some moral weaknesses inbuilt in them. These are impotence, weakness, poverty, and need so that they may not think that they are omnipotent, powerful, self-sufficient, and without need. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 578) Only Allah Almighty possesses these qualities. Prophethood makes remember humanity about these basic deficiencies and also help them to be the obedient servant of Allah.

Prophets Help Humanity to Find Allah

The Illuminist (*Ishraqiyyun*), the Materialist and Naturalist philosophers hold that “From one person, only one single thing can proceed. Everything else proceeds from him by means of intermediaries.” (Nursi, 2013c, p. 579) This kind of misleading philosophy helps humankind to make an association with partners of God whereas the prophetic line is the reverse. The prophetic line demonstrates the unity of God (*tawhid*) only. In this way, prophethood again saves humanity from making association with God.

Social Life in Prophetic Line, Examples for Others

Humankind is a social being. They cannot leave this important field to the hands of the devil minded one (*satan*). That is why; the line of prophethood indicates people to be social and try to be the best example unto humanity. In this regard, the prophet follows the manners and etiquettes first and then encourages and orders his followers to do so. For a social life, mutual assistance, magnanimity, and generosity are a must for others, even they are not in a line of prophetic tradition. (Nursi, 2013c, pp. 578–579) Following these noble virtues, one can easily be safe from conflict, indiscipline and enmity in social life. As a result, all the prophetic lines admire all these qualities are the best and put them as the cardinal virtues in religions.

Wājib Al-Wujūd Argument on Prophethood

Regarding the ontological point of view, Nursi as a revivalist theologian argued the ‘*wājib al-wujūd*’ (necessarily existent) factor (2011a, pp. 19, 139, 2011b, pp. 129, 134–135, 2013a, pp. 24, 80, 2013b, pp. 61–62, 7167–168, 2014, p. 117; Vahide, 2010, pp. 216, 219) and effectively used this argument throughout his *Risale*. He avoided all theological debates but searched on all the possibilities of prophethood through a strong connection between his argument of *wājib al-wujūd* and prophethood and stressed its necessity. (2011b, pp. 134–135, 162–164, 2013a, pp. 83, 169, 2013b, pp. 61–62, 167–168, 2013c, pp. 214, 312–313, 2014, pp. 37, 108–109, 296–297, 337, 2016a, p. 140, 2016b, pp. 349, 388, 2017, p. 117; Vahide, 2010, pp. 216, 219)

He believed the possibility of prophethood may be established through the correlation between Divinity (*Uluhiyat*) and prophethood. After belief

(*Imaan*), Muslims have to worship only one God and follow Him in all affairs of life. (Nursi, 2013b, p. 115) But for a practical reason, who will guide him to worship One God? There must be a messenger who will mediate between God and the human being and that is the Prophet. In this way, the Prophet can attest to the *tawhid*, the purpose of creation, God's perfection and the bondage between prophets and humans. (Nursi, 2013b, p. 115) Next, he continued the discussion on the names and attributes of God and put it as the central theme of his exegesis. For example, God has many names, among them perfection (*Kamal*) and beauty (*Jamal*). So, if there was no prophet sent down by Allah, we would not know the meaning of the divine names and attributes and humans' understanding of God could not be fulfilled. Therefore, to learn the true nature of God and His attributes and divine names, it was necessarily logical for the prophets to be sent down to earth by God.

Need for Prophethood for Social Justice and Order

In Nursi's discourse on prophethood, he argued mainly through analogies, examples and teleological reasoning. For Nursi, the roles of prophets were in initiating moral culture, creating justice and harmony in the society. This was called Nursi's 'argument of the need for prophethood' and it was the focal point of his discourse. In Nursi's worldview, every creature in the world obeys (*iti'at*) a set of laws fixed by God. Usually, creatures follow the 'Divine Laws' for themselves. However, sometimes there are some exceptions in society. In Nursi's discourse, prophets were needed to re-establish ethical laws and cultivate ethical values to preserve law and order in ensuring a harmonious society. (Nursi, 2008, p. 127)

Although human beings are the best creations of God, they have the potential to commit evil, sins and other social misdeeds. Human beings are tempted to commit a bad or evil act not only by their desires but by the temptations of the devil (*satan*) (*al-Qur'an*, v. 12:53 This translation was taken from Yusuf Ali. Prophet Yusuf (PUBH) says, "Nor do I absolve my own self (of blame): the (human) soul is certainly prone to evil, unless my Lord do bestow His Mercy: but surely my Lord is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful") and also because civilisations not only transport good morals and virtues but also leave behind their immoral evil records and sins. To Nursi, there were no solutions for composing laws according to new evil in society. Therefore, there was a burning needs (need) for prophets who

could warn people of evils and sins and convey divine messages and laws to human beings. (Nursi, 2008, p. 127) Human beings were also created to be dependent on one another. Observing this psychological aspect, Albert Bandura, a psychologist argued, "Observance of human behaviour, aptitudes, and capabilities demonstrate that humans are created in such a way that they are dependent upon social life and need to live a communal life." (Bandura, 1982, pp. 122–147) So, this human dependency necessitated the prophets and prophetic moral and legal systems to ensure social justice, peace, harmony, law and order (Nursi, 2008, p. 126, 2013a, p. 84) as human beings and their intellect alone cannot ensure justice in the world. They needed divine prescriptions for justice to be implemented into society. To Nursi, "Humans can't find the justice through their intellects, hence the establishment of justice between humans can happen with the laws that God informs humans of. To apply these laws and put them into actions, there is a need for prophets who are of a higher class than the rest of humanity to do so." (Nursi, 2008, p. 126)

Prophets were not only establishing moral and legal aspects to the society but also teaching good morality and culture to be a true servant to God Almighty. To Nursi, "Human being is created in a higher way than animals, that is why they have a variety of wants/desires and tendencies, and that is why they have a lot of needs and for every individual. It is impossible to meet those needs alone, and consequently everyone needs the help of the others, and by helping each other they meet their needs. Because the mind and the carnal feelings (*shahwi hisler*) are not limited, and because we have our own will power (*irāda*), (the reason for us to improve ourselves, that is why they are not limited,) if you leave these alone with no rules, there will be oppression *zulm*, abuses, (if no rules are applied). To prevent oppression (*zulm*) and tyranny (*tajawuz*) you need justice in society." (Nursi, 2013a, p. 32) Moreover, by highlighting the urgency of prophethood and the nature of the "Divine Acts" (Nursi, 2011b, p. 81, 2011a, pp. 324, 357, 394, 457–458, This term is frequently used in *Risale* and it referred to 'the Divine actions' as manifested in the universe as the physical or natural laws in Nursi's worldview. See: 2013c, pp. 52–53, 2013a, p. 168, 2013b, pp. 40, 78, 260, 2014, pp. 122, 393, 2016b, pp. 349, 376, 2017, pp. 55, 118; Vahide, 2010, p. 416) (*Sunnat Allah*) the needs of the prophets were highlighted. By responding to the prophethood issue in such a way, Nursi's status among the revivalist scholars was secured and became strong.

About Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) and His Universality

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a unique character of history in the Arabian Peninsula. Most of the time, the adjacent civilizations left behind this land to conquer and did not even show interest. The people of Arabia were in a dark in a sense of political, social, religious and economic aspects of life that is why this age is called the age of ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*). (Bashier, 1991, p. 25) They were guerrilla fighters with one another (Grunebaum, 2009, p. 18), there was no state; blood for blood. (Rodinson, 1971, p. 12) Religiously Arab was pagan in (a) general sense. (Margoliouth, 2003, p. 207) This land was united by Muhammad and established a state where he introduced the Divine law. He was able to make them brothers from their worst enemies. (*al-Qur'an*, v. 3:103. Allah SWT mentions the day of ignorance's interpersonal relationship as a whole vivid scenario of Arab, "And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah (i.e. this Quran), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allah's Favor on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic Faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His *Ayat* (proofs, pieces of evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.,) clear to you, that you may be guided.") Nursi draws a picture of the Arabian Peninsula and narrates how Prophet Muhammad transformed this land as the blessed land. In addition, he articulates the universality of Prophet Muhammad and how he became the leader of mankind and jinn. Prophet's uniqueness is there that he successfully answered all questions of mankind and jinn. Nursi argues,

"If you wish, come! Let us go to the Arabian Peninsula, to the Era of Bliss! In our imaginations, we shall see him at his duties and visit him. Look! We see a person distinguished by his fine character and beautiful form. In his hand is a miraculous Book and on his tongue, a truthful address; he is delivering a pre-eternal sermon to all mankind, indeed, to man, the jinn, the angels, and to all beings. He solves and expounds the strange riddle of the mystery of the world's creation; he discovers and solves the abstruse talisman which is the mystery of the universe; and he provides convincing and satisfying answers to the three awesome and difficult questions that are asked of all beings and have always bewildered and occupied minds; Where do you come from? What are you doing here? Where are you going?" (Nursi, 2011b, p. 240, 2013c, p. 81, 2013a, p. 190, 2014, p. 237)

Prophet Muhammad's Role in The Tradition of Prophethood

Nursi considered Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the perfect soul in terms of prophetic qualities, miracles and characteristics in the trajectory of prophethood. Nursi argued in his book "*Mathnawi al-Nuriye*" that God Himself manifested through His messengers. Nursi further illustrated Prophet Muhammad as a beautiful picture and reflection of God's Names and attributes. (Nursi, 2007, p. 52)

Nursi presented the Prophet as the 'truthful witness' of God and the 'verified proof'. (Nursi, 2007, p. 19) For him,

"He is the master of all prophets, messengers, saints, who holds the meaning of the confirmation of God's existence and unity. He is the consensus of all prophets, Messengers, leader of all its God-conscious scholars, who possess lofty and laudable virtues and perfect admirable morals, and is the centre upon which Divine revelation is focused. He is the traveler (traveller) to the unseen realm and the teacher, and guide of humanity and jinn." (Nursi, 2007, p. 69)

For Nursi, a Prophet is the reflection of truth, the servant and Messenger of God and the perfect expression of the light of Divine Unity. (Nursi, 2007, p. 69) For Nursi, Prophets had the prophetic lineage beginning with Prophet Abraham and ending with Prophet Muhammad. According to the Abrahamic Tradition, all Prophets were torchbearers of truth among misguidance and darkness. (Nursi, 2014, p. 377) Nursi considered Prophet Muhammad as the significant proof of God. (Nursi, 2008, pp. 119–121) Prophet Muhammad was the seed of all the creations. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 600) His light existed before all other creations. To Nursi, Prophet Muhammad is regarded as the main purpose of creation and held a meaningful position among other prophets. (Nursi, 2007, pp. 169–170) In all the prophetic chains, Prophet Muhammad is the luminous personality of the chain of prophethood.

