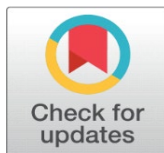
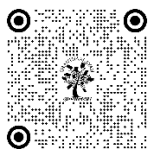


SULTANATE PERIOD: A BRIEF ESTIMATION OF BENGALI LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

The materialization of Sultanate rule over Bengal territory by the onset of thirteen century marked a new sketch on socio-cultural life of native people. For the first time, dominated Hindu society encountered a new wind of Muslim rule, which gradually made a socio-cultural cocktail for both communities. Obviously due to this shift, the Bengali literature received a new sway under new political set up. Under the Influence of contemporary socio-political thoughts, the theme, pattern, volume and expression of Bengali literature progressively got new line. Consequently, there certain streamline became as new trends for the Bengali literature that clearly distinct from the earlier times. Simply, this paper has made an endeavor to investigate the trend and the line of changes that had been taken place in Bengali literature during sultanate rule in India.

Keywords: Literature, Bengal, Muslim, Writer, Patronage

1. INTRODUCTION

Turkish Muslim Muhammad Bakthiyar Khalji conquered Bengal in 1204 and henceforth they ruled over Bengal with different capital at Gaur (Lakhnauti), Pandua, and Dhaka till 1342. Subsequently a regional Muslim dynasty known as Ilyas Shah Dynasty ruled Bengal, whereas the central power was under Delhi Sultanate. When the Muslim conquered Bengal, the Bengali language was in embryonic form and there was hardly any Bengali literature worth the name. Prior to the Muslim rule Sanskrit was the court language and the language of culture. Maithili was an influential and effective literary medium. It was by 1350 A.D., when the Muslim had united the different regions of Bengal and started becoming patrons of Bengali language and literature, thus providing an impetus to new literary production. Though the Persian was official language, however due to the ground needs Bengali became the common language of the immigrants and settlers. Sukumar Sen believed that the development of Bengali language and literature was impeded by the Muslim invasion in the region. However, many scholars of Bengali literary historiography consider that Muslim rulers had always been supportive of the development of Bengali language and literature, and this is well echoed in the following comments of Dinesh Chandra Sen: This elevation of Bengali to a literary status was brought about by several influences,

of which the Mohammedan's conquest was undoubtedly one of the foremost. If the Hindu kings had continued to enjoy independence, Bengali would scarcely have got an opportunity to find its way to the courts of kings.

Historians have identified three well-defined phases in the development of the Bengali language and literature. Early phase (900 – 1400) of Bengali literature included devotional songs, middle phase (1400-1800) of Bengali literature included the evolving texts like Srikrishnakirtan of Chandidas, and third is the modern phase of mature Bengali literature, which began by the early nineteenth century. However, the early history of the Bengali literature goes back to the compilation of Charyapada, a collection of Buddhist mystic songs dating back to the 10th and 11th centuries. Afterward, the mixed Sanskrit and the aprabhansa Bengali literature got impetus under Pala and Sena kingdom of Bengal. Finally, Bengali literature under Muslim rule turned into a distinct literary tradition and obtained its unique entity.

In So far as Bengali literature of Sultanate period is concerned, we have to keep in our mind that the Bengali speaking people of those days belong to two major communities having different social traditions and even antagonistic symbolism. Though both communities speak the same language, they have consistently followed different historical trends, responded differently to the same situations and hence created different formal, linguistic and thematic traditions. Due to these distinctions, writers of both communities were fully aware of the two tradition of literature existing side by side within the large framework of a common inheritance of Bengali literature. These two traditions were interacting upon one another, stimulating each other, reacting against each other and at the same time combining the lexical, thematic and formal patterns and occasionally merging one into the other.

2. MUSLIM WRITERS AND BENGALI LITERATURE

Muslim writers during 'Middle Ages' contributed mainly three or four types in Bengali literature: first, translation and adaptation of romantic narratives of Persian origin; secondly, romantic narratives of local, folk or Indo-Pakistani origin; thirdly heroic verses in which history is used as myths; lastly religious and didactic verses. So far as the common formal features of all the four types of narrative poems are concerned, somehow or other, Muslim accepted the existing form and made some additions and alterations in order to eliminate or suppress typically Hindu elements.

