

ARABIC AND PERSIAN STUDIES UNDER BENGAL SULTANATE: *AN APPRAISAL**

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Bengal for her enormous natural resources and moderate climatic conditions had been a covetous country of attraction for the foreigners from the time of yore. Many civilizations grew up and declined with the passage of time since its record in history. From the historical records it is evident that over this fertile soil of Bengal, the Mauryans, the Guptas, the Palas and the Senas before the coming of Muslims had their sway and contributed a lot to the enrichment of her political, administrative and cultural attainments. A fragmentary Mauryan Brahmi Inscription^{1[1]} paleographically dated in the 3rd century B.C. discovered at Mahasthan twelve kilometers north of Bogra town reveals to us *Pundanagala* equating with *pundranagara* and conclusively identified with Mahasthan^{2[2]}, an emporium of Bengal from very ancient time. Archaeological excavation of this mound of Mahasthan unfolds the various start as of civilization to speak the glorious past of Bengal history. Even in and around the vicinity of Mahasthan are unearthed the ancient relics in the form of *viharas*^{3[3]} and temples which tell her past heritage. Likewise the Sumapura *Vihara* of Paharpur in the district of Naogaon and Shalbana *Vihara* of Mainamati in the district of Comilla bear witness to the rich heritage of Bengal. In this chain of cultural attainments the advent of the Muslims at the beginning of the 13th century A.C. added a new vista of contribution to her history. Pertinently it

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^{1[1]} D.R. Bhandarkar, "Mauryan Brahmi Inscription of Mahasthan", *Epigraphia India* (Ed.), Vol. XXI, 1931, pp. 84-85.

^{2[2]} Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Report*, Vol. XV (Calcutta: Government Printing Press, 1882), p. 102 (Henceforth ASR).

^{3[3]} Vasu Vihar almost four miles off to Mahasthan and tentatively other unexplored *viharas* around Mahasthan in its southern side.

may be mentioned here that the *Janapada* names^{4[4]} existed at the advent of the Muslims sank into oblivion and Bengal emerged as a country uniting three administrative divisions of Lakhnawati, Satgaon and Sonargaon. The credit of this unification goes to Sultan Shams al-Din Ilyas Shah (1342-1359 A.C.) who assumed the title of *Shah-i-Bangala*^{5[5]} bringing the above mentioned regions under his suzerainty in 1352 A.C. Hence Bengal of the Sultanate period denotes the territorial expanse of Bangladesh and West Bengal of India extending from Rajmahal hill in the west to hilly region of Chittagong in the east and from the Himalayan mountain in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south.^{6[6]} The time span of Bengal Sultanate began with the conquest of Lakhnawati Kingdom of the Senas by Ikhtiyaral-Din Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji in 1204 A.C. and ended with its annexation to the Mughal empire of Delhi in 1576 A.C. Arabic as the language of religion and Persian as the language of cultural accomplishment of incoming Muslims got utmost consideration for study during their rule in Bengal. This paper aims at throwing light on their study from literary and archeological standpoints.

To see the extent of Arabic and Persian studies during the period of Bengal Sultanate literary and archaeological sources are to be taken into consideration. Arabic, the youngest Semitic language^{7[7]} got its recognition among the richest languages of the world as being the language of the holy Quran and the Prophet (Sm) of Islam. With the expansion of Islam over half of the then world just after the demise of the Prophet (Sm) Arabic got momentum as an enriched language to produce voluminous works in all branches of learning for onward transmission to the contemporaneous and to the posterity as well. In the heydays of Muslim civilization tentatively from the beginning of the seventh century A.C. to the end of the thirteenth century A.C. Arabic became the language of expression and bearer of knowledge in all the Muslim occupied territories of three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe.^{8[8]} It did not preclude the cultivation of indigenous language of the countries of their domination. Hence Persian second to Arabic as language got flourishment at the hands of the Muslim rulers since tenth century A.C. and spread all over the Central Asian regions as one of the richest languages of the then

^{4[4]} Varendra, Radh, Vanga, Upavanga, Samatata, Gauda, Mithila etc.

^{5[5]} Shams Shiraj Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* (Abridged in *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. III, edited by H.M. Elliot and J. Dawson, Allahabad), P. 296; A.H. Dani, "Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah Shah-i- Bangalah", *Sir Jadunath Sarkar Commemoration Volume*, Punjab University, 1958, p. 275.

^{6[6]} Abdur Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, Vol. I (Karachi, 1963), p. 6.

^{7[7]} For many centuries in the Middle Ages Arabic was the language of learning and culture and progressive thought through out the civilized world. Between the tenth and the twelfth centuries more works, philosophical, medical, historical, religious, astronomical and geographical, were produced through the medium of Arabic than through any other tongue. The languages of the Western Europe still bear the impress of its influence in the form of numerous loan words. Its alphabet, next to the Latin, is the most widely used system in the world. It is the one employed by Persian, Afghan, Urdu, and a number of Turkish, Berber and Malayan languages. Cf. Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 9th edition 1967), p. 4.

^{8[8]} *Ibid.*, pp. 240, 363.

time.^{9[9]} It is not, therefore, unreasonable to assume that the Central Asian Turks with the rich linguistic heritage of Arabic and Persian entered the Indian subcontinent as the conquerors. In the case of Bengal it is not an exception. The Khalji Turks of Central Asia who entered Bengal as conquerors initiated the cultivation of Arabic and Persian learning by introducing Persian as the court language and establishing *madaris*^{10[10]} where due attention was given for the study of both the languages. This move continued unabated in later times of the rulers and sultans till the end of the Sultanate period. In this context a few examples are cited here to clear the points.