In Nursi's view, "Prophet Muhammad stands for a particular and unique role amongst all the prophets and is affirmed by his account that, Just as the Prophet's mission of messengers caused the creation of this world for trial and worship, so the prayer he makes as a requirement and dimension of his servanthood would cause the construction of the other world for reward and punishment." (Nursi, 2007, p. 28, 2013c, p. 86) Nursi's other concept about the Prophet was "*shakhṣ al-ma'nawī*" (collective personality). This collective personality refers to the universality of the

Prophet's nature and his global mission. "Collective Personality" of Prophet Muhammad is unique among the whole mankind even among the prophetic traditions. His personality and mission are universal. Allah made the whole earth his mosque, Mekka as his place of worship, Medina as his pulpit.... the master of all saints and scholars; he guides and educates them via the light of his messengership. For more details, see Nursi, 2007, p. 20. He spread his mission within a very short time throughout the world. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 249)

In brief, there is only one human personality who came to the universe whose natural situations, everyday habits and practices, speeches, eating-drinking, sleeping, walking, even his public and private life have been well recorded as *Sunnah*. He is the cosmic model for humanity's "*uswatun hasanah*," ('Indeed, in the messenger of Allah a 'good example has been set for the one who seeks Allah and the Last Day and thinks constantly about Allah', See *al-Qur'an*, v. 33:21) and he acted accordingly. He always chose the middle way and avoided extreme methods. Thus, he became a role model for humanity. (This translation was taken from Yusuf Ali. Allah says, "Thus, have We made of you an *Ummat* justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves; and We appointed the *Qibla* to which thou wast used, only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels (from the Faith). Indeed it was (a change) momentous, except to those guided by Allah. And never would Allah Make your faith of no effect. For Allah is to all people Most surely full of kindness, Most Merciful." See *al-Qur'an*, v. 2:143)

Pieces of Evidence of Prophethood

To believers, Muhammad (PBUH) is the last messenger and prophet from God to humankind. The proofs of the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) are of two kinds: The First is called *irhasat* that includes the paranormal events (that) happened at the time of his birth, or before his prophetic mission. (Nursi, 2013a, p.196, 2013b, p.596, 2014, p.157) The second one is all the remaining pieces of evidence of his prophethood. (Nursi, 2014, pp. 121–122)

Miracles (*M'uzizat*)

Nursi developed his discourse based on reason (*'aql*) and logic (*mantiq*) rather than Revelation (*naql*). Likewise, for a miracle, he employed these arguments for rationalizing and proving the miracles of Prophet

Muhammad to refute the post-Enlightenment influence. Nursi addressed and defended the miracles of Muhammad in the *Risale*. He started to explain prophethood beginning with the Qur'ān. (*al-Qur'an*, v. 2:23-24.) Allah says, "And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a *Surah* like there unto; and call your witnesses or helpers (If there are any) besides Allah, if your (doubts) are true. But if ye cannot and of a surety, ye cannot then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, which is prepared for those who reject Faith.") Allah says,

"And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed, step by step, to Our servant, then produce a *Surah* like there unto; and call your witnesses [and helpers if there are any] besides Allah, if what you say is true. But if you cannot, and of surety you cannot, then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, which is prepared for those who reject Faith." (Nursi, 2013a, p. 181)

According to Nursi's discourse, Allah facilitated some of the prophets to demonstrate miracles (*m'uzizat*) to prove their prophethood, and this was overwhelming and amazing to the laymen in daily life. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 181) Nobody could perform these miracles without the permission of God. To Nursi, "Both miracles and wonders depend on the permission of God. Besides, 'if God does not enable them to produce miracles or wonders, a prophet cannot work out a miracle nor can a beloved, saintly servant of God do so'." (Nursi, 2014, p. 91) Prophet Muhammad was blessed with 'fifteen different types of miracles' (Nursi, 2014, p. 152) and thousands of miracles of Prophet Muhammad are found in the Prophetic biographic corpus. (Nursi, 2013c, p. 296) Nursi argued for the benefit of miracles as the miracles helped the believers to verify the authenticity of the prophets with their claims and increase their belief and become more luminous. (Nursi, 2014, p. 152)

Nursi's categorized miracles and miracle related discussion into three categories in the *Risale*: firstly, miracles as confirmation and verification for prophethood for example the miracle of the moon splitting into two; (Nursi, 2010, p. 99, 2011b, p. 118, 2013c, p. 73, 151, 2013b, pp. 151, 594, 2014, p. 118, 2017, p. 99) secondly, miracles helping believers to be firm to their conviction, for example, the 'moaning of the pole' to Prophet Muhammad; (Nursi, 2014, pp. 159–162) and lastly, miracles were for specific needs of prophet or his *ummah* (community) for example, food and water. (Nursi, 2014, pp. 159–162)

Nursi's explanation of miracles of the prophets, especially Prophet Muhammad these awarded him a very unique position among his contemporary scholars. He did not reject *naql*, but for a better understanding by the masses, he preferred to employ '*aql*'. However, by dedicating this method of discussion, Nursi contributed a new paradigm in theology that balanced the discourse on prophethood and the miracles from a logical and philosophical point of view to prove prophethood.

Finality of Prophethood (*Khatam Al-Nubuwwah*)

According to Islam, Prophet Muhammad is the last in the line of prophetic chain and final messenger of Allah to humanity and it is discussed in the concept of "the finality of prophethood" (*Khātām al-Anbiyā*) (Allah says, "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things." (*al-Qur'an*, v. 33:40). With this concept of the "seal or finality of prophets," it meant that prophethood and revelation have been ended with his revelations. (*al-Qur'an*, v. 5:3) The concept '*Khātām al-anbiyā*' was not discussed much more in the *Risale* because, the claiming prophethood in the modern age by an ordinary people was not familiar to Nursi, but in Pakistan and India, it was discussed in details because of claiming prophethood by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908), was the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement from Punjab in India. He is self-proclaimed to be a reviver, a *Mahdi*, a messiah and finally a prophet. See Kaushik, 1996, pp. 8, 19, 49; Maudoodi, 1979, pp. 5–6, 112; Valentine, 2008, p. 84).

Nursi's discourse regarding prophethood was mainly based on the necessity of prophethood, pieces of evidence for prophethood, *hikmah* of sending a prophet, collective personality of Prophet Muhammad, and arguments in terms of the philosophical point of view. However, Nursi addressed the finality of the prophethood issue in the *Risale* as the 'Seal of all prophets' (Nursi, 2010, p. 73, 2011a, p. 115, 2013c, p. 243, 2013b, p. 361, 2013a, p. 58, 2014, pp. 200, 236,) or 'seal of the prophet' (Nursi, 2010, p. 73, 2013c, pp. 271, 617, 2013a, pp. 7, 58, 2014, pp. 197, 251, 518).

Salvation outside of the fold of Prophet Muhammad?

Islam believes in the chain of messengers and prophets. It is believed that the first man Adam (PBUH) was the first prophet. Throughout the ages,

Allah SWT sent many prophets to every nation and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was the last messenger in this prophetic line. He is the heir of all prophets and messengers of Islam. He is sealed and the last prophet of Islam. In Islam, after believing in *tawhid*, the necessary obligation to believe in the other part of *kalima* is to believe in the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He was sent to all people; his Shariah has abrogated all preceding ones and contains their virtues. (Nursi, 2013a, p. 58) So, there will be no salvation outside the fold of Prophet Muhammad. (Nursi, 2014, pp. 394, 529) His *Shariah* is eternal. (Nursi, 2010, p. 73)

Conclusion

The observation made in the above discussion suggests that Nursi's main concern was to invite the Muslims especially and the people of other faiths generally to enjoy the beauty of Islam. In the course of doing so, he had to explain among other issues, the rights of non-Muslims in the newly transformed Turkish Republic. This discourse led him to re-theorize some of the long-practised Islamic legal principles experienced by the pre-modern Muslim Administrations.

Through the content analysis of the writings of Nursi, this article addressed the post-Enlightenment theological dilemma of Turkey. He founded his whole place of thought on the premise of *tawhid*, the doctrine in '*wajibul wujud*', '*Nubuwwah*' and '*hashr*'. Nursi addressed the anti-Islamic propagation against prophethood and proved it in his *Risale*. Nursi highlighted the bliss era of Prophet Muhammad and his leadership. Likewise, he also argued the importance of prophethood and revelation to the solution to the modern world. Michel H. Hart also evaluates Prophet Muhammad in similar voices like Nursi. Hart argued, "My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels." (Hart, 1992, p. 3) To put it otherwise, Nursi processed his thought system based on the synthesized Islamic *Kalami* tradition. He relied on the *Quran-Sunnah* based understandings and responded to the challenges and the prospects of the transitional phase of the Ottoman rule and Kemalist era.

His thought system hence could be easily located in the greater Islamic knowledge arena. To sum up, his thought system was a dynamic method

that allowed him to re-theorize some Islamic principles in line with the demands of the transitional phase in a unique way whereby he accommodated positive factors and rejected the evil currents.

References

- Adivar, A. A. (1951). The Interaction of Islamic and Western Thought in Turkey. In T. C. Young (Ed.), *Near Eastern Culture and Society*. Princeton, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Bandura, A. (1982). Self-Efficacy Mechanism in Human Agency. *American Psychologist*, 37(2), 122–147.
- Bashier, Z. (1991). *The Makkan Crucible* (Rev. ed). Nairobi, Kenya: Islamic Foundation.
- Esack, F. (2005). *The Qur'an: A Users' Guide; a Guide to Its Key Themes, History and Interpretation*. Oxford, England: One World.
- Fakhry, M. (1991). *Ethical Theories in Islam*. E.J. Brill.
- Fakhry, M. (2000). *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism: A Short Introduction* (Reissued 2000). Oxford, England: Oneworld.
- Grunebaum, G. E. V. (2009). *Classical Islam: A History, 600 A.D. to 1258 A.D.* (Fourth paperback printing). New Jersey, USA: Transaction Publishers.
- Hart, M. H. (1992). *The 100: A ranking of the most influential persons in history* (Rev. ed). Secausus, N.J: Carol Pub. Group.
- Kaushik, S. N. (1996). *Ahmadiya Community in Pakistan: Discrimination, Travail, and Alienation*. New Delhi, India: South Asian Publisher.
- Mardin, Ş. (1989). *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*. State University of New York, Albany, USA: State University of New York Press.
- Margoliouth, D. S. (2003). *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam* (reprint). Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press.
- Maudoodi, S. A. 'Ala. (1979). *The Qadiani Problem*. Lahore, Pakistan: Islamic Publications.
- Nursi, B. S. (2007). *Al Mathnawi al-Nuriya (Masnevi-i Nuriye)* (H. Akarsu, Trans.). New Jersey, USA: Tughra Books.
- Nursi, B. S. (2008). *Reasonings: A Key to Understanding the Qur'an's Eloquence*. New Jersey, USA: Tughra Books.
- Nursi, B. S. (2010). *The Damascus Sermon* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.). Delhi, India: Barla Publications.
- Nursi, B. S. (2011a). *The Flashes Collection* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.; 2011 Edition). İstanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2011b). *The Staff of Moses* (S. of the R. Nur, Trans.). İstanbul, Turkey: Sözler Publications A. Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2013a). *Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur'an's Conciseness* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.; Revised Edition). İstanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2013b). *The Rays Collection* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.; Revised Edition). İstanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.