After the establishment of Muslim rule in the region, a large number of local people embraced Islam. This made an urgent need of some knowledge about the new religion such as the lives of Prophets, principles of Islam, history of Islam, new culture. Accordingly, the Muslim writer and intelligentsia got initiated to translate some Persian texts into Bengali under the patronization of Muslim rulers. Side by side they began to write lots of books based on Persian themes, which resulted in the introduction of numerous Persian words and the themes into the Bengali literature. Early writings like Shek Subhodaya, a Sanskrit hagiology on Shaykh Dialal al-Din Tabrizi, and Niranjana Rushma, a Bengali ballad by Ramai Pandit, contain sufficient materials indicative of the growing Islamic atmosphere in Bengal.

3. HINDU WRITERS AND BENGALI LITERATURE

Bengali literature was greatly stimulated by the interest of the Muslim sovereigns of Sultanate period with their inevitably anti-Sanskrit culture. Muslim rulers were not only patrons of Bengali texts on Muslim subjects but on Hindu subjects also. It was in the late fifteen century, the royal court of Bengal lent vigorous support to Bengali language and literature. This time Bengali language received the credit of language of literature. New trend of writing popular literature in Bengali rather than in Sanskrit text has already been started. In the early fifteenth century, the Chinese traveler Ma Huan observed that Bengali was "the language in universal use" By the second half of the same century the royal power sued to patronize Bengali literary works as well as Persian romance literature. Nusrat Shah patronized the Bengali language and literature. He extended his patronization for translation of Mahabharata and Ramayana into Bengali language. Under his patronage Maladhar Basu translated Bhagavata into Bengali.

Vishnu cult had been gaining royal favor prior and after to the Turkish conquest. During the first few centuries of Muslim rule over Bengal the popular cult of Siva suffered from the absence of state patronage. At this juncture, under the court patronage vernacular literature glorify the various incarnation of Vishnu. The popularization of the Krishna (incarnation of Vishnu) can be attributed to the patronage of Muslim court of Gaur. Under the patronage of Sultan Rukn al-Din Barbak (1459-74) poet Maladhara Basu composed Sri Krishna Vijaya (the triumph of lord Krishna), within 1473 to 1480 C. E., and as a reward he earned the title of 'Gunraj Khan' from Sultan. The most significant period for the growth of Bengali language and literature was the rule of Allauddin Hussain Shah (1493-1519). Yosoraj Khan wrote Krishna

Mangala, who received the patronage of Sultan Ala al-Din Husain Shah. He also extended his patronization to the writing of the Manasa-Vijaya by Bipra Das, and the Padma Purana by Vijaya Gupta. Krittibas Ojha, the translator of Krittivasi Ramayana into Bengali was his Court member. Some of the nobles of Allauddin Hussain gave patronage to Bengali poets. Sultan Hussain Shah's two generals Paragal Khan and his son Chuti Khan used to patronizing Bengali literature. They employed Srikar Nandi to translate the Mahabharata into Bengali. During Ilyas Shah Period, sultan Jalaluddin is remembered for his generous patronage of local Hindu scholarship. The famous poem of the Krishna story Sri Krishna kirtan was composed by Boru Chandi Das during second half of the fourteenth century. According to Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, "The Grammar of the speech of the Shreekrishna Kirtana gives a clue to many of the forms of New Bengali." Most distinguished Lyrical poems Vaishnava Padavali was compiled by Vidyapati and Chandidas during this time. By the end of the fifteenth century a host of literature was composed in Bengali on the life and teachings of Sri Chaitanya. The Chaitanya Charitamrita of Krishna Dasa Kaviraja is excellent one among those literatures.

The historical tradition of patronizing court poet continues with great care, and that was extended to the writers of both communities. It seems, moreover that this was how contemporary poets perceived them under the sway of different sultans. To cherish the royal patronization some Hindu writers used to eulogize Sultan through their writings. In 1494, a work glorifying the goddess Manasa, the poet Vijaya Gupta wove into his opening stanzas praises of the sultan of Bengal:

Sultan Husain Raja, nurturer of the world:

In war he is invincible; for his opponent he is Yama (God of death).

In his charity he is like Kalpataru (a fabled wish-yielding tree).

In his beauty he is like Kama (God of love)

His subjects enjoy happiness under his rule.