Qazi Rukn al-Din Samarkandi was a profound scholar in Islamic learning. He was of Persian origin and a Qazi of Lakhnawati in the time of ‘Ala al-Din ‘Ali Mardan Khalji. His translation of the Sanskrit book *Amritkund* on yogic system first in Persian and then into Arabic^{11[11]} proves his proficiency in both the languages, and bears witness to their study at the initial period of the Muslim rule in Bengal. In this chain stands Imamzadah Jalal al-Din son of Jamal al-Din who delivered lectures on Islamic disciplines in the court of Ghiyath al-Din Iwaz Khalji (1212-1227 A.C.).^{12[12]} Jalal al-Din, a profound scholar in Arabic and Islamics happened to be an inhabitant of Firuz kuh in Persia. These facts lead to substantiate the case for the cultivation of Arabic and Persian learning under the state patronization even at the initial period of Muslim rule in Bengal. Pertinently it may also be mentioned here that the administration of the country was to be run according to the *Shariah*. The *Diwan al-Qaza* or the Department of Justice testifies to the fact that administration of Bengal Sultanate like other Muslim countries was being run broadly on the basis of the *Shariah*. The sources of Muslim law are four i.e. al-Quran, al-Hadith, Ijma and Qiyas.^{13[13]} The persons in charge of the department of justice and other important departments of the government were expected to achieve proficiency in Arabic to understand properly the implication and interpretation of laws as embodied in the holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (sm.). The epigraphic records^{14[14]} bear witness to this fact that Arabic language was given importance for a subject of study in this land. The state language being Persian, the persons employed in the various positions of

^{9[9]} *Ibid.*, pp. 463 ff.

^{10[10]} Minhaj Siraj, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Vol. I. Text ed. Abdul Hai Habibi (Kabul: Historical Society of Afghanistan, 1963), p. 43.

^{11[11]} Qazi Akhtar Ahmad Mian, "Amritkund" *Journal of Pakistan Historical Society*, Vol. I, Karachi, 1953, pp. 48-49 (Henceforth *JPHS*)

^{12[12]} *TN*, Vol. I (Kabul edition), p. 43.

^{13[13]} Shaikh Ahmad Mulla Jiwan, *Nur al-Anwar* (Karachi: Educational Press, A.H. 1382), pp. 4-7; Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 1.

^{14[14]} See A.H. Dani, *Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1957); A K M Yaqub Ali, *Select Arabic and Persian Inscriptions of Bengal* (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation, 1988).

administrative hierarchy must have possessed mastery in Persian language. Hence it is reasonable to believe that all possible steps were taken to train up expertise personeels in Arabic and Persian to run the administration of the country smoothly and in a proper way.

A cogent question arises that how could the personeels be trained up in Islamics including the language study and what proper arrangement be provided for that purpose. The answer is simple that establishment of *madaris* and educational seminaries could be considered as proper way for realizing the purpose. Both epigraphic and literary sources recorded a large number of *madaris* and educational institutions that sprang up in the capital cities and strategic places of Bengal during the Sultanate period. Of these educational seminaries Taqi al-Din Arabi's Madrasah at Mahisun^{15[15]} identified with Mahisantosh built in about the middle of the 13th century A.C., Zafar Khan's Madrasah at Triveni^{16[16]} built in 1313 A.C., Darasbari Madrasah^{17[17]} of the time of Shams al-Din Yusuf Shah (1474-1481 A.C.), Belbari Madrasah^{18[18]} of `Ala al-Din Husayn Shah (1493-1519 A.C.) both situated in Gaur area, Bagha Madrasah^{19[19]} of the time of Nasir al-Din Nusrat Shah (1519-1531 A.C.) and Mawlana Sharf al-Din Abu Tawarama's Madrasah^{20[20]} at Sonargaon deserve mentioning. The syllabi pursued in these academies spread over the various branches of secular and religious subjects.^{21[21]} These are highly acclaimed by the scholars and persons interested in their study. To these institutions of learning the students of far-off place flocked together to achieve primary and advanced knowledge in the field of their studies. Usually the medium of instruction was Persian though in higher strata of learning and specialization of subject one might have opted for Arabic. There are evidences to show that during the period of Bengal Sultanate Arabic and Persian studies reached the point of excellence. Scholars of different shades came forward to write books in the subjects of their interest either in Arabic or in Persian which substantiates it.

As for the cultivation and study of Arabic few points are stated here for consideration. The epigraphs of Bengal Sultanate were mostly incised in Arabic. Grammatical mistakes are hardly noticed in the text of the epigraphs. Quotations from the verses of the holy Quran^{22[22]} and the traditions^{23[23]} of the Prophet (Sm) in the epigraphs testify to the fact

^{15[15]} Shah Shu'yab, *Manqib al-Asifiya* quoted in *Maktubat-i-Sadi*, p. 339; A K M Yaqub Ali, "Mahisantosh: A Site of Historical and Archaeological Interest in Bangladesh", *Islamic Culture*, Vol. LVIII, No. 2, Hyderabad, 1984, pp. 139-140.

^{16[16]} *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* (Henceforth *EIM*), 1917-1918, p. 13.

^{17[17]} A K M Yaqub Ali, *Aspects of Society and Culture of the Varendra, 1200-1576 A.D.* (Rajshahi, 1998), p. 239 (Henceforth *ASCV*).

^{18[18]} *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

^{19[19]} *Ibid.*, pp. 241-242.

^{20[20]} *Manaqib al-Asifiya*, Extracts in *Maktubat-i-Sadi*, pp. 339-40; *Calcutta Review*, 1939, Nos. 1-3, p. 196.

^{21[21]} Religious study deals with al-Quran, al-Hadith, al-Fiqh and other related aspects of Islamic faiths while the secular study includes the various subjects relating to the day today affairs of the people in relation of the society and country. For detail see *ASCV*, pp. 242 ff.

^{22[22]} Generally the verses of the holy Quran which have been found inscribed at the prominent places of the mosques are as follows:

that learned persons in these religious sciences were available in Bengal. The *madaris* and the institutions of learning of this land, as referred to above, bear witness to the existence of *ulama* who had profound knowledge in religious literature and Islamology. The courses taught in the *madaris* laid emphasis on Arabic language and literature. The translation of *Amritkund* by Qazi Rukn al-Din Samarqandi^{24[24]} in Arabic at the capital Lakhnawati in the time of ‘Ala al-Din’ Ali Mardan Khalji and the transcription of *Sahih al-Bukhari* by Muhammad b. Yazdan Bakhsh^{25[25]} in three volumes at Ikdalah in the time of ‘Ala al-Din Husayn Shah lead us to presume that Arabic study was encouraged under Bengal Sultanate.