- Nursi, B. S. (2013c). *The Words On the Nature and Purposes on Man, Life and All Things* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.; New Edition). Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat Tic. ve San. A.Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2014). *The Letters-1928-1932* (Ş. Vahide & others, Trans.; reprinted with corrections). Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2016a). *Emirdağ Letters: Vol. I* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.). Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2016b). *Emirdağ Letters: Vol. II* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.). Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.
- Nursi, B. S. (2017). *Rational Arguments: A Prescription for the Ulema* (Ş. Vahide, Trans.). Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat Tic. ve San. A. Ş.
- Rodinson, M. (1971). *Muhammad* (Reprinted, 1985). New York, USA: Penguin Books USA.
- Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Quran in the English Language* (M. T.-D. Al-Hilali & M. M. Khan, Trans.). (1984). King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Quran.
- Vahide, Ş. (2010). *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* (New Edition). Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.
- Valentine, S. R. (2008). *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama'at: History, Belief, Practice*. New York, USA: Columbia University Press.
- Yavuz, M. H. (2000). Cleansing Islam from the Public Sphere. *Journal of International Affairs*, 54(1), 21.

CAESAR THE CELEBRITY: SHAKESPEARE'S REPRESENTATION OF JULIUS CAESAR

Mehedi Karim Shimanto *

Introduction

If one asks a historian, “Who is Julius Caesar?” he/she might answer that Julius Caesar was a great leader of ancient Rome. It is no new knowledge that Caesar was a “[c]elebrated Roman general, statesman, and [dictator]” (*Britannica Concise Encyclopedia* 309). But if one asks the same question to a litterateur what might be his/her answer? William Shakespeare seems to have already attempted an answer to that query. In his play *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare portrays Julius Caesar as a great Roman military leader who is tragically assassinated. To recapture historical events of such magnitude in the form of a play, Shakespeare uses “Plutarch’s *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*” and follows “the relevant sections of Plutarch’s biographies of Caesar” meticulously (Dobson, 229). Thus Shakespeare remains true to the actual history and in this sense *Julius Caesar*, despite being a work of fiction, can be called a non-fiction. Yet this play might appear to be more literary in nature than non-literary because

[s]everal themes and human situations we find in *Hamlet* and the other ‘great’ tragedies [of Shakespeare] can already be found in *Julius Caesar*, in particular the hero’s tragic dilemma which, in the last resort, claims more of our attention and sympathy than the political fate of Rome, even though the two can hardly be separated. (Mehl, 221)

Thus Shakespeare’s play is not simply history recaptured. One may find in that play the story of Caesar narrated more dramatically. There Julius Caesar is more heroic and more alive than actual history would portray him to be. Perhaps this is why it has been said that “*Julius Caesar* is in various aspects a most exceptional and most important work” of Shakespeare (Zander 3).

But does Shakespeare portray Caesar simply as a leader there? Does he plainly reenact history? Or does he have anything extra to say about Caesar? This paper shows that William Shakespeare seems to have

* Lecturer, Department of English, University of Dhaka.

depicted Julius Caesar, the historical figure, as a celebrity in his play. A celebrity is a successful and famous individual who has attained the attention and love of mass population. This person is a charismatic, cravingly sought after character who has crazy fan following. And also, celebrities often fall prey to envy and misfortune. In *Julius Caesar*, we find all these things happening to Caesar. Caesar appears to be a celebrity there because in the play he is not only a compelling personality, he is an idol. He is so popular in the play that it seems he is almost deified. Just to have a glimpse of him his admirers act like fanatics. Everyone talks about him so admiringly as if Caesar were not a man, but a god. Even Caesar himself seems to be aware of this magnificent aura of his which simply cannot be translated as the aura of a mere leader. To come to the point, in the play it appears that this reputation conferred upon Caesar might have come from his being more than just a leader. This research says Julius Caesar, in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, seems to be represented as a celebrity.

The History of Caesar

But before exploring that “star” status of Cesar, Caesar’s true story needs to be known. How did Caesar achieve greatness? How did he rise to the top of the Roman republic? According to *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*, Caesar

held the prominent posts of Q[uaestor] [a magistrate] and P[raetor] [a judicial officer] before becoming governor of Farther Spain in 61–60. He formed the First T[riumvirate] [a political alliance] with P[ompey] [a statesman and general of Roman republic] and M[arcus] L[icinius] C[rassus] [a merchant banker and politician] in 60 and was elected C[onsul] [an annually elected chief magistrate of the Roman republic] in 59 and P[roconsul] [a consul with extended powers] in Gaul and Illyria in 58. After conducting the G[allic] W[ars], during which he invaded Britain (55, 54) and crossed the Rhine (55, 53), he was instructed by the Senate [a governing advisory council] to lay down his command, Senate conservatives having grown wary of his increasing power, as had a suspicious Pompey. When the Senate would not command Pompey to give up his command simultaneously, Caesar, against regulations, led his forces across the Rubicon River (49) between Gaul and Italy, precipitating the Roman Civil War. Pompey fled from Italy but was pursued and defeated by Caesar in 48; he then fled to Egypt, where he was murdered. Having followed Pompey to Egypt, Caesar became lover

to C[leopatra] [an Egyptian queen] and supported her militarily. He defeated Pompey's last supporters in 46-45. He was named dictator for life by the Romans. He was offered the crown (44) but refused it, knowing the Romans' dislike for kings. He was in the midst of launching a series of political and social reforms when he was assassinated in the Senate House on the ides of March by conspirators led by C[assius] [a Roman general and administrator] and B[rutus] [a politician]. (309)

From this brief but informative description it is evident that Caesar led an illustrious life. Professionally he held many powerful positions. There is no doubt he must have been a very influential person. He displayed tact and true diplomacy in his political career. It seems he acted as if he were his own master. He led wars, demolished nations and punished his rivals. He was bold and daring. He was both a conqueror and a lover. He was a reformer also. But he fell prey to political conspiracy and was tragically murdered. This was the story of Julius Caesar.

But how can this historical figure be a celebrity? In the above mentioned quote there is no hint that Caesar lived his life like a superstar. He was simply a ruler. Even the term "celebrity" itself might not sound right with the name Julius Caesar. How can Shakespeare portray Julius Caesar as a celebrity?

Caesar and Stardom

To understand how Caesar can be a star, the concept of celebrity must be known first. A celebrity is an individual who attracts and deserves attention. This means a celebrity must be someone very famous and renowned. Also, a celebrity always stands out from the general people: he/she is unique and special. Who are these celebrities then? Rojek defines stardom as "the attraction of glamorous or notorious status to an individual within the public sphere" (10). Analyzing Rojek's definition, Longhurst et al say "people gain celebrity status for either 'glamorous' reasons, such as super-models, footballers and pop stars, or for more 'notorious' reasons, such as serial killers or people who have committed 'lewd acts'" (52). From Rojek's definition three key points about a celebrity can be pinpointed: first, it is the people who decide who a star is; second, a star can attain name and fame either for being exceptionally good at something or for being abnormally twisted or antisocial in nature; and third, celebrities can entertain (as movie stars, singers etc.), shock (as serial

killers, hackers etc.) or offer something unique and new. Here a question might arise: should a person be a star though he/she is “notorious”? Boorstin seems to have already answered this question. He says: [t]he celebrity is a person who is known for his wellknownness” (57). So from Boorstin’s perspective, not one’s talent or wickedness but the level of one’s knowableness to the mass people determines one’s stardom.

Did Julius Caesar have that stardom? Plutarch wrote that Caesar “had sought dominion and power all his days, and after facing so many dangers he had finally achieved them. And the only benefit he reaped was its empty name, and the perils of fame amid his envious fellow citizens” (qtd. in Pelling 258). Based on this report it can be argued that a man who just craved for “dominion and power” and who could not earn more than an “empty name” cannot be a star. But does Shakespeare have a different opinion in this regard? Has he depicted Caesar as a celebrity? The following discussion argues that he has.

The Fans of Caesar : Craze and Devotion

A celebrity is nobody if he/she doesn’t have fans. The people’s attitude towards a person determines if he/she would become a star or not. In Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, Julius Caesar is a celebrity because he seems to have huge fan following and popularity there. According to Longhurst et al, fans are those admirers who display “some kind of excess of admiration of an activity or star” (264). It means fans have excessive love for their favorite star. So fans are basically lovers and supporters. Unless a celebrity gains their love, he/she cannot be called a celebrity. Simply put, celebrities need and depend upon these fans. Yet, in Jenson’s opinion, fans are fanatics and insane people (9). They often act in a frenzied manner because they are over excited about their favorite star. Their love for the celebrity may sometimes cross the boundaries of logic and commonsense. To understand such complex psychology of a fan, Jenson divides fans into two classes: firstly, “obsessed loner[s]” who are fans who “(under the influence of the media) [have] entered into an intense fantasy relationship with a celebrity figure” and who might sometime “achieve public notoriety by stalking or threatening or killing the celebrity;” and secondly, the “frenzied or hysterical member of a crowd” (11). To simplify, from crazy enthusiasts to devoted followers, a celebrity can have all kinds of fans.

Now, does Caesar have fans like these in the play? And do his fans adore him in the above described manners? William Shakespeare's play seems to answer affirmatively to these questions. In the beginning of the play, a group of people are celebrating Caesar's victory over Pompey in the civil wars. They are eagerly waiting for Caesar to come because they want to hail him. However, these men are reprimanded by two tribunes, Flavius and Murellus who think that the people are just wasting their time. To this, one of the admirers answers: "we make holiday to see Caesar and to rejoice in / his triumph" (1.1.34-35). So in the very first scene, Shakespeare is showing that the people of Roman Republic are so passionate about Caesar that just to get a glimpse of him they would even leave their jobs and offices. The way they are craving for a look of Caesar implies that they are viewing Caesar as someone rare. The tribunes who criticize this temperament of the people seem to be fearful that Caesar might eventually become greater than a leader. That is why Flavius says, "let no images / Be hung with Caesar's trophies" lest Caesar should "soar above the view of men / And keep us in servile fearfulness" (1.1. 72-73, 78-79). In this speech, it is even clearer that Caesar was becoming a star to men. Fans often hang on walls the posters of their favorite celebrities. Here Flavius is especially anxious about the "images" of Caesar. Is he sensing that Caesar is becoming a celebrity to the people? Thus in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, from the very beginning an ambience can be felt where Caesar is treated not merely as a general, but as a VIP whose images are hung and whose arrival is rejoiced grandiosely. Unless Caesar is more than just a leader in the play, it is unlikely that he would receive such treatment.

