

## **Translation of the Holy Qur'an in Bangla: A Historical Perspective**

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**Abstract:** Islam came to the Indian Sub-continent in 712 A.D. Since then, Islam spread fast and the need was felt for the translation of the Holy Qur'an into Bengali language. Though, from 12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century, there did appear a good number of literary contributions on the religion of Islam in Bengali language. However, there has not been any translation and explanation of the Qur'an directly in Bengali except few attempts at the translation of certain parts of the Qur'an as poetry or lyrics. The reason may be the lack of awareness about the Muslim culture, backwardness of education in the Muslim society of Bengal and the pervading