Concurrently the Persian study made great stride under Bengal Sultanate. In a few inscriptions of the period under study Persian was used together with Arabic, but so far known only one inscription completely in Persian has come to light. But the official titles used in the epigraphs such as *Sharabdar, Jamadar, Shiqdar, Bahrbak, Jangdar, Kotwalbak* ‘Ala, *Sar-i-lashkar, Sar-i-Khail, Mahliyan Nawbat* ‘Ala, *Sharabdar-i-Ghayr-i-Mahli, Jamadar-i-Ghayr Mahli, Mir Bahr, Kar Farman and Dastur*^{26[26]} are all Persian terms. This practical use of the terms leads us to think that Persian was the language of the court, and the Muslim rulers might have taken steps to develop it. Persian formed an

انما يعمر مسا جد الله من امن بالله و اليوم الاخر و اقام الصلوة و اتى
الزكوة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولئك ان يكونوا من المهتدين -

cf. Al-Quran, surah IX, V. 18.

Tr. He only shall build Allah's mosques who believes in Allah and the last day, establishes prayer, pays the poor rate and fears none but Allah. For such only it is possible that they can be rightly guided.

واقم الصلوة طرفى النهار و زلفا من الليل - ان الحسنات يذهبن السيئات -
ذلك ذكرى الذاكرين

cf. al-Quran, Surah XI, Vol. 114.

Tr. Establish prayers at two ends of the day and in some watches of the night. Verily good deeds annul bad deeds.

In some cases the *Ayat al-kursiyy* or the throne verse of the Quran is inscribed in the mosques.

cf. *Journal of the Varendra Research Museum*, Vol. 4, 1975-76, p. 64, plate No. 1.

^{23[23]} The following is the *hadith* of the Prophet which is generally inscribed.

من بنى لله مسجدا بنى الله له بيتا مثله فى الجنة

cf. *Sahih al-Muslim*, Vol. I (Karachi, 1956), p. 201.

Tr. He who builds a mosque for the sake of Allah, Allah builds for him a similar house in the Paradise. In some epigraphs instead *بيتا مثله فى الجنة* is recorded *سبعين فصرا فى الجنة* (seventy castles in the Paradise).

^{24[24]} *JPHS*, Vol. I, pp. 46-49.

^{25[25]} Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Mss in Oriental Public Library, Bankipure Vol. V, Part 1, Nos. 130-132 quoted in A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal* (Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1959), p. 80 (henceforth *Social History*).

^{26[26]} A.H. Dani, *Bibliography*, p. 124, M.R. Tarafdar, *Husain Shahi Bengal* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1965), p. 264.

important subject of study in the educational institutions during the period of Bengal Sultanate. In the track of Nasir al-Din Mahmud Bughra Khan, the son of Delhi Sultan Balban came poets and men of letters to Bengal. Shams al-Din Mudabbar, the *dabir khas* of Bughra Khan was such a person who had a facile pen both in Persian prose and poetry.^{27[27]} In eulogizing him he composed *qasidah* in Persians some of which are preserved in *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*.^{28[28]} All these factors show the cultivation of Persian language and literature in this land.

The sultans as well as the individual scholars thrived much for the cultivation of Persian language and literature. It is to be mentioned here that sultan Ghiyath al-Din Azam Shah (1389-1410 A.C.) had poetical aptitude and composed poem in Persian.^{29[29]} He invited poet Shams al-Din Hafiz of Shiraj to his court^{30[30]} so that Persian literature might flourish in this land. Of the *maktubat* literature of *sufi* saints, the *maktubat*^{31[31]} of Nur Qutb al-Alam helped the growth of a type of Persian literature in this land. His *Anis al-Ghuraba*,^{32[32]} a collection of forty *Hadith* with translation and interpretation in elegant Persian speaks of his proficiency in that language. Some of his Persian poems have been published in *Subh-i-Gulshan*.^{33[33]} A *rikhta* of mixed poem in Persian and Bengali has been ascribed to this saint.^{34[34]} These instances are indicative of the growth of Persian literature among the ruling elites and savants of Bengal. *Sharf namah*,^{35[35]} a Persian lexicon compiled by Ibrahim Qawwam Faruqi in the reign of sultan Rukn al-Din Barbak Shah (1459-1474 A.C.) was a significant contribution to Persian language and literature. Another Persian lexicon named *Farhang-i-Amir Shahab al-Din Kirmani*^{36[36]} is said to have been compiled a few years earlier than *Sharfnamah* and is deemed to have made positive contribution to the language. *Nam-i-Haq*^{37[37]} a book on *fiqh* of an anonymous writer or sometimes ascribed to Sharfuddin Abu Tawwamah written in elegant Persian is

^{27[27]} Zia al-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, text ed. Sayyid Ahmad Khan (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1862), p. 95.

^{28[28]} Badauni, *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*, Vol. I, Tr. S.A Ranking (Delhi: Idarah-i- Adabiyat-i-Delhi, Reprint, 1973), pp. 134-38.

^{29[29]} Ghulam Husain Selim, *Riyaz al-Salatin*, Tr. Abdus Salam (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1904), pp. 108-109.

^{30[30]} *Ibid.*, p. 108.

^{31[31]} There are eight letters which were in possession of Professor Sayyid Hasan Askari (Retd.) of Patna University. Extract form a letter was published in *Bengal Past and Present*, 1948. no. 130, pp. 38-39. A Copy of these letters is preserved in the Library of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka.

^{32[32]} *Anis al-Ghuraba* Litho printed in Lucknow, cited in S.M. Ikram & Percival Spear ed. *The Cultural Heritage of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 112.

^{33[33]} *Ibid.*, p. 112.

^{34[34]} Mahammad Shahidullah, *Islam Prasangna* (Dacca, 1962), pp. 108-109.

^{35[35]} *Urdu*, Oct. 1952, Karachi, pp. 16 ff.; Alia Madrasah MS, No. p. Mss/13-8.

^{36[36]} *Urdu*, 1952, Karachi, pp. 16 ff.