Another example from scene 2 of the play discloses how popular Caesar was becoming. When Caesar returns to Rome victorious, he is offered the crown: the people want him to be their king. But Caesar refuses to be the monarch of Rome. At this, the people's reaction is very significant. Brutus, Cassius and Casca are talking about that attitude of the people toward Caesar :

CASCA. Why, there was a crown offered him;
and being offered him, he put it by with the
back of his hand, thus; and then the people fell
a-shouting.

BRUTUS. What was the second noise for?

CASCA. Why, for that too.

CASSIO. They shouted thrice: what was the last
cry for?

CASCA. Why, for that too.

BRUTUS. Was the crown offered him thrice?

CASCA. Ay . . . and he put it by
thrice, every time gentler than other; and at every
putting-by mine honest neighbours shouted. (1.2.219-230)

From this conversation between Brutus, Cassius and Casca, it is understood that Caesar was offered the crown of Rome thrice and he denied kingship every time. But each time he rejected the proposal, each time the crowd yelled and shouted demanding Caesar to be their king: “the people fell a-shouting” because Caesar “put by” the crown. In Casca’s words, repeatedly “for that” reason only, the crowd screamed again and again to show Caesar their support. A ruler can also have public support and love. But the manner those people applaud Caesar is overwhelming. It feels they want Caesar not because they have to choose a person for the position of a king but because they are simply crazy about him. Had Caesar simply been a dictator, he would not have had taken delivery of such overwhelming public sympathy. Earlier in this paper, two types of fans have been mentioned: lonely fans and fans in groups (Jenson 11). Here the crowd who cries for Caesar to be the king represents those fans in a crowd who are mad about their beloved stars. The following example clarifies his point even better :

CASCA.
and still as he refused it the rabblement
shouted and clapped their chopped hands, and
threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered
such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar
refused the crown, that it had almost choked
Caesar; (1.2.244-249)

Here, the actions of the people, e.g. crying, shouting, throwing things in excitement, uttering their heartfelt emotion etc., clearly identify them as fans in a group. As Jenson elucidates, a star can have fans who express love for the celebrity as a “frenzied and hysterical member of a crowd” (11). In this sense, in *Julius Caesar*, the love the common mass show for Caesar can be interpreted as the love of a group of fans for a star. From this perspective, Caesar is a celebrity.

But not only these people, lonely individuals also loved Caesar. In Shakespeare’s play, Artemidorus embodies such fans. In the play, this man wrote a letter to Caesar to warn him against the conspirators. The letter is as follows:

ARTEMIDORUS. *Caesar, beware of Brutus; take heed of
Cassius; come not near Casca; have an eye to
Cinna; trust not Trebonius; mark well Metel-
lus Cimber; Decius Brutus loves thee not; thou
hast wronged Caius Ligarius. There is but one
mind in all these men, and it is bent against
Caesar. If thou be'st not immortal, look about
you: security gives way to conspiracy. The
mighty gods defend thee! Thy lover,
Artemidorus (2.3.1-10)*

As this letter confirms, Caesar does have true fans and admirers. Normally, a letter in such language is not written by a subject to his/her ruler. The language of the letter implies that Artemidorus loves Caesar and in such a tone he tries to tell Caesar who loves him and who does not. It seems he wants his idol, Caesar, to be aware of his lovers and haters. He knows many big names are plotting against him, yet he wants Caesar to live. This is a level of unquestionable devotion only a true fan is capable of displaying. He is so devoted he does not even hesitate to confront Caesar in public to try to save him:

ARTEMIDORUS. Hail, Caesar! Read this schedule.
DECIUS. Trebonius doth desire you to o'er read,
At your best leisure, this his humble suit.
ARTEMIDORUS. O Caesar, read mine first, for mine's a suit
That touches Caesar nearer. Read it, great Caesar.
CAESAR. What touches us ourself shall be last serv'd.
ARTEMIDORUS. Delay not, Caesar; read it instantly.
CAESAR. What! is the fellow mad?
PUBLIUS. Sirrah, give place. (3.1.3-9)

Here Artemidorus is earnestly requesting Caesar to read his letter: “[d]elay not, Caesar, read it instantly.” But Caesar, like an arrogant and careless master, dismisses him: “is the fellow mad?” Caesar at this time acts not like a leader but like an egotistical snob. This side of Caesar seems to have been highlighted here - that Caesar might have been really seeing himself as a celebrity who can only be admired from a distance but cannot be touched.

Even when Caesar is dead, the general people treat him as such. Though at first Brutus is successful in making the people into believing that Caesar's assassination was necessary, the people do not deplore Caesar. On the contrary, the public shower respect on Caesar:

FIRST CITIZEN. Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

SECOND CITIZEN. Give him a statue with his ancestors.

THIRD CITIZEN. Let him be Caesar.

FOURTH CITIZEN. Caesar's better parts

Shall be crown'd in Brutus.

FIRST CITIZEN. We'll bring him to his house with shouts and clamors.
(3.2.54-58)

So still after Caesar's demise with all the accusations heaped upon him, the people decide to make Caesar's statue to commemorate him. They would even give him a proper funeral with "shouts and clamors." In all these instances, the people's natural love for Caesar is unmistakable. Even when they are convinced by Brutus that Caesar was dangerous, they do not criticize or maltreat Caesar. Such a love can hardly be won by a mere army general. It feels this love is for a wonderful man who has charmed them. That is the reason, "[t]he figure of Julius Caesar stands out, brilliant. From the start he is idealized in point of power, general respect, glory . . . he is endued dramatically with strength, importance, almost divinity" (Knight 119). Here Knight's focus is also on how Caesar is idealized and deified. He elucidates that "the general acclamation" Caesar receives makes him "a sublime figure-head." But without that "general acclamation," he is "weak, egotistical, [and] petulant" (119-120). Just as a celebrity is not a celebrity without the applause of the fans, so it appears Caesar is not great without the acclamation of the people. In this sense, Caesar can be called a star.

Caesar's Own View of Himself as a "Star"

Not only the people's acclamation, Caesar's own elated opinion of himself also makes him a star. Particularly the following instances verify how Caesar himself talks or behaves as if he were a star. When Metellus Cimber petitions Caesar for the repeal of the banishment of his brother, Caesar denies that appeal saying :

CAESAR.

Thy brother by decree is banished:

If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,

I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.

Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause

Will he be satisfied. (3.1.44-48)

That Caesar is too arrogant and egotistical here is obvious. His speech discloses that he is not going to lower himself. Even when Brutus, Cassius, Casca and others beg him for mercy, he says:

CAESAR. I could be well moved, if I were as you;
 If I could pray to move, Caesar was prayers would move me;
 But I am constant as the northern star,
 Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
 There is no fellow in the firmament.
 The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks;
 They are all fire and every one doth shine;
 But there's but one in all doth hold his place.
 So in the world, 'tis furnish'd well with men,
 And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
 Yet in the number I do know but one
 That unassailable holds on his rank,
 Unshaked of motion; and that I am he,
 Let me a little show it, even in this;
 That I was constant Cimber should be banish'd,
 And constant do remain to keep him so.

CINNA. O Caesar

CAESAR. Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus? (3.1.)

It appears, even when everyone requests Caesar to call off his order, he does not change his mind. But more interesting than that is his assertion when he himself refers himself as a “star”: “I am constant as the northern star” and declares himself as a denizen of the “firmament.” As Knight says, “[t]he North Star alone remains constant in the skies, and Caesar must be such a star to men” (121). So according to Knight, Caesar wants to be like a star to men. Though the reason why he views himself as a star is that “[h]e wants primarily to ‘show’ his constancy: to the world, to himself” (121), the focus here is not merely on Caesar’s constancy and rigid ideals. The overall impression created by Caesar’s speech is that as a star he dwells above the territory of normal human beings. And as such,

[h]e represents an ideal of constancy, permanence, and absoluteness: a style of *integer vitae* that asserts itself even when apparently weak or infirm. In Freudian terms, Caesar is an ego-ideal to which others either aspire to or conspire against. Caesar’s famous constancy is his *virtù*, an ideal of virility and ethical integrity. (Willbern, 215)

Perhaps, because of his “ego-ideal to which others either aspire or conspire against,” Caesar emerges as a star.

The idea is further expanded. Caesar seems to be of the opinion that he is not a man of flesh and blood, but a fiery creature. He displays contempt for normal human beings: “men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive.” At the same time he purports that “[t]he skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks; / They are all fire and every one doth shine; / But there's but one in

all doth hold his place.” He means, his status is fixed in the *sky*, and he, as the “northern star,” illuminates the sky. So he believes that he is something more than a mere human being: “[u]nshaked of motion; and that I am he.” So Caesar himself thinks himself as some kind of idol whose level is beyond the reach of mankind and who should be revered accordingly. That is why he shouts: “[w]ill thou lift up Olympus?” comparing himself with Mt. Olympus. In all these occasions, Caesar seems to be of the belief that he is someone extraordinary just like a superstar. This idea is strengthened by the following assertion:

[Caesar] is spoilt by victory, success, power and by the republican courtiers who surround him ... he exclaims against flatterers and cringers, and yet both please him. All around him treat him as a master, his wife as a prince; the senate allow themselves to be called his senate; he assumes the appearance of a king even in his house; even with his wife he uses the language of a man who knows himself secure of power; and he maintains everywhere the proud, strict bearing of a soldier, which is represented even in his statues. (Gervinus, 77-78)

Therefore, both in the ways Caesar treats others and the ways he is treated by others, he comes out a special person who, like a celebrity, is the topic of everyone’s gossip.

So can it be assumed that in his own opinion Caesar is a celebrity, a man of celebrated status? His recurring references to “stars,” “the sky,” “mountains,” etc. in his dialogue create an impression that he considers himself a luminary which, in Goddard’s view, is an “assumption of divinity” (203). Thus in many ways, the overall tone of his above quoted speech is not of a leader’s, but of a star’s. Perhaps it can be the reason why Griffin says that in William Shakespeare’s play Caesar has a habit of referring to himself pompously, as a model (384) and “[t]herefore, whatever we may think of Caesar as a man, we must see him also as a symbol of something of vast import, resplendent majesty, and starry purpose” (Knight 122).