Under the patronage of Ghiyath al-Din Azam Shah Vidyapati of Mithila and Muhammad Saghir of Bengal, the author of the first Bengali romance Yusuf-Zulaykha, flourished. Due to this royal patronage, we can see in the next phase that how the writers of poet like Chandi Das and Vidyapati revealed the innate strength and gave unmistakable proof of its capacity to express the highest thought of human mind. Nasir Shah was great patron of the vernacular of this country. The poet Vidyapati dedicated one of his songs to his monarch, and in another, speaks with high respect of sultan Guisuddin. He proved his excellence through the use of his unique metaphors and similes, in the choice of his expression, and in the higher flights of his poetic fancy, and by overshadowing all vernacular poets. Chandi Das, the child of nature had no match for him. Chandi Das seems to be far greater apostle of a more lasting impression than all the literary establishments and poetic flights of Vidyapati. There was already age long tradition of writing Mangalakavya literature prevailing among the Hindu writers of Bengal. The same thing follows during Muslim rule, but with certain innovation that has been discussed in the next segment of the paper.

4. LINE OF TRANSFORMATION

Writer Sayd Ali Ashraf aptly stated that "A literary tradition is either thematic, lexical, formal or stylistic in character or the product of the combined operation of these features over a certain period of time. As literature is the creation of men and as men is a social being, the evolution, change or maintenance of literary tradition is intimately tied up with the evolution, change or maintenance of social sensibility." During the Sultanate of Bengali literature two distinct traditions emerged: the tradition of Hindu literature and the tradition of Muslim literature. The former accepted as their panorama the two worlds of Man and the Gods and Goddesses as highly interlinked worlds with divine machinery as a useful tool for conducting action. The later, though religious in outlook separated human action from divine action and thus created what may be considered a rational outlook among writers. These traditions also introduce, besides two religious symbolisms, two kind of mythology.

The basic similarity in these two traditions lies in the religious character of these myths. They provided symbols for their respective societies through which the societies tried to penetrate into a meaning full reality that would transcend objective reality. But the essential characters of the two mythical traditions were different, though the functions they performed were of the same nature. Their character differed because the Hindu myth uses gods and goddesses not as symbol of the reality but as symbols of imaginary existence. A Muslim writer uses historical figures almost in the same sense. Weird enough that both of them wanted to elicit belief in the essential validity or authenticity or faith in the recurrence of such events in future and both tried to evoke empathy and guide conduct by 'portraying one or more basic human needs, their goal, the action thus propel, and disastrous and successful outcome of these actions' as it said by Paul

Tillich. However, the Muslim writers kept God outside the world of myths, whereas the Hindus brought the god and goddess in. At the same time both of them maintained that these myths had significance beyond their artistic use therefore they wanted readers to proceed beyond aesthetic response and get emotionally moved to believe in the objective reality of what was just a portrayed myth. Muslim writers such as Alaol, Daulat Uzir and Daulat Qazi created narratives without such intention. But the artistic intention is mixed up with religious intentions even in Bharatchandra, the poet of Annadamangal Kavya. With the elapsing of time, sultanate period witnessed certain transformation in the line of Bengali literature writing which became visible in many writings of both communities' writers. The latest trend of writings, new themes and tradition gradually replaced the old one and shoved the Bengali literature for next stage of achievement and perfection. Here I have tried to show some major line of changes that had occurred in the writing of Bengali literature in the first phase of Muslim rule.

First important changes took place in the sphere of invocation. Earlier Hindu writers used to invoke to Swaraswati or to any other god and goddess in the preface of any literary works that we can find in the opening of the Mangla Kavyas. Muslim writers replaced these invocations by Hamd and Nath, the praise of God and holy Prophet. Other hand Hindu writer included romantic tales in the framework of Mangala Kavyas, in the stories of their gods and goddesses. Muslim writer eliminated this framework and wrote simple, straight forward and direct narrative poems. But sometime Muslim writers wanted to introduce typically Persian forms. Even when Alaol was writing Padmavati, the story of a Hindu princess or when Daulat Qazi was writing the story of Sati Mayna, another Hindu princess, they started by hymning the praises of Allah and His Prophet. Muslim Writers got rid of the possibility of such incongruities and made the form more appropriate for the romances of human life. Though it is true that most of the Hindu and Muslim writers had written about their own people and used their own myths, however, some of the Muslim writer had shown more catholicity and used Hindu myths for the sake of similes and metaphors. In this line, Hindu poets always followed the policy of seclusion and never used any of the Muslim myths even for similes or metaphors. In this context, Sayed Ashraf Ali aptly pointed out that 'the duality in the mythological patterns remained in spite of a temporary admixture.'