^{37[37]} *Nam-i-Haq* (Cawnpore, 1332 A H)

The book seems to have been written either by Sharf al-Din Abu Tawwamah or by some of his disciples on the basis of his teaching. *Nam-i-Haq* has ten main chapters and three introductory chapters with a number of one hundred and eighty three verses. The three introductory chapters contain the *Hand* and *Na't*. The remaining ten chapters deal with the fundamentals and rules relating to *Wazu*, *ghal*, *namaz* and *ruzah* in Ramazan. Even it discusses *farz*, *sunnat*, *wajib*, *mustahab* and *makruh*. Cf. A Karim, *Society History*, pp. 74-76; A K M Yaqub Ali, ASCV, p. 265fn 46.

indicative of Persian study in religious matter in this land. Archery formed an important warfare technique under Bengal Sultanate. *Hidayat-i-Rami*^{38[38]} a book on archery compiled by Muhammad Buda'i better known as Sayyid Mir 'Alawi in Persian in the reign of `Ala al-Din Husayn Shah speaks of cultivation of multidimensional subjects in Persian language. All these instances show that centring round the court of Lakhnawati, Gaur and Pandua, the poets and scholars engaged themselves in developing Persian language and literature.

In the continuity of discussion on the cultivation of Arabic and Persian learning during the times of Turk-Afghan rulers it seems pertinent to refer to the position of linguistic study before the advent of the Muslims in Bengal. On the eve of Muslim conquest at the beginning of the 13th century A.C. the Senas belonging to the orthodox Brahmanic section of the Hindus were the ruling power. The language of the Brahmanic section and of the court was Sanskrit while the common mass's language was Bengali. All positive steps were taken by the Sena rulers for the cultivation and patronization of the Sanskrit language which was considered as the *Deva* language while Bengali as mass language was despised,^{39[39]} and blockade was created on its study. The incoming Muslims as rulers on their permanent habitation in this land opened the door of education for all by establishing *madaris*^{40[40]} and educational seminaries in all the important places of the country. This step also facilitated the Hindus, irrespective of their status in the society, to get education in their mother tongue i.e. Bengali and the Muslim rulers made equal efforts for the cultivation and patronization of Bengali language side by side with Arabic and Persian studies in the institutions of learning. The Persian being the court language the job seeking people either Hindus or Muslims were required to get proficiency in Persian study. Hence it seems probable that some *mukatib* or schools might have provided arrangement for teaching Persian to the Hindus. They might have been, therefore, allowed to enter into these *mukatib* to study Persian with the Maulavi. This system seemed to be prevailing in some places in later times. In this connection the remark of Adam's report as regard the district of Dinajpur is worth mentioning. It says, "The Persian schools are nearly as much frequented by Hindus as by Mohammadans, for the Persian language is considered as a requisite accomplishment for every gentleman, and it is absolutely necessary for those who are candidates for offices in the court of

^{38[38]} *Asiatic Society*, Calcutta MS Curzon Collection No. 625, fn. 1 Cited in A. Karim, *Social History*, p. 80.

^{39[39]} $\text{Aón'k cyivYvbx ivgm" PwiZvwbP| fvlvis gybe: k^aZiv \text{ti}\check{S}ees e^{\text{a}}\text{†RZ}\backslash$ Tr. Those who will study the eighteen *Puranas* and the biography of *Rama* i.e. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in human language i.e. Bengali other than Deva language (Sanskrit) are to suffer *Raurava* hell. Quoted in D.C. Sen, *Vanla Bhasha O Sahitya* (Calcutta: Dasgupta & Sons, 1336 B.S.), pp. 73-74.

^{40[40]} *TN*, Vol. I, Persian (Kabul edition), p. 42.

law.^{41[41]} If this was their attitude to Persian education in the 19th century A.C. under British colonial domination, it is reasonable to infer that during the time of Muslim rulers the Hindus received Persian education in greater number from the Maulavis in the *mukatib* at the primary level to equip themselves for the jobs.

For imparting knowledge in religious affairs and for manning administration of the country Arabic and Persian studies were deemed to be the most vital point on the part of the rulers. To implement this scheme the *madaris* or educational seminaries were the proper places for imparting knowledge to the learners of both primary and advanced levels of education. Though it is difficult to determine the exact courses of study yet it is reasonably presumed that religious instruction was the basis of primary education in the *mukatib* and *masajid*. An *Imam* of the mosque as teacher is expected to teach his students the fundamentals of Islam and other rituals. Contemporary Bengali literature substantiates the view that the Maulavi taught the Muslim children ablution and prayer in the *mukatib*.^{42[42]} To understand the fundamental and other rituals the students should have adequate knowledge of the Quran and *Hadith*. The Sayyids, the Qazis and headmen of the Muslim society used to decide the various cases in accordance with the injunctions of the holy Quran and traditions of the Prophet.^{43[43]} We may, therefore, presume that the Quran and *Hadith* were also included into the courses of education at the primary and higher levels. *Fiqh* or elementary of jurisprudence is prerequisite for performing the obligatory duties of Islam. The subject was, therefore, in all fairness included into the courses of study at the primary level. *Nam-i-Haq*,^{44[44]} a work on *fiqh*, referred to earlier, in elegant Persian supposed to be a contribution of Muslim Bengal in Islamic learning, supports the contention of introducing *fiqh* in the courses of study at the primary and higher level as a well. In the light of this observation it is not, therefore, unreasonable to conjecture that the Quran, *Hadith* and *fiqh* formed the main subjects of study in the *mukatib* and *masajid* at the primary level under Bengal Sultanate.

On the completion of primary education in the *mukatib* and *masajid* the students might have proceeded to the *madaris* for higher education. The *madaris* as have been stated earlier provided higher education for the advanced students though elementary courses were not at all excluded from their syllabi. No concrete evidence is available to show the courses of studies followed in the *madaris* most of which were built and patronized by the

^{41[41]} William Adam, *Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar* (Calcutta: Home Secretariat Press, 1818), p. 74; Martin, *Eastern India*, Vol. III, p. 710.

^{42[42]} Vipradas, *Manasavijaya*, p. 67; Mukundarama, *Kavikankan Chandi*, p. 345.

^{43[43]} Mukundarama, *Kavikankan Chandi*, p. 345.