Caesar the Celebrity

Now after all the above discussion, can it be said that the Caesar of *Julius Caesar* is a celebrity? To answer this question Rojeck can be taken help from again. Rojeck classified celebrities into three types:

1. Ascribed celebrity – which is celebrity status that typically follows bloodline and biological descent. The foundation of this celebrity is predetermined and something born into; for example, monarchy.
2. Achieved celebrity – derives from the (perceived) accomplishments of an individual in open competition. In the public realm these celebrities are recognized as individuals with rare talent. For example, early sporting stars such as Jesse Owen.
3. Attributed celebrity – result of the representation of an individual as noteworthy or exceptional by cultural producers (such as the mass media), regardless of an individual's actual talent or skill. (Longhurst et al 53)

Here some aspects which are deemed essential to obtain stardom have been shed light upon. First, a person can be a celebrity because he/she has famous bloodline; second, a person can be a star for being a genius; and third, he/she can be a celebrity because he/she has been publicized and broadcast far and wide. Now, which category does Shakespeare's Caesar fall into? As this paper has already illustrated, Shakespeare's Caesar is loved by the people because of his accomplishments and magnificence. In this sense, Caesar can be called an "achieved celebrity." According to Longhurst et al,

Achieved celebrity pre-dates the rise of the mass media, and whilst those who were marked out for their significant achievements were widely known and talked about, key elements of their private self were secret from public view. By contrast the contemporary 'achieved' celebrity is ever present and open to digestion through various arms of the mass media, and as such, become much dependent upon their 'public' face. (53)

So, achieved celebrities are not new in societies. They existed even when there was no mass media. And because of this, their private life was a secret. So Shakespeare's Julius Caesar must be an achieved celebrity in the traditional sense of the term then. But interestingly enough this is not happening in the play. Shakespeare's Caesar is always in the midst of people. Griffin says Shakespeare does not give Caesar any private space and soliloquy:

he is only ever on stage alone for long enough to speak three lines ([2].[2].1–3). . . . Shakespeare's Caesar is never private. Even with the people in whom he comes closest to confiding, his wife and Antony, he

refers to himself in the third person, using his name like a title . . . An impression results not of a virtuous ruler or of a ruthless tyrant, the traditional choice, but of a powerful presence with a blank behind it. (382)

Thus Shakespeare's Caesar speaks avowedly in front of public as if he were always under the spotlight: "From the very first scene, Julius Caesar is powerfully present, even though he does not enter the stage before the second scene" (Mehl 222). And Caesar is "powerfully present" because he never hides himself: he wants everyone to feel his presence. Perhaps because of such tendency, he rarely unveils his innermost thoughts or his "private self." That is the reason Shakespeare's Caesar is a public figure who seems to have no private life: "Whenever he appears in person he seems more anxious to create an impression of superhuman stature and commanding presence than to allow us any revealing insight into his real thoughts and emotions" (Mehl 223). And this attempt on Caesar's part to "create an impression of superhuman stature and commanding presence" is his desire to create a powerful public image of himself. Longhurst et al say "the contemporary 'achieved' celebrity is ever present and open to digestion through various arms of the mass media, and as such, become much dependent upon their 'public' face" (53). Thus just like a "contemporary celebrity," Caesar depends on his "public face" and is "ever present and open" to public gossip.

But is there any connection between a celebrity and mass media? Though there is no mass media in the life of Shakespeare's Caesar, this Caesar understands well the importance of reaching the people. In Longhurst et al's words:

The contemporary celebrity is ... closely associated with the mass media ... where depth [and] meaning are no longer important, and increasingly what is important is surface and image. It does not really matter what David Beckham or Brad Pitt are *really* like – all that matters is their media and celebrity images, which become disconnected from any sense of reality. (53)

That is why Caesar's public image is more important to him than his true personality. As a result, the way he talks or acts, in Griffin's words, can come neither from a "virtuous ruler" nor from a "ruthless tyrant," but from "a powerful presence with a blank behind it" (382). This "powerful presence" is the presence of a celebrity. And the "blank" behind such a

presence is the bleak and lusterless private life of that star. In *Julius Caesar*, as the “northern star” or “mount Olympus” Julius Caesar appears to be a powerful presence. This Caesar is not just a leader, but a prevailing existence which is revered by everyone. Thus Caesar may be a celebrity in the modern sense of the term as well.

Conclusion

So it can be argued then that Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* depicts an idolized Julius Caesar. Though Caesar the man dies in the play, his aura persists. This idea is explained by Jehne in this manner: “[t]he image of an admired Caesar [is] not perished. ... Caesar's great talents and efficiency cannot be denied ... because his winning and generous manner impress[es] a modern observer as well” (65). So what is important about Caesar, as Jehne has figured out, is his “image.” Celebrities and stars always depend upon their public image or face value to be liked. Caesar's charisma, then, comes not from his achievements only, but from the impression he creates also.

And this is why this research views Caesar as a celebrity. He is an icon: “Caesar's impact, throughout the play, is more powerful, indeed more real, than his physical presence. ... His authority is taken for granted and does not have to be demonstrated by impressive rhetoric or despotic gestures” (Mehl 222). So Caesar in Shakespeare seems to have reached such a level, where he is no longer a powerful king purely. Rather the playwright paints a picture of such a Caesar who appears to have risen above his identity as a ruler. This Caesar is something more. He is a star to the people.

Works Cited

- Bloom, Harold, ed. (2008). *Bloom's Shakespeare Through the Ages : Julius Caesar*. New York : Infobase — Bloom's Literary Criticism.
- Boorstin, D. (1992). *The Image : A Guide to Pseudo Events in America*. New York : Random House.
- Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*. (2006). Revised and expanded ed.
- Dobson, Michael (2001). “*Julius Caesar* (Source).” *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare*. Ed. Michael Dobson & Stanley Wells. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gervinus, Georg Gottfried. “Character of Caesar.” Bloom 77-78.
- Griffin, Julia. “Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and the Dramatic Tradition.” Griffin 371-398.
- Griffin, Miriam, ed. (2009). *A Companion to Julius Caesar*. Sussex : Willey-Blackwell.

- Jehne, Martin. "History's Alternative Caesars : *Julius Caesar* and Current Historiography." Zander 59-70.
- Jenson, J. (1992). "Fandom as pathology: the consequences of characterization." *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*. Ed. L. Lewis. London : Routledge, 9-29.
- Knight, G. Wilson. "The Eroticism of *Julius Caesar*." Bloom 119-145.
- Longhurst, Brian, et al. (2008). *Introducing Cultural Studies*. 2nd ed. Harlow : Pearson-Longman.
- Mehl, Dieter. "Julius Caesar." Bloom 220-240.
- Pelling, Christopher. "The First Biographers: Plutarch and Suetonius." Griffin 252-266.
- Rojek, C. (2001). *Celebrity*. London : Reaktion Books.
- Shakespeare, William (1992). *Julius Caesar. Shakespeare: Complete Works*. Ed. W.J. Craig. London: Magpie Books Ltd.
- Willbern, David. "Constructing Caesar: A Psychoanalytic Reading." Zander 213-226.
- Zander, Horst, ed. (2005). *Julius Caesar: New Critical Essays*. New York: Routledge.
- . "*Julius Caesar* and the Critical Legacy." Zander 3-55.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FOR THE RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN BANGLADESH : A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INSERTION OF STATE RELIGION IN THE CONSTITUTION

Md. Didarul Islam*

Abstract

This research explores the status of religious freedom in Bangladesh for the religious minorities from a critical perspective. The main subject of this research is religious minorities in Bangladesh mainly the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Christians. As Islam is the state religion in Bangladesh constitution, religious minorities feel inferior to the Muslims. This research attempts to explore whether the insertion of 'state religion' in the Bangladesh constitution is a threat to freedom of religion in Bangladesh with special preference to religious minorities.

Keywords: Secularism, State Religion, religious minorities, religious freedom

Introduction

Bangladesh formulated its first constitution in 1972 with a premise to form a secular state ensuring religious freedom for all irrespective of whether they belong to a majority or minority religious tradition. Secularism was made a state principle along with democracy, socialism and Bengali nationalism which refers to a situation where no religion would be given preferential treatment by the state rather than the separation of religion from the state and its relegation to the private sphere. State should maintain an equidistance stand point in South Asian secularism, more specifically for India and Bangladesh (Sen, 2012 : 171-190). Bangladesh has a historical legacy of religious freedom (Belfiedt, 2015) and religious coexistence that enabled interfaith harmony in every level from societal to state from a distant past (Anisuzzaman, 2015). Secularism was abolished from the constitution from 1975 to open up religion-based politics in Bangladesh (Islam and Huda, 2016). In 2011, with the fifteenth amendment of the constitution, secularism has been

* Assistant Professor, Department of World Religions and Culture, University of Dhaka.

reinserted with an endeavour to bring back the original secular nature of the constitution. After the elimination of secularism in the Bangladesh constitution and the insertion of Islam as the state religion, the tension among religious minorities increased. Moreover, the percentage of the religious minorities has been reduced to approximately 10 percent in 2015 from approximately 29 percent in 1972 (Adams, 2015). Subsequently, since 2012, after the destruction of some Buddhist Temples at Cox's Bazar by Muslim extremists, tension has been raised among minorities regarding their freedom of religion. This tension was accelerated due to the consecutive attacks on the minorities. More than one thousand incidents have already been reported regarding attack on the minorities including vandalising temples, grabbing land, rape and killing religious priests. Religious minorities also said de facto discrimination existed in education system. The government is also accused of not providing equal funding to the minority religious groups when compared to Islamic communities (US State Department Report on Religious Freedom, 2014). Moreover, religious minorities sometimes feel threatened and insecure due to the insertion of Islam as the state religion (Beilfiedt, 2015). This is why more extensive qualitative research will enable us to understand to what extent the insertion of Islam as a state religion is a threat for minorities. There is hardly any academic literature based on primary research that has been produced which analysed the relationship of state religion and minority crisis. This research will explore the intrinsic relationship between the insertion of Islam in the Bangladesh constitution as the state religion and the freedom of religion with special attention to the religious minorities. This research will also help to know the crises that minorities face in Bangladesh.

Methodology

In the beginning of the study, a flexible research design was formulated (Robson, 2002) which kept this research in a specific direction. This research has been conducted by following qualitative research approaches including literature review, archival study and a fieldwork. A social fact can be best understood through qualitative analysis (Martin, 1998). A Fieldwork was conducted at Dhaka, Bangladesh from 17 June to 08 July 2017. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven prominent personalities who are mainly academics working on religious freedom. Judicial magistrates have also been interviewed. All of them

have expertise on the concerned fields. Respondents were selected using Purposive Sampling Technique (PST) in order to minimize research errors to and to get in-depth analysis of the facts (Taher, 2009) Each interview was around 30 to 40 minutes long. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. But at least two respondents have given their interviews written instead of oral interview. Two respondents were interviewed in Bengali as they were more comfortable in Bengali. Then their interviews were translated into English.

Legal Framework and theoretical understanding

Freedom of religion is considered as one of the key human rights by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights where article 18 states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966, p. 178) by Article 18 also ensured the freedom of religion stating “everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. And no one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice...”.

Bangladesh, not being an exception has framed constitutional guarantee for religious freedom for all including the majorities and the minorities. Religious freedom has been conceived as a corner stone of Bangladesh constitution (Rashid, 2004). According to Article 41, every citizen has the right to profess, practice, or propagate any religion and for every religious community or denomination to have the right to establish, maintain, and manage its religious institutions (Bangladesh Constitution, 2011).