Romanticism became another tradition of the writings of those days. The most significant writers in the field of romanticism were Shah Muhammad Saghir, the author of Yusuf-Zuleikha. This is a conversion of celebrated Iranian poet Firdowsi or Jami's poem of that title. Poet Shah Muhammad Saghir dedicated his Bengali version of Yusuf – Zulaikha to his patron Sultan Ghiyathuddin Azam Shah (1389-1409). I have noticed another trend in the later romantic writings of Muslim certain extravaganza. For instance: the Vijya Kavyas that illustrated the romantic, imaginative, miraculous exploits of Holly Prophet, his companions and well-known Muslim heroes. These poems were the product of the urge to popularize Islam and prove the superiority of the Muslim over the 'infidels. Therefore, they relate the vijaya or victories of the Holly prophet of Islam over his infidel adversaries. Zainuddin's Rashul Vijaya is one of the earliest known works in this field.

Historically Hindus were the rulers of Bengal when Muslim conquered it. Hindus had never accepted Muslim political tentacles contentedly. Ideologically, Hindu orthodoxy preserved and encouraged the difference between the Hindus and Muslims through different rival movement. Both communities expand their cultural frame in the society along with a sharp divide line. There were some methods or techniques were occasionally used to synthesize the two as in the Satyapeer cult and the Yoga – Qalandara mystic system. The literary traditions were therefore different. For the Hindus the most significant form was that of the Mangalakavyas. Regarding this literary work, Dr. Asutosh Bhattacharya has said that it was the product of Hindu reaction to Muslim cultural dominance and political domination. It was attempted to provided sustenance to Hindu society by showing God's favor and the favor of gods and goddesses. The emotive response was that of a defeated society seeking pride-fulfillment through pictures of divine assistance and also seeking consolation and ideals.

The Hindus kept continue to write Mangala kavyas, but the thematic, lexical and stylistic patterns of the Muslims writing showed a remarkable change. The most significant development that we can see in the writings of Mangla Kavya is the first time Hindu society recognized the equal power and position of a female deity 'Manasa'. This definitely brought a new perception among the Hindus about the status of female gender in divine world, which in turn heighten the self-respect of womenfolk in real world. This move is clearly distinct from the earlier socio-religious notion written in the Bengali texts. Another Hindu writing dedicated to the story of Goddess Chandi. Though Chandi cult and its relative literature is very ancient, it appeared in written form only in the late sultanate period. The well-known text upon this is Chandi- Mangala, a drama written by Mukundaram (ca 1590).

Another tradition known as Rikhta tradition was feasibly made by the saint-poet Nur Kutb-i Alam (1416 AD) of Pandua, who introduced the Rikhta Style in Bengali, in which half the hemstitch was composed in pure Persian and the other half in simple Bengali. Dobhasi tradition was another creation of Muslim writers of this age. Lexicographic view of Dobhasi literature is not less important than thematic traditions. Due to the linguistic fusion, Muslim writers were being habituated with this practice from early days to develop Bengali nomenclatures. For instance: 'Kitab', 'Allah', 'Rasule Khuda', 'Noore Muhammadi', 'peer paigambar' 'alim' used by Shah Muhammad Saghir, (1389-1409 AD), Zainuddin, (15th century AD) used 'Taj', 'sawar', 'dada' etc. Some contemporary writings followed the tradition of dobhashi puthis were Ghribullah's Yusuf-Zulaikha, Amir Hamza (1st part) and Hatem Tai and Syed Hamza's Madhumalati, Amir Hamza (2nd part), Jaiguner Puthi and Hatem Tai. This pattern emerged as an attempt to assert the distinctive character of the Muslim mode of utterance as distinguished from the mode of utterance of the Hindus. This style of writing at once becomes highly popular. Other hand, fatalism rather than human responsibility for his action and their consequences become the dominant theme of the writers of this period.