^{44[44]} *Nama-i-Haq* (Cawnpure, 1332 A.H.).

Muslim rulers or the executive heads posted in various administrative units. Advanced learning so far theological studies are concerned, would no doubt have been a continuation of the primary education. It is, therefore, possible that an analytical study of the Quran and *Hadith* formed principal part of the advanced courses. *Tafsir* of the Quran and *Tashrib* of the *Hadith* belonged to this category.

To derive decision on minor questions and multifarious problems from the Quran and *Hadith Ijtihad* played a vital role in the system of Islamic *Shariah*. While sending Mu'adh b. Jabal as governor to Yaman, the prophet is reported to have praised his desire to exercise his own judgement in the cases uncovered by the apparent verdict of the Quran and *Hadith*.^{45[45]} Herein lies the clear indication of the role of *Ijtihad* in Muslim jurisprudence. The Madrasah financed by Ghiyath al-Din A'zam Shah in 813 A.H./1410-11 A.C. at Makkah near the Ummi Hani gate provided teaching for the students of four schools of Muslim jurisprudence.^{46[46]} An account of the students studying in that madrasah^{47[47]} shows that the madrasah was meant to impart advanced learning on *fiqh* specially for the students of four schools of jurisprudence. We may, therefore, come to the conclusion that an advanced study of *fiqh* also formed one of the main subjects of study in the *madaris* of Bengal. Ghiyath al-Din A'zam Shah belonged to the Hanafite school of law.^{48[48]} His descendants are expected to follow in his track, and, therefore, almost all the students of this land probably belonged to the Hanafite School. However, they showed liberal attitude to other schools of law as is evident from the patronization of four schools equally in the Madrasah at Makkah.^{49[49]} This fact leads us to infer that the *madaris* built by the Muslim rulers of this area opened courses on four schools of *fiqh*. But the population being predominantly Hanafite, the *madaris* were mostly attended by them.

Besides these subjects, the sciences of secular nature such as logic, arithmetic, medicine, al-chemy, hindasa (geometry), astronomy and other were also taught in the *madaris*. Though of later period, the statement of Abul Fazl confirms this. He writes, "Every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household matters, rules of government, medicine, logic, higher mathematics, science and history, all of which may be gradually a acquired."^{50[50]}

^{45[45]} *Jami al-Tirmidhi* (Karachi: Nur Muhammad Library, n.d.), p. 211; *Mishkat al-Masabih*, bab al Amal Fi al-Qaza, p. 324.

^{46[46]} Zia Uddin Desai, "Some New Data Regarding the Pre Muslim Rulers of Bengal", *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XXXII, 1958, Hyderabad, p. 200.

^{47[47]} Sixty students were attending this institution of whom twenty were studying Shafite law, twenty Hanafite and ten each Mahikite and Hambalite, cf. *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XXXII, 1958, p. 200.

^{48[48]} *Ibid.*, p. 199.

^{49[49]} *Ibid.*, p. 200.

^{50[50]} *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 279.

The *madaris* for advanced studies possibly kept provisions for all these subjects for the students. But they were not required to study each and every subject. There might have been different grades of *madaris* on the basis of the subjects taught in them.

Anatomy consisting of a branch of medical science possibly formed a subject of study in the *madaris* of first grade. In an epigraph Jalal al-Din Fath Shah (1481-1488 A.C.) b. Nasir al-Din Mahmud Shah is designated as *kashif* or interpreter of the secrets of the Quran and ‘*alim* or learned in the religions and of bodies.^{51[51]} These connotations, ascribed to the sultan, substantiate the view of introducing the *tafsir* (commentary of the Quran), comparative study of religions and the science of anatomy in the *madaris* of higher learning. Ghiyath al-Din A‘zam Shah was an archer,^{52[52]} and archery formed an important technique in the art of warfare. Archery, therefore, seemed to have been taught as an art of warfare to those interested in it in the academy of higher learning. *Hidayat-i-Rami*,^{53[53]} a book on archery compiled by Muhammad Budai in the reign of ‘Ala al-Din Husayn Shah supports the contention.

Beautiful writing on the inscription slabs of the *masajid* and other monuments found in Bengal leads us to infer that possibly penmanship was introduced as an important subject of study in the *madaris* of higher learning. The epigraphs of this region incised in Arabic bear witness to this fact. It may, therefore, be presumed that the subject of penmanship was studied in the academies for higher learning; otherwise it would have been difficult to display such penmanship in such a large scale.^{54[54]}

The nature of the subjects studied in the *madaris* of higher learning required proficiency in Arabic and Persian languages. In order to pursue the subjects of learning written either in Arabic or in Persian, the learners should have achieved mastery over them. The inscriptions of this region engraved in Arabic show the extent of cultivation of Arabic language by the Muslim rulers. This bears witness to the fact that Arabic was seriously studied in the *madaris* of higher learning. Likewise Sultan Ghiyath al-Din A‘zam Shah’s eloquence in Persian and his composing of verses in Persian^{55[55]} testify to the study of Persian language in the *madaris*. We may, therefore, presume that courses on Arabic and Persian were given to the students in the *madaris* of higher learning under Bengal Sultanate. The system possibly continued upto the 19th century as is evident from Adam’s

^{51[51]} *JASB*, Vol. XLII, Part I, 1973, pp. 282-286; *ASR*, Vol. XV, p. 65.

^{52[52]} *Riyaz al-Salatin*, p. 110.

^{53[53]} Cited in A. Karim, *Social History*, p. 80.

^{54[54]} See inscriptions in A.H. Dani, *Bibliography*; S. Ahmed, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. IV; *EIM*.

^{55[55]} *Riyaz al-Salatin*, pp. 108-109.

Report. The Report states that, “In the *madrrasah* both Persian and Arabic are taught. The Persian courses of study commencing with *alif ba* proceed to the formal reading of the Quran and thence to *pandnamah*, *Amadnamah*, *Gulistan*, *Bustan*, *Joseph & Zolekha*, *Jamiul Qawanin*, *Sikandar namah & Bahr Danish* etc. The courses of Arabic study includes *Mizan Munshaib*, *Tafsir*, *Hadith*, *Sarf*, *Miat Amal* and *Sharh Mint Amal*.”^{56[56]} But it is to be noted that the Arabic and Persian studies which reached the culminating points under Bengal Sultanate with the passage of time came to be confined within the limited subjects in the colonial rule in the 19th century.