Marshall (2013 : 11-12) has pointed out few key components of religious freedom. Firstly, freedom for believers to engage in particular practices apparently peculiar to religion. For instance, any particular modes of diet, dress and prayer can be astonishing to an outsider which he or she thinks strange and incompatible to the mainstream society or religion. Secondly, freedom to gather together for worship. Thirdly, freedom of religious institutions and organizations to decide on their

governance, rules and personnel. Fourthly, freedom of religious people to found and maintain distinctive social organizations, such as hospitals, family and welfare agencies, as well educational institutions and media.

According to Uitz (2004 : 15), the constitutional significance of protecting religious freedom is only acknowledged if the significance of the freedom of religion is understood in a pluralist society. The right to profess or not to profess any religion largely depends on a particular society that to what extent that society or state is pluralist. In Bangladesh, freedom of religion has been understood based on secularism grounded in a pluralist society (Bielfiedt, 2015, p.5). In Bangladesh secularism has a distinct meaning and character meaning neutrality to religion and the equal status of all religions persistent in Bangladesh (Islam and Huda, 2016). According to the secularism in Bangladesh, state will enforce no law which can violate the religious harmony of Bangladesh and state will guarantee the freedom of people irrespective of religion, class and ideology (Anisuzzaman, 2015). According to the Article 12 of the Bangladesh constitution, secularism will be understood as follows: “The principle of secularism shall be realised by the elimination of — (a) communalism in all its forms; (b) the granting by the State of political status in favour of any religion; (c) the abuse of religion for political purposes; (d) any discrimination against, or persecution of, persons practicing a particular religion” (Bangladesh Constitution, 2011). This provision implies that the constitution has conscious endeavour to establish communal harmony. Article 41(1) also mandates; “subject to any law, public order and morality.”

- a. Every citizen has the right to profess, practice or propagate any religion.
- b. Every religious community or denomination has the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.

Article 41(2) further provides that no person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instructions, or to keep part in or to attend any religious ceremony or worship, if that instruction ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.

Despite a clear outline of pluralist framework of secularism, there are two trends of debate against the secularism in Bangladesh. In one hand, the pro-leftist intellectuals want to say Bangladesh secularism as ‘pseudo-secularism’ as it has been depicted by Sharif (2004 : 148-155). He argued

that the loophole of secularism in Bangladesh is that it accommodates every religion within itself instead of sharp division between religion and state. On the other hand, the pro-right-wing intellectuals want to describe secularism as ‘atheism’ which gave an idea that the insertion of secularism is the promotion of atheistic or non-religiousness in Bangladesh (Anisuzzaman, 2015).

According to (Bielfiedt, 2015 : 5), the secularism of Bangladesh is space providing *inclusive secularism* where all religions have equal status and state is not passive towards religions. Stating the importance of active attitude of state for the sake of religious freedom, he writes: “There is a need for the state activity to protect and promote religious and belief related diversity, based on the right to freedom of religion or belief for all, as guaranteed in article 39 and 41 of the constitution as well as in international human rights law” (Ibid : 5).

Despite ensuring religious freedom for all, the constitution of Bangladesh has two questionable aspects regarding the freedom of religion. In one hand, it says that Islam is the state religion in Bangladesh though people belonging to other religions will enjoy the equal status (Bangladesh Constitution, 2011). Members of religious minorities feel the contradiction and feel inferior as well due to the insertion of this state religion (Beilfiedt, 2015 : 6). On the other hand, it does not have any provision or legal protection for those who do not officially practice any established religions like Islam or Hinduism.

The Bangladesh government’s response towards the religious minorities and a way forward to develop their status:

The government has been taking some steps to protect minority rights with respect to legal affairs such as punishing the culprits causing harm to the minorities and social awareness, the minorities are still concerned about their safety and protection (Ahmed, 2016, : 5). The US Commission on Religious Freedom Report (USCIRF) (2016) argued that the government is showing more active endeavour to protect the minority rights. In addition, the law enforcing agencies have arrested people those who are associated with any incidents and investigated for any attack and threats. These active measures have increased the social protection of the minorities. USCIRF (2016) reports that some political parties try to curtail the influence of the religious minorities in electoral process as a game

changing factor. They have argued that the minorities have a strong vote bank which is mainly opposed to any right wing political parties like Jamat. Adams (2015 : 45) writes: “The targeting of minorities in elections violence has been motivated by a desire to limit their electoral influence.”

Few Aspects of the crisis of the religious minorities

There are few aspects that can be described demonstrating the issue of the religious Minorities. Firstly, in 1965 when Bangladesh was in Pakistan, the government enacted the enemy property Act (EPA) that enabled the government to take over the property of the enemies of the state, the Hindus who supported India during India Pakistan War in 1965 and who left Pakistan for India after 1965 (Ahmed, 2016 : 7). This law was retained as the Vested Property Act (VPA) after the independence of Bangladesh as The Vested Property Act (1974). This triggered the Hindu migration in India and decline of the number of the Hindus in Bangladesh (Belfiedt, 2016 : 7). In face of continuous crisis of land grabbing and security of the minorities, in 2011, the government started implementing the Vested Property Return Act (2011) but had been encountered with many problems (Ahmed, 2016 : 8).

Secondly, the Religious minorities have encountered few problems in religious education in Bangladesh as Beilfiedt (2016, : 9) notes that there is a sharp discrimination between the majority Muslims and the religious minorities in government schools regarding religious education.

Thirdly, attacks on the Minorities in recent years have become more common. The Ramu incident in 2012 has changed the course of the interfaith harmony of Bangladesh at least to some extent when at least twenty historic Buddhist temples were destroyed and some houses of the Buddhists were burnt (Beilfiedt, 2016, p. 7) in the face of a rumour associated with the defamation of Islam by the Buddhists. This resulted in a speedy rise of the attacks on the minorities in the subsequent years including kidnapping, land grabbing, vandalising temples and statues, target killings of the Hindu priests and the Christian pastors. US State Departments International Religious Freedom report (2015) says: “Attacks targeting Hindus or their property during the year killed seven persons and injured 67, compared to none killed and 60 injured in 2015. Attackers destroyed 197 statues, monasteries, or temples compared to 213 in 2015; and destroyed 192 homes and 2 businesses compared to 104 homes and six businesses in 2015.”

In 2016, dozens of Temples and hundreds of houses of the Hindus were vandalised in Nasirnagar based on rumours that a local young Hindu defamed Islam. The main agenda was grabbing Hindu properties (Taj Hashmi, 2016). In addition to that, Santals (aboriginal ethnic minorities) faced a severe attack resulting vandalising houses and loosing land. Taj Hashmi (2016) described the attack from power dynamics that aimed at seizing a huge amount of land estimated 800,000 hectares of land. According to Hashmi (2016), attack on the minorities has a direct link with the powerful side, no matter which religion they belong to clearly inclined to either grab land or to take personal revenge through political back up.

General Findings and Data Analysis

In the following section I present a discussion based upon the interviews that I carried out during my field work. In my analysis, I have identified themes and have structured the discussion accord to the following areas.

General understanding on the Situation of religious freedom in Bangladesh

It is quite difficult to calculate to what extent religious freedom persists in Bangladesh as it does not solely depend on data. Sometimes data is not available as the religious minorities cannot always report all the incidents happened to them. However, generally it can be said that the constitution guarantees the rights of the religious minorities including the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Christians, the aboriginals and others. But among the religious minorities, the Hindus enjoy much better opportunities in Bangladesh as one of the respondents remarked :

“Hindus are the largest minority group and also they are the most privileged group among all the minority groups. To some extent, Christians and Buddhists are also enjoy their freedom of religion in various ways. But undoubtedly, the Hindus enjoy more freedom and opportunities.”

The Hindus are the largest minorities in Bangladesh and this can be a reason for getting special treatment from the government. They are considered as a vote bank for secular parties. But the constitution does not make any discrimination. So, this comment is partially true.

One of the respondents has argued that though sometimes the government and the society talk about religious minority rights and religious freedom but they do not talk about the freedom of some of the

sects of the Muslims such as the Ahmediya and the Shiites in Bangladesh (Adams, 2015). Another respondent also discussed the issue stating that even in the academia people hardly speak for the religious freedom of groups like the Shi'ites as they face more potential threats from the orthodox Muslims. She argued that despite a historical legacy of religious freedom in Bangladesh the term 'religious freedom' is still not pervasively applicable for all.

Amidst different issues on the religious minorities, some of the respondents are totally agreed that the state of religious freedom is 'good' in Bangladesh which is much better than many other South Asian countries like India and Pakistan.

A respondent explained one example to prove him right. He said that in any Hindu Puja (Hindu religious festivals), most of the attendants in any Puja area are the Muslims. This festival usually exceeds the boundary of religion. The Muslims join these festivals and enjoy there. There is hardly any incident where the Muslims and the Hindus confronted due to performing any worship or Durga Puja.

Islam to be the state religion

State religion implies the state recognition of a religion over the other religions within the state. It allows a particular religion to enjoy superior status over other religions. Islam, as a state religion, means that it is the religion of a state patronized by the particular government itself. It is total disrespect to the other religious adherents, according to at least four respondents including from the minority group respondent. One of them has said: "Recognizing, Islam as state religion means, it will get extra preference over others. But, it is really disgraceful for a democratic and secular country like Bangladesh."

Islam became the state religion in 1988 through the 8th amendment of the constitution by the then president Hussain Muhammad Ershad, a former military general. He did not make Islam a state religion overnight. He followed the footsteps of his military predecessor General Ziaur Rahman who abolished 'secularism' from the constitution after the assassination of the father of the nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975 (Riaz, 2013). Recognizing Islam as state religion means, it will get extra preference over others. This has been described by one of the respondents as 'disgraceful' for a democratic and secular country like Bangladesh.

The reason for making Islam as state religion was obvious for the military rulers of Bangladesh Including General Ziaur Rahman and General H.M. Ershad. They used 'Islam' as a card to gain popular support from the Muslims, according to Ali Riaz (2013). There can be mentioned at least 3 reasons for why Islam was made state religion, according to the discussion of the respondents.

Firstly, the reason has been stated by most of the respondents is the endeavour of the military rulers to legitimate their regimes. Bangladesh experienced first military dictatorship in 1975 by General Ziaur Rahman who used Islam as a political card to legitimize his rule. He disavowed secularism from the constitution and declared Bangladesh as an Islamic republic. In this regard, he sought legitimacy from the middle eastern countries, Saudi Arabia for instance by declaring Bangladesh as Islamic republic (Riaz, 2013).

Secondly, the military rulers established their own political parties. According to all the respondents, after the beginning of the military regimes in Bangladesh, two consecutive military rulers ended up with an endeavour of being 'democratic' by calling so called general election. Both Ziaur Rahman in the early 1980s and General Ershad in 1986 tried to remain in power by using 'religion' card.