A new trend of synthesizing Hindu-Muslim's cultural expression through writing was also developed by contemporary writers. Muzammil (1430-?) one of the earliest writers who wrote his Neeti-Shastravasta, a text related to the story and preaches of emergence of Islam refers the very simple enunciation of Islamic rules. Afzal Ali preaches the rules and regulations of Islam in his Neseehatnama which follows the pattern of the Mangala Kavyas. Instead of god and goddess, this writer indicated his peer who gives him instructions in dream, and the poet relates to us what he dreamt. On the other side Vaisnavasim and Nat Cult togetherly tried to compose a new synthetic culture through writing literature in Bengali language.

5. CONCLUSION

Sultanate period marked several new traditions, which were established in the writings of Bengali literature by both Muslims and Hindu Writers. Above all the writings of Muslim writers were not only gave human life the dignity and recognition that it deserves, but also, they introduced through translation and adaptation the myths of the Muslim world. Through historical and religious verses, they extended the range of the total sensibility of the Bengali speaking people. Muslims patronized, fostered, and encouraged this literature and produce some of the best poems of this period. On the other way, Hindu Bengali writers of those days not only added to the existing volume and themes of Bengali literature but also maintained the continuity of literary activities with greater literary achievements. Their writings pattern and tradition got considerable change and so many new elements entered into the writings that definitely enriched the literary sense of mediaeval writers.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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- Bengali language belongs to the eastern-most branch of the Indo-Aryan group of the Indo-European family of languages. Its origin is traced up to a form of Prakrit, common people's language spoken in ancient India. But over a period of time, languages slowly evolved appropriating each one's own definite form and thus the present Bengali took shape by the middle of the 6th-10th centuries, according to scholars. During this period of evolution, proto-Bengali passed through Magadhi-Prakrit, and Maithili. From this evolved what is termed as Ardhamagadhi (half magadhi) out of which branched off Apabhramsa which eventually changed forms as regional tongues like Bihari languages, Oriya languages and the Bengali-Assamia languages. See: Pracheen Vangla Sahityer Itihas by Dr. Tamonash Chandra Das Gupta, Calcutta University, 1951, chap. V

- According to Professor Nihar Ranjan Roy "in addition to Sanskrit, there were two other languages in vogue in Bengal in the 9th and 10th centuries: one was derived from Souraseni and the other from Magadhi. The latter is said to have evolved later into Bengali. Some writers would write pad, doha and verses, in both languages and the readers too would understand them equally well." See: Dasgupta, Dineshchandra Sen and Co., Vangabhasa O Sahitya Calcutta, 1949, pp. 11-12 and Roy, Niharranjan Vangaleer Itihas, Book Emporium, Calcutta, 1952, pp.693-756
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- These are mystic songs composed by various Buddhist seer-poets: Luipada, Kanhapada, Kukkuripada, Chatilpada, Bhusukupada, Kamlipada, Dhendhanpada, Shantipada, Shabarapada etc. The famous Bengali linguist Harprashad Shastri discovered the palm leaf Charyapada manuscript in the Nepal Royal Court Library in 1907.
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- Chandra, Satish, Medieval India from Sultanat to Mughals, Har-Anand Publication, New Delhi, 1998, p.261
- Eaton, Richard M. Op. cit., p.110
- Maladhar Basu flourished in the modern-day Bardhaman district of Paschimbanga in the 15th century. Sri Krishna Vijaya is also the oldest Bengali narrative poem of the Krishna legend and this is virtually a translation of the Mahabharata.
- Chandra, Satish, Op. cit., p.212
- Sen, Sukumar, Op. cit., p.66
- Niharranjan Ray, "Mediaeval Bengali Culture", Visva – Bharati Quarterly, 11, No.2, August-October, 1945, p.54; Haque, Md. Emamul, Muslim Bengali Literature, Pakistan publication, Karachi, 1957, pp.38-39
- Krittibas Ojha belonged to the modern-day Nadia district, Paschimbanga, flourished in the 15th century, See: Ibid., pp.34-40
- Chandra, Satish, Op. cit., p. 212
- Ranjan Roy Bidyatvallava discovered the torn manuscript of the Sri Krishna Kirtana from the cowshed of Debendranath Chatterjee's house at Kakinlya village, Bankura district of West Bengal. This work explores the devious tactics deployed by the lusty young Krishna in winning the love of the cowherdess Radha. Throughout this time Radha's passionate love for the divine Krishna become the central motif of Bengali devotionism or bhakti.
- The 15th century is marked by the emergence of Vaishnava lyrical poetry or the padavali in Bengal discussed about love of Radha and Krishna. The padas of Vidyapati, though written in Maithili influenced the medieval Bengali poets immensely.
- The book is a hybrid Bengali and Sanskrit biography, documents the life and precepts of the Vaishnava saint Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486–1533)
- Gupta, Jayanta Kumar Das, (ed.) Vijaya Gupta: Padma-Purana, University of Calcutta Press, Calcutta, 1962, p.8
- Other writers of romances, like Bahram Khan with his Layla-Madjnun, Sabirid Khan with his Hanifa-Kayrapari, Donaghazi with his Sayf al-Mulk and Muhammad Kabir with his Madhumalati (1583-1588), followed Saghir in quick succession. See: The Encyclopedia of Islam, Op. cit., p.1168
- The poetry of Vidyapati, the great Maithili poet, though not written in Bengali, influenced the literature of the time so greatly that it makes him a vital part of Middle Bengali literature. He flourished in the modern-day Darbhanga district of Bihar, India in the 14th century. His Vaishnava lyrics became very popular among the masses of Bengal. The first major Bengali poet to write Vaishnava lyrics was Chandidas, who belong to the modern-day Birbhum district of Paschimbanga (W.B.) in the 15th century. See: Sen, Dinesh Chandra, Op. cit., p.115
- Ibid., p.141
- Mangal-Kavya ("Poems of Benediction"), a group of Hindu narrative poetry, composed more or less between 13th Century and 18th Century, eulogize the indigenous deities of rural Bengal in the social scenario of the middle Ages. Manasa Mangal, Chandi Mangal and Dharma Mangal, the three major genus of Mangal-Kavya tradition include the portrayal of the magnitude of Manasa, Chandi and Dharmathakur, who are considered the greatest