In this connection it is to be pointed out that the patronization of the Muslim rulers in the educational sphere made possible the study of Arabic and Persian learnings reaching the apex of development in their multidimensional aspects under the Sultanate period. It appears from the epigraphic sources that the grants were awarded by the rulers to the teachers as well as to the pupils.^{57[57]} The Madrasah at *Qasbah* Bagha described as an endowed institution of long standing was run by the grant of some neighbouring villages as *madad-i-ma'sh*.^{58[58]} According to local tradition^{59[59]} a land grant of 2750 bighas continued as *lakharaj* even in the 19th century A.C. for running the mosque, madrasah and other religious institutions in Mahisantosh. It is at least indicative of land endowment for running the religious institutions by the Muslim rulers. Pertinently it may be mentioned here that Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Iwaz Khalji built *masajid*, *madaris* and *caravan-saraies* in his conquered territories and bestowed gifts on the learned.^{60[60]} This refers to the fact that the sultan bore the expenses of these institutions along with their accessories from the state-treasury. Epigraphical records^{61[61]} ascribe the title of *badhil* to some sultans.^{62[62]} In Arabic terminology *badhil* derived from the root *badhl* which refers to the person who spends money in some benevolent works to obtain Allah's blessings. Construction and maintenance of *madaris* may be regarded as one of the virtuous works. Some sultans were also referred to a *fazil* (learned) and *Kamil* (ripe in understanding) in the epigraphs.^{63[63]} Taking into consideration the connotations of '*alim*, *badhil*, *kamil* and *kashif* (interpreter of the secrets of the Quran) ascribed to the sultans in the epigraphs, we may come to this

^{56[56]} William Adam, *Report on Vernacular Education*, p. 114.

^{57[57]} A K M Yaqub Ali, “Two Undeciphered Arabic Inscriptions”, *Journal of the Varendra Research Museum (JVRM)*, Vol. 6, 1980-1981, Rajshahi, pp. 101ff.

^{58[58]} *JASB*, 1904 Part I, p. 110; *BPP*, 1928, p. 114.

^{59[59]} A K M Yaqub Ali, *ASCV*, p. 267, fn. 70.

^{60[60]} *TN*, Vol. (Kabul edition), p. 43.

^{61[61]} A.H. Dani, *Bibliography*, Inscriptions Nos. 35, 50, 60, 72 & 121.

^{62[62]} The inscriptions so far studied the *badhil* has been ascribed to Sultan Rukh al-Din Barbak, Shah Shams al-Din Yusuf Shah, Jalal al-Din Fath Shah, Shams al-Din Muzaffar Shah and 'Ala al-Din Husayn Shah. Cf. A.H. Dani, *Bibliography*.

^{63[63]} A.H. Dani, *Bibliography*, Inscription Nos. 29 & 72.

conjectural conclusion that the *madaris* as mentioned earlier^{64[64]} were run by the endowment of the Muslim rulers for serving the multidimensional purposes of learning including the Arabic and Persian studies.

In the support of the contention regarding the cultivation of Arabic language and learning par excellence under Bengal Sultanate a few epigraphs of the period by way of example are cited below with their texts and underlying ideas in chronological order.

I, Wazir Beldanga Inscription of Rajshahi district, now preserved in the Varendra Research Museum. Wazir Belganga, the provenance of the inscription is a village under Nachol Police Station of Rajshahi district. A series of small mounds are to be found around the village. The mounds are 2 to 3 feet high above the general level of the corn fields. The locality is strewn with old pieces of bricks. From one such spot the inscription understudy is procured. Though apparently no traces of the building walls are to be found in this place, scientific digging of the mounds may unearth some edifices.

The epigraph consists of two major parts divided by an horizontal band. Two lines of the inscription are accommodated in each of these parts.

The text of the epigraph is as follows:

1st Part

(i) 1st line:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم لاله الا الله محمد رسول الله-هذا مال الملك الكبير الكريم المويد المظفر المرصود
المجاهد المرتبط الغازى

(ii) 2nd line:

مصرف الدولة والدين اسل الاسلام والمسلمين ابو الملوك والسلاطين المعروف

2nd Part

(i) 1st line:

بدينار حب السلطانى لظافر الله اقباله فى عهد يوم السلطان الاعظم غياث الدين ابوالمظفر بهادر شاه السلطان
بن السلطان اصمد الله قوامين مملكته ومهد براهين

(ii) 2nd line:

سلطنته شهور سنه اثنى وعشرين وسبعماية بناء صفقا لوجه الله لقبيل الله منه بخط الضعيف محمد بن محمد بن احمد
غفر الله اجمعين -

^{64[64]} *Supra*, p. 3.

1st Line: I begin in the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. There is no object worth-worshipping except Allah and Muhammad is the apostle of Allah. This is the treasure of the courtier (who is) generous, assisted, victorious, fighter, mercher, ghazi.

2nd Line: Banker of the government and faith, strength of Islam and the Muslims, father of kings and sultans known as

2nd Part

1st Line: Dinar, chosen of the sultan. May Allah make his advent successful in the time of the reign of the great sultan Ghiyath al-Dunya wa al-Din Abu al-Muzaffar Bahadur Shah, the sultan, the son of the sultan. May Allah strengthen the pillars of his kingdom and guide rightly the proofs.

2nd Line: Of his Sultanate, in the months of the year 722 A.H./1322 A.C. massive structure was built for the sake of Allah. Allah will surely accept it. (It was) engraved by the weak slave Muhammad, son of Muhammad, son of Ahmad. May Allah forgive them all.