Finally, the reason for introducing Islamic republic and state religion lies in establishing an anti-Awami League philosophy based on Islamic ideals by portraying Awami –League as 'anti-Islamic' party. The military rulers founded two political parties named Bangladesh nationalist party (BNP) by general Zia and Jatiya party (JP) by General Ershad. As they had no political base and history, they tried to establish a philosophy based on anti-Awami League stand point, according to most of the respondents.

Key challenges of religious freedom for the religious minorities

The respondents have argued that in the modern complex world it is easy to think to establish religious freedom for all from all levels but this is difficult to get it done. Bangladesh has many challenges on the way to ensure religious freedom for the religious minorities. There are three kinds of challenges regarding religious freedom in Bangladesh as pointed out by the respondents.

Firstly, the main problem is the dilemma regarding the insertion of state religion in the constitution which has set a 'psychological' deadlock to ensure religious freedom. This has created a confusion and apparently it was against the spirit of the very first constitution of Bangladesh. One of the respondents said: "The key challenge to ensure religious equilibrium is the insertion of state religion. It makes a psychological sense of inferiority among the others (religious minorities). When state provides extra preference to any particular religion, this process automatically undermines other religions. At the same time when state take extra care to any particular religion, the orthodox group of that particular religion tries to take the advantage of it. Consequently, it compels the minority groups to think themselves as second class citizen. He is true to some extent that the so-called fanatics and religious orthodoxies try to get privilege to dominate the religious minorities." But among the respondents, at least four respondents including two persons from religious minorities do not think the insertion as the key challenge to ensure religious freedom. For instance, a respondent said: "Religious freedom is not confined within the debate of state religion. It is not easy to ensure religious freedom even in a country where there is no state church or state religion; USA or India for instances. So, it is a mistake to blame state religion solely."

Secondly, they found 'the absence of the rule of law' as the key challenge to promote religious freedom in Bangladesh. One of the respondents said: "If the rule of law was established no matter whether there is any state religion or not, everyone would be bound to obey the rules which prohibits to cause any harm to any person."

Thirdly, another problem raised by the respondents is the global crisis on terrorism and the expansion of the Salafist and Wahhabi ideology. Global crisis on the Muslims has an effect in Bangladesh as well though it might not be a massive one. A respondent said: "A key challenge is movements like Salafism and Wahhabism which have been initiated in Bangladesh by some young people. We know that Salafism and Wahhabism are related with conservative trend. The young people who go to Middle East countries like Saudi, Syria, Tunisia and are influenced by such kind of conservative ideologies and when they back they just try their best to initiate that conservative trends."

Thus, the absence of rule of law, global political phenomenon such as global war on terrorism, expansion of ideological terrorism by the

Wahhabis or armed terrorism in different countries and psychological weakness of the religious minorities stand as key obstacles to establish religious freedom in Bangladesh.

Despite the fact that, this policy debate is a sensitive issue for the policy makers and for the religious minorities whether the insertion of state religion is a direct threat for them. Respondents are divided in their opinion regarding this issue. Some of the respondents do not consider the insertion of state religion a 'real threat' while the others consider it as threat. In addition, it is not only the Muslim respondents who think that state religion is not a threat. Even one of the respondents from religious minorities thinks that it is not a matter whether there is any state religion or not. Instead, the lack of a total 'environment for religious freedom' is a major threat for religious freedom.

In contrast to this very firm stand point that state religion is a major threat for the minorities, at least four respondents including two respondents from religious minority groups opined that state religion is not the biggest issue to ensure religious freedom. One of the respondents argued that ideally, it does not matter if there is a state religion so long as the status does not result in an inferior status given to other religions and rights of the people from all religion are protected as envisioned in the constitution. However, as indicated above, the status of Islam as a state religion has generated a sense of special status, despite the constitution clearly denying so, among the Muslims which poses the threat towards equal treatment of minorities. Moreover, constitutional values are not embedded in the social values which results in denial of equal status not in administrative settings but in social scenarios.

Thus, it cannot be generally stated that the insertion of state religion is a major threat for the religious minorities. But the fact cannot be denied according to this research that there is a link between these state religion and minority threats in any fashion what so ever.

Feasibility of affirming religious freedom by keeping state religion: a critical debate

The respondents are not unanimous in the position whether it is possible to affirm religious freedom by keeping state religion. Some of them argued against the proposition while some of them stated on behalf of it. The key argument of these who opposed the proposition is that state religion and secularism is contradictory concept. This is why, these two

contradictory ideas cannot affirm a harmonious situation for the religious minorities. For instance, one of the respondents argued that without ensuring overall development (socio-economic), it is not possible in our country to ensure religious freedom. Still now, commoners are easily motivated by the words of religious personalities. Literacy rate is still not so satisfactory. That is why many people failed to understand the actual meaning of religious freedom likely, sometimes religious freedom, in Bangladesh, is interpreted as Atheism, which is absolutely a misguided thought. So, without ensuring good literacy rate and proper awareness among the commoners, it is impossible to affirm religious freedom by keeping state religion.

In contrast to the previous position, two of the respondents including one from minority group have argued that by embedding the constitutional values in our social values, the rights of religious minorities can be ensured. One of the female respondents argued that if embedding the constitutional values are done in a right way, merely a constitutional acknowledgement of the state religion would not hinder religious freedom as the constitution guarantees on religious freedom.

This position leads this study to a minimum comparison to UK model of state church. While the respondents were asked that if United Kingdom could ensure religious freedom by keeping state church, whether it is possible for Bangladesh. In this case, one of the respondents said: "Countries like UK, Netherlands become potent to affirm religious freedom by keeping state religion for their strong law and order situation and economic strength. The situation in Bangladesh is totally different because our law and order situation is not satisfactory to ensure all kinds of rights of the minorities as well as the poor. The political parties always patronise state religion to get the majority vote in election. So, affirming religious freedom by keeping state religion is not possible in the third world countries like Bangladesh. It is contradictory."

Most of the respondents are reluctant to go for any comparison as the socio-economic situation in the United Kingdom is not comparable to a country like Bangladesh. In this case, at least two respondents suggested that the UK model of state church is somewhat different from the idea of state religion. In policy making or for enacting any law, there is hardly any influence of the Anglican church where this has a significant impact on implementing policies in Bangladesh. Thus, though apparently it might be

resembled that the comparison may be feasible between these two countries but in fact, there is little scope to state that as UK can affirm religious freedom by keeping state religion, therefore Bangladesh can confirm religious freedom by keeping state religion.

Besides the comparison, some of the respondents suggested that even in Bangladesh, religious freedom can be affirmed by increasing the sense of 'psychological security' among the religious minorities in Bangladesh. Hence, the government should pass more 'religious minority friendly' law so that they do not feel inferior to at least minimum point. In addition to that, the law enforcing agencies should take care of any harmful situation with strict hand so that the victims get proper judgement.

Thus, it can be stated that it is possible to ensure religious freedom for all irrespective of the majorities and the minorities by keeping state religion if the above stated aspects can be ensured in a proper way. State religion can be a symbolic reflection of the majority Muslims and might have no negative impact if the constitutional values of equal status are enshrined among the people.

Reasons for declining the number of the religious minorities

Some of the respondents have mentioned the state of religious minority-majority issue is not so acute in Bangladesh. But the data regarding the decrease of the religious minorities from nearly 22 percent in 1971 to 10 percent in the most recent years tell a different fact. It shows that the minorities are decreasing every year for many reasons. There are many greedy political leaders who always try to grab the properties of the minority groups. Here religion is just an issue in the camouflage of economic reason. A respondent from a minority group suggested that many Hindu people are scared by such types of political leaders and their supporters. They do so because if they get scared, they will migrate to India. Consequently, they can grab their lands. In Bangladesh, people are very much ethnocentric. Another reason is lack of sense of security in the society. It is not possible by the government to ensure security for every family. So, social sense of security should be risen. Lack of political willingness is also responsible for the present problem, as government cannot ensure the proper security for the minor classes. The respondents have mentioned at least four reasons why the number of the religious minorities is decreasing.

Firstly, one of the main reasons of decreasing the number of religious minorities is *land grabbing* by force from the minorities. It was started during the liberation war in 1971 when many Hindus fled to India. When they returned to their home land, many of them found that their land had been grabbed by the local elites and powerful political persons. Thousands of cases regarding this land grabbing is pending and still they are waiting to get back their property. In addition, it has been found that every year, many religious minorities are losing their land to the local politicians. One of the respondents said that there are many greedy political leaders who always try to grab the properties of the minority groups.

Secondly, the *sense of insecurity* has triggered the migration of the religious minorities that reduced the number of the religious minorities. It is true that there is a psychological impact on the religious minorities when they face some crisis in an independent land despite the conscious endeavour from the government to ensure religious freedom. Due to the atrocities affecting the minorities, which in many cases resulted in death, flight and migration of minorities, the number has subsequently been decreasing.

Thirdly, the reason that comes out here is the *low birth rate* among the religious minorities in Bangladesh. At least two respondents have marked this as a reason for the decreasing number of religious minorities. For instance, a respondent said: "The Hindus or the other religious minorities were more conscious regarding their child birth than the Bengali Muslims. As a result, it is very obvious that the average rate of the Muslims will be increased and the percentage of minority population will be decreased proportionately".

Finally, conscious migration to India is a major cause of the decline of the religious minorities in Bangladesh which is truer for the Hindus in compare to the Christians and the Buddhists. It cannot be denied that many Hindus consciously migrated to India for a better future after the liberation war. Hence, it was true for those who lost their lands to the powerful people.

Factors contributing to the present attack (2012 to onwards) on the religious minorities

Three facts are related in the present attack on the minorities, according to the respondents. Firstly, there is a direct link between the

present attack on the minorities and the trial on war criminals for their inhuman action in 1971 during the liberation war of Bangladesh. Hence, Jamat-e-Islami and some other collaborators of them have tried to stop the trial by making Bangladesh unstable. Secondly, the Ramu incident started based on a fake Facebook post which disrespected the Prophet Muhammad (sm). The locals grew angry and the local powerful elites and the fanatics took the privilege of this situation. They started vandalising the Temples and this kind of destructions were seen later on as well. One of the respondents said that all things started out of a rumour which changed the pattern on communal harmony discourse in Bangladesh. Thirdly, the rise of Islamic States (IS) or the expansion of Islamic militancy is one of the reasons for increasing the attacks on the religious minorities. Though in the recent years, the number has been decreased, the global political phenomenon contributed a lot in the rise of attack on the minorities. A respondent said: “The global rise of Islamic extremism triggered the expansion of the local militancy which facilitated the ongoing attack on the religious clergies or on the temples. Target attacks on the religious clergies, for instance, was a part of global strategy of IS which was functioned by the local ideological supporters of IS in different names.”