among all the native divinities in Bengal, respectively. There are also minor Mangalkavyas known as Shivayana, Kalika Mangal, Raya Mangal, Shashti Mangal, Sitala Mangal and Kamala Mangal etc.

Vijay Gupta, Hari Dutta was some of this kind of writers who wrote Manosa Mangala Kavaya in honor of Manosa Devi. For detail see: Ibid., p.278

Ashraf, S. Ali, Op. cit., p.3

Ibid., pp. 10-11

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Tillich, Paul 'The Religious Symbol' in Daedalus, Spring 1959, pp. 215-216

Muslim writers do this because of the transcended and objectively real character of god vouchsafed by their faith. See: Ashraf, A. Ali, p.11

Swarswati in Hindu mythology considered as the Muse of poetry and arts

This was a consistent practice of all Muslim writers of epics and long narratives like Firdawsi, Sadi, Attar of Iran. This was the when Muslim writers would be the first to write pure romantic narratives in verse. They stated to employ their knowledge of Hindu life and Habits in their writings.

Billah, Abu Musa Mohammad Arif, The Development of Bengali Literature during Muslim Rule, SACS, Vol.1 No.2 pp 44-54

Ashraf, S. Ali, Op. cit., pp.8-10

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See: Vangla Mangalakavyer Itihas, Calcutta, (3rd edi), 1957, pp.7-8. During this time the translation of the Ramyana and Mahabharata provided the common Hindu men and women with ideals to emulate and take pride their own historical past.

Mansa (snake Goddess) was known to the people prior to the Turkish conquest in Bengal. But she was worshiped by the lower class people only and failed to achieve full acceptance in Brahmanical literature due to the influence of Siva. But the Hindu literature of Muslim period projected her in a different way to ascertain in a higher position.

Throughout the period 1200-1600, Brahman ideologues sought to appropriate the cult of sign of the Goddess by identifying female divine power in all its manifestation with the sakti, or pure energy, which is the counterpart of the Brahmanical God Siva.

Here one thing is important that Hindu writing shows the principle of divine intervention turns the Hindu mythical story of Behula and Lakhindar into a story with happy ending. In other wards the concept of power of gods and goddesses make the gods the cause and the remover of the tragic suffering

Chandi was a forest goddess, wife of God Siva, and rival of Manasa, hold a greater position in the society.

Eaton, Richard M. Op. cit., p.108

Dobhasi means 'in two languages', it was the highly Arabised and Persianised Bengali used by the Muslims of Bengal

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Ibid., pp.51-52