Pertinent Discussion

The inscription dated 722 A.H./1322 A.C. of the reign of Ghiyath al-Din Bahadur Shah, son of Shams al-Din Firuz Shah (1301 – 1322 A.C.) bears fact to the excellence of Arabic engraving on the stone slab with the setting of appropriate words and sentences from the linguistic point of view. Here for the first time the name of the calligrapher artists is traced as Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Ahmad who is deemed to be trained up in the art of penmanship. Moreover, the epigraph lacks in diacritical dots and orthographical signs which are considered to be a new style of Arabic writing of the name *Bihar* akin to the *Kufic* style of writing.

ii. Ghazipur Inscription

The village Ghazipur is situated in the Shibgonj Police Station of Chapai Nawabgonj district about 7/8 kilometers away from the Chhota Sona Masjid area to the east. Potsherds and brickbats are found scattered over the surrounding places of the village. An inscription in Arabic letterings being procured from the debris was kept with Aaur Rahman Putu. But that man was greedy enough to sell it in exchange of huge amount of money. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi desired to get it donated to the Museum for a lumpsum money. He did not agree to it, and ultimately getting news of this inscription the

Government Archaeological Department of Bangladesh seized it for preservation. But its whereabouts are not known now. Beforehand it was stamped and snapped by one of the officials of Varendra Research Museum, and on the basis of the stampage it was deciphered.

This is an undeciphered inscription and unique in the sense that so far my knowledge goes no second inscription of Sultan Shams al-Din Ahmad Shah (1432-1436 A.C.), son of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah (convert Muslim Jadu, son of Raja Ganesh) has come to light. The writing is very fascinating and ornamental, but difficult to decipher. It is an intricate style of *Tughara* writing inscribed in single line of ascending order.

The text of the epigraph is as follows:

قال الله تعالى انما يعمر مساجدالله من امن بالله مظلل مسجداالله فى عهد سلطان الا عظم والرحمة شمس الدنيا والدين
ابو المظفر احمدشاه بن محمد شاه سلطان خلد الله ملكه خان المكرم خان المعظم الغ سلطان البر فى يوم العشرين من
سفر سنة اربعين وثمانماية

Translation

Allah, the Exalted said: Only he small tend Allah's mosques who believes in Allah. This shade of Allah's mosque (was built) in the time of the exalted sultan and of mercy Shams al-Dunya wa al-Din Abu al-Muzaffar Ahmad Shah, son of Muhammad Shah, the sultan. May Allah perpetuate his kingdom. (It was built by) honoured Khan and great Khan Ulugh (an official) of the sultan of land in the 20th safar of the year 840 A.H./ 1436 A.C.

As for the appreciation of the inscription it may be opined that its calligraphic niceties and ornamental motifs attract the attention of connoisseur of art in one side and its linguistic excellence tells to the cultivation of Arabic language and penmanship in other.

iii. Navagrama Inscription

The inscription collected from Navagrama, a village under Tarash Police Station of Pabna district is now preserved in the Muslim gallery of Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. The epigraph is not in *si tu*, and it is presumed that it was inserted in an old mosque, the site of which could not be traced out. It belongs to the reign of Nasir al-Din Mahmud Shah (1442 – 1459 A.C. The language of the epigraph is Arabic with excellent setting in words and sentences.

The epigraph besides its calligraphic niceties and ornamental designs is informative and it throws light on an important administrative unit and name of administrator, and also

political situation of the time. Moreover, it reveals the sultan's patronization of the *ulama* and the taught. It is in three lines; its main purpose is the construction of a mosque.

The text of the epigraph is as follows:

1st Line:

امابعدحمدالله على نعماءه والصلوة على النبي واحبابه ولما اظهر شعائر الشرع واحركه امنه سلطان العصر والزمان
ناصر الدنيا والدين ابو المظفر محمود شاه السلطان خلدالله ملكه وسلطانه فى خطة رفيعة (ريفة) موسومة بسلامباد
ولما اهدى جناب الاعظم

2nd Line:

صاراكرم المصر و الاسلام الذى خوطب بخطاب مجلس منصوص (منصرم) مازال كاسمه منصورا ولما عزم
لعرف مسجدا ليحمله ذخيرة فى دارالجزء الى يوم الساعة خان المعظم عضد الاسلام والمسلمين خان الاعظم وخاقان
المعظم الخ رحيمخان يبقى الله ثراه وجعل الجنة مثواه ووفقه

3rd Line:

الله قلع اعداء الله من الكفار والمشركين و ادارا لانعام على العلماء والمتعلمين مورخا فى الثانى والعشرين من
ذى القعدة فى يوم الجمعة سنة ثمان وخمسين وثمانماية

Translation

1st Line: Ammabad (after this), praise be to Allah for His endless bounties and peace be upon the Prophet (Sm) and his friends. When the insignia (canons) of the *Shariah* was shaken (turmoil and unrest prevailed in the country) then the sultan of time and age Nasir al-Dunya and al-Din Abu al-Muzaffar Mahmud Shah had given it asylum. May Allah perpetuate his kingdom and sultanate. (He established the rule of law) in such high *Khittah* (or the fertile land on the bank of a river) which might be termed Simlabad. When the exalted personality directed.

2nd Line: he was regarded as the honoured person of the city and Islam. He was dignified with the title of *Majlis-i-Mansus* (*Munsarim*), like his name he would always remain victorious (in all his campaigns). When he intended (to perform) any good work, he started (constructing) the mosque so that he might make it saving for the abode of retribution till the day of resurrection. (This person was known as) *Khan al-Mu'azzam*, the helper of Islam and the Muslims and also a *Khan al-A'zam* and *Khaqan al-Mu'azzam* Ulugh Rahim Khan. May Allah illuminate his grave, make his abode in the Paradise and give him opportunity.

3rd Line: to uproot the enemies of Allah from among the unbelievers and polytheists. May Allah give him heart to bestow his rewards repeatedly upon the learned (teachers) and the learners (students). This mosque was built on Friday, the 22nd Dhil Qa'dah of the year A.H. 858 / 1454 A.C.

Comments: Really it is an important piece of epigraph throwing light on the political situation and cultural attainments of the time under Bengal Sultanate. Within a short space of the stone slab a lot of informations are accommodated in chaste Arabic language pointing out to its cultivation superably in the soil of Bengal.

iv. Sharuppur Inscription

Sharuppur is situated in the large expanse of Bara Bazar in the Jessore district at about 10 kilometers to the west from Kaligonj. Old relics can be found around the location of Sharuppur. Within a somewhat old mosque of this village the inscription slab of sand stone is fixed in the floor so that none can remove it from the place. It is the belief of local people that if it is removed somewhere the calamities will befall them. However, this inscription is yet undeciphered, and it is related to the construction of mosque. It may happen that from nearby ancient mosque it has been carried and fixed in this mosque. The inscription belongs to the reign of sultan 'Ala al-Din Husayi Shah.