Impact of discarding state religion: a feasibility study

It is quite a difficult policy making question. This might not be a comfortable option for the government as well because of political reasons. This is why, almost all respondents have argued that the direct cessation of Islam as state religion will not be solution. Hence, it will increase the chance of communal tensions. As long as fundamentalist values are replaced by constitutional values, cessation of Islam being the state religion would not bear the fruit of religious freedom enjoyed by the minorities, according to the discussion of the respondents. For instance, one of the respondents said that nevertheless, if it so happens, the positive effect would be that the minorities would receive moral strength. On the other hand, it would invoke anger among the fundamentalist Muslims which in turn may result in more frequent attacks on minorities. Hence, it is not a question whether Islam remains a state religion or not, but whether the state is capable to protect the minorities and ensure their constitutional right to the choice of and freedom of religion.

One of the respondents from minority group said that the cessation of state will religion has two-fold impacts in Bangladesh. From positive point of view, Bangladesh will enjoy and undoubtedly be established as a role model for religious freedom. In addition, there will be a peaceful co-existence of different religious followers under the same umbrella and the minority groups will be really happy from sense of psychological security. But he repeatedly emphasised that tension and chaos will be doubled if any attempt to discard state religion be taken by the government. He said: "Though there are some good impacts of the cessation of state religion, the negative impacts will be more dangerous. In one hand, the mainstream Muslims might not take it easily. As a result, the orthodox might call movement against this move of the government. In addition, there is no guarantee that this will help to promote religious freedom unless the psychological change of the people and the rule of law be established in the country."

His arguments seem to be very objective. On one hand, the Muslims definitely have a soft corner for Islam as state religion. They might react negatively. On the other hand, there is no guarantee that mere constitutional change will alter the situation by bringing a society without any communal issues.

Another negative thing must be considered that this move might be counter-productive for any government. In a country where majority people are Muslims and where communal tension is not that much high in compare to India, the government will not take any risk to discard state religion. Henceforth, political parties need to consider their vote bank. As the vote bank is mainly based on the majority Muslims, therefore it is expected that the government will not take any steps regarding this.

A twist has been visible for the respondents who argued that state religion is a major threat for the religious freedom and religious minorities. In answering the positive and negative impacts of discarding state religion, no one of them has suggested to discard Islam as state religion. According to their views, though there will be some positive impacts if there ceases to be state religion, but the negative impacts will be much higher.

A respondent said: "If the government takes the risk discarding the provision of state religion, their vote bank might be affected. In addition, other political parties will play this religious card so that the government becomes unable to run the country. This will destabilise the situation of

Bangladesh as well.” Thus, according to their arguments, it is clear that the cessation of Islam as state religion will have more negative impacts than positive impacts.

Developing the status of the religious minorities in the present constitutional setting: a way forward

The present government does not have any intention to change the present constitutional structure regarding secularism and state religion. Their key argument is that state religion is the representative status of the majority Muslims in Bangladesh. At the same time, secularism guarantees the equal status of all people belonging to different religions. Thus, the government will keep the present constitutional structure. But the question rises whether it is possible to confirm religious freedom in its fullest essence by keeping state religion. It is a policy question which needs more examination. But to the best of this study and data collected from the respondents, it can be said that by following different methods in policy implementation levels, religious freedom can be guaranteed and the current situation regarding minority issues can be improved.

Most of the respondents have expressed their positive response to this question whether the situation of the religious freedom can be improved. For instance, one of the respondents has said that it is true that Bangladesh has been facing some issues with religious freedom but it is not as big as it is usually portrayed in media. Hence, the present situation can be much improved by a ‘collective’ approach from the government, civil society and the potential victims meaning religious minorities. He added that the situation of the attack on the minorities has been improved in the recent days while the data regarding the attack on the minorities proves him right.

According to the respondents, the following programs can enable the state to secure religious harmony without discarding either secularism or state religion.

Firstly, Political willingness of government is necessary for improving the present situation. Especially, it has been reported in many times that land of the religious minorities have been grabbed by the political persons in the respective localities where proper steps have not been taken.

Secondly, a social movement in favour of the religious freedom of the minority groups should be initiated to improve the situation. A social

awareness campaign will help people to understand the necessity of religious freedom. In this regard, mosques and Friday sermon in *Zumma* (special prayer on Friday) can be very effective if people are informed by the religious personals.

Thirdly, besides changing our education policy, textbooks in different levels should be enriched with discussion on interfaith harmony, religious freedom, the necessity of religious pluralism and secularism. These academic arenas will help students to develop a sense of mutual respect and harmony which in turn will facilitate the development of the status of religious freedom in Bangladesh.

Besides asserting the expectation of improving the present state of religious minorities in Bangladesh, at least two respondents differ in the position that the situation can be improved in the present settings; meaning keeping state religion and secularism together. They have expressed their concern that the religious minorities won't be able to enjoy equal status in actual sense unless the constitutional provision of state religion be 'withdrawn'.

These two respondents in this regard said that it is very tough to ensure religious freedom without ceasing state religion because of two reasons. Firstly, this state religion gives the people belonging to other religions a sense of 'second class' citizen. Secondly, the socio-economic situation in our country is not compatible to Europe. Many European countries have state church which does not hamper their establishment of religious freedom. But for a third world country like Bangladesh, it is not easy to ensure religious freedom by keeping state religion which accelerate the majority class to think superior over the others."

Conclusion

The situation of the minority groups in Bangladesh is not satisfactory as there are many issues which have raised the tensions regarding the minority rights and religious freedom in Bangladesh. This study was an endeavour to understand to what extent the insertion of state religion is a major threat for the establishment of religious freedom and whether this is connected to the ongoing attacks on the religious minorities or whether it is contributing to the decrease of the number of religious minorities in the last forty-six years. In addition, along with analysing the legal framework and the government's position on religious freedom and minority rights, it

has been premised that the situation of the religious freedom demands more attention from the government and mass people. This 'more attention' will accelerate to understand the rights of the religious minorities and will create a social awareness. Based on the field work data, it is difficult to take a firm position as many respondents were divided in their opinion. And both parties have strong arguments. But sometimes they have been seen being self-contradictory in keeping state religion along with secularism. Because maximum respondents said that state religion is a threat for the ensuring religious freedom and equal status for all. Hence, they changed their position on the issue whether the government should take the risk of discarding state religion. Due to the government's more active position in the last couple of years, the number of communal incidents have been decreased and law enforcing agencies have become more active. But this is not enough convincing which can immediately solve all problems. It is not merely a problem of the law enforcing agencies to take immediate actions; it is connected with a 'collective societal aspects'. In this study, it has been argued that state religion has a significant negative impact on the religious minorities which trigger them to think second class citizen of a country. But this has limited connection with any communal conflict like vandalising temples or target killings of the religious clergies. Besides, thousands of land grabbing incident is due to personal gain instead of any religious issues. It has been argued more that if the government discard state religion, the situation will be more condensed that there is a huge chance of getting the communal issues dangerous. This is why, the respondents mainly argued that in the present settings of the constitution meaning by keeping both secularism and state religion together, the situation can be improved immensely without disrupting anything.

Bibliography

- Adams, N. (2015). *Faith and Development in Focus: Bangladesh*. USA: Berkley Center for religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University.
- Ahmad, Tariq. 2016. Bangladesh: Treatment of Religious Minorities August 2016 Report for the US Department of Justice. available at <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/file/882896/download>
- Anisuzzaman. (2015). *Secularism*. Dhaka: BPL
- Hashmi, Taj. (2016). Attack on the Minorities in Bangladesh: No longer a 'communal issue'. The Daily Star. November 22, 2016. Available at <http://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/stranger-fiction/attacks-minorities-bangladesh-no-longer-%E2%80%9Ccommunal-issue%E2%80%9D-1318237>. Last accessed [17July, 2017]

- Islam, M.D. and Huda, Fazrin. (2016). Religion and Politics: Bangladesh Perspective. *International Journal of Management and Humanities (IJMH)*. 2(4) : 1-5.
- Marshall, Paul. (2013). Conceptual issues in contemporary religious freedom research. *International Journal for Religious Freedom (IJRF)*. 6(1/2).
- Maoa, Jannatul. (2012). Human Rights and Religious Freedom in Bangladesh. available at <https://iarf.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/human-rights-and-religious-freedom-in-bangladesh-43.pdf>
- Pejic, Jelena. (1997). Minority Rights in International Law. *Human Rights Quarterly*. 19(3) : 666-685.
- Rashid, Harun Or. October 03, (2004). Freedom of Religion: Religious minorities in Bangladesh, *The Daily Star*.
- Riaz, Ali. (2013). *Inconvenient Truths on Bangladesh Politics*. Dhaka: Prothoma Prokashan.
- Sen, Amartya. (2012). Discontents on secularism. In: sadi, Anup. 2012. *Bangaleer dharmaniropekata*. Dhaka: kotha Prokash Publications.
- Sharif, Ahmed. (2004). *Humanism and Secularism*. Dhaka: Sandesh Publications.
- US State Department. (2017). Bangladesh 2016 International Religious Freedom Report. Last accessed [18 August, 2017]. Available at
- US State Department (2016). Bangladesh 2015 International Religious Freedom Report. Available at <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/256513.pdf>. Last accessed [17 July, 2017]
- US State Department. (2015). Bangladesh 2014 International Religious Freedom Report. Available at <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/238702.pdf>. Last accessed [16 July, 2017]
- Uitz, Renata. (2004). Freedom of Religion in European constitution and International case law. Belgium: CUP.
- UNHR.1966. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. [Last accessed, August 18, (2017). Available at [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf)
- UNHR. (1948). Universal Declaration on Human Rights. [last accessed 19 August, 2017]. Available at <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
- OHCHR. N.d. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Available at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf. Last accessed [16 July, 2017]
- N.b. This article has been prepared from my MA thesis at the University of Leeds as the partial fulfilment of MA in Religious Studies and Global Development at the University of Leeds. I am thankful to Professor Dr. Emma Tomalin of the University of Leeds for her valuable guidance on producing my arguments.

Call for Articles/Book Reviews & Notes for the Contributors

The Arts Faculty Journal is published annually from the Faculty of Arts, University of Dhaka. The Editorial Board invites research based articles and book reviews in the field of Humanities. The articles/book reviews must conform to the following guidelines/notes:

1. Two hard copies (computer composed) of the manuscript along with a soft copy of the research article/book review should be submitted to the address given below.
2. The article/book review must be single authored.
3. The text of the manuscript should be of 12pt typed in Times New Roman font, and double spaced.
4. All contributors must submit articles using the latest edition of either APA Style or MLA Style for the purpose of documentation (Check on internet).
5. *The Arts Faculty Journal* is a reviewed journal, and all contributions are reviewed by relevant experts in the field.
6. Contributors are requested to note the declaration below.
7. Contributions from faculty members of any public/private university are accepted.
8. Views expressed in the articles are those of the contributors. The Editorial Board shall not be responsible for the contents of the papers.

Professor Dr. Abu Md. Delwar Hossain

Editor

The Arts Faculty Journal

&

Dean, Faculty of Arts

University of Dhaka

Dhaka 1000 Bangladesh

Declaration

The manuscript submitted is original. It has not been submitted for publication or is not already published in any journal.