The epigraph is divided into two broad lines each having two parts. The text of the epigraph is as underneath:

1st Line:

1st Part:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الله لا اله الا هو الحي القيوم لا تاخذه سنة ولا نوم له ما فى السموات وما

2nd Part:

الارض من ذا الذى يشفع عنده الا باذنه يعلم ما بين ايديهم و ما خلفهم و لا يحيطون بشئى من علمه الا بما شاء وسع كرسئنه السموات والارض

2nd Line:

1st Part:

و لا يؤده حفظهما و هو لعلى العظيم - لا اكره فى الدين قد تبين الرشد من الغنى فمن يكفر بالطاغوت ويؤمن بالله فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقى

2nd Part

لا انفصام لها و الله سميع عليم - بنى هذا المسجد فى عهد السلطان علاء الدنيا و الدين ابو المظفر حسين شاه خلد الله ملكه سلطان بحر وبر بنى المسجد دولت خان بن حصين خان فى التاسع وتسعين و ثمانماية -

Translation

1st Line:

1st Part: In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Allah! There is no divinity, but He, the Living, the Self-subsisting, Supporter. Neither slumber nor sleep can seize Him. His are all things in the heaven.

2nd Part: and on the earth. Who is the person who can intercede in His presence except as He permits. He knows what approaches to His creatures as before or after or behind them. Nor they shall encompass taught of His knowledge except as He wishes. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth.

2nd Line:

1st Part: He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. For He is most High and Supreme. Let there be not compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from error. And he who rejects false deities and believes in Allah has grasped a firm handhold

2nd Part: which will never break. Allah is Hearer, Knower. This mosque was built in reign of ‘Ala al-Dunya wa al-Din Abul Muzaffar Husayn Shah, the sultan of sea and land. May Allah perpetuate his kingdom. Daulat Khan son of Hasin Khan built this mosque in the year 899 A.H/ 1493 A.C.

This epigraph was engraved on the very year of ‘Ala al-Din Husayn Shah’s accession to the throne of Bengal Sultanate. He was the founder of the Husayn Shahi dynasty in Bengal ousting the incompatible rule of the Habshis. This inscription is an excellent piece of calligraphy highlighting the superb *Tughra* style of writing pointing to the extent of cultivation of Arabic learning during the reign of ‘Ala al-Din Husayn Shah.

v. Arashnagar Inscription

This inscription was procured from the village Arshnagar of Dumuria Police Station of Khulna district. It was originally inserted into the wall above the central doorway of the mosque, but fell down subsequently when it was removed and collected by Maulavi Fazlur Rahman Sheikh, one of the villagers. The Varendra Research Museum purchased the inscription from him in July 1979. Thenceforth it has been preserved in the Muslim gallery of Varendra Research Museum.

The text of the epigraph has been deciphered to read as follows:

قال النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم من بنى مسجدا فى الدنيا بنى الله له سبعين قصرا فى الجنة - بنا السلطان العهد و الزمان علاء الدنيا و الدين ابو المظفر حسين شاه السلطان اكرم بر و بحر سنة سبع و تسعمائة -

Translation

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: He who builds a mosque in this world Allah builds for him seventy castles in the Paradise. The sultan of the time and age ‘Ala al-Dunya was al-Din Abul Muzaffar Husayn Shah, the sultan, the most honoured of land and sea built (this mosque) in the year 907 A.H. / 1501 A.C.

This epigraph is an excellent piece of *Muhaqqaq qalm* of Arabic writing with the interwoven position of letters that make it *Tughra* decorative pattern. The engraver’s art, in this epigraph, is of high order. The single lined calligraphy may represent, in its decorative form, a ship which carries soldiers with swords in hand going to charge the enemies in the riverine tract. The decorative scheme may also bear two other possibilities: first, an army camp, where the tents are kept tight with a suitable number of poles and secondly, a roof resembling a Bengali *Chala* house. In any case, the artist’s skill as noticed in the proportionate arrangement of the shafts and curvatures, finds full play in this epigraph. The bold letterings of من، قصر، بنى، فى amidst the elongated vertical strokes suggest the likeness of a curved roof, which is a distinctive characteristic as well as special feature of Bengali architecture.

Concluding Remarks

In the light of above discussion we may come to the propositions as underneath regarding the cultivation of Arabic and Persian studies under Bengal Sultanate. First, the advent of the Central Asian Turks as conquerors with rich cultural heritage ushered a new era of multidimensional attainments in the soil of Bengal. The egalitarianism of Islam inspired them to build a society and state on the principle of equilibrium ensuring the fundamental rights to all irrespective of race, religion and colour. The successive historical events bear witness to this fact that the Muslim rulers took positive steps for bettering the overall conditions of the people and for creating an environment of amelioration among the different sections of people. This policy brought tangible results in all directions of country’s need including the nourishment of cultural and intellectual upheavals. Secondly, in the track of their cultural attainments and linguistic advancement the persianized Turks of Central Asian region brought with them the Arabic as the language of their religion and the Persian as the language of the state and accomplishment to Bengal, the land of their conquest. Thirdly, without ignoring the importance of indigenous language, the incoming conquerors made all possible steps for the study of

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Arabic and Persian languages in this land so that their study being widespread throughout the country could be instrumental for transmitting valuable treasures of knowledge to the contemporaneous and to the posterity as well. With this end in view state patronization was extended and individual initiative was encouraged for the foundation of *madaris* and institutions of learning throughout the length and breadth of Bengal Sultanate from the beginning of the 13th century to the last quarter of the 16th century A.C. Lastly, the corporate endeavours of the ruling authority and the individual expertise made the Arabic and Persian studies to the blooming in the soil of Bengal during the Sultanate period, the impact of which was found flowing in the Mughal and early British colonial Bengal.

SOURCE: Obtained directly from the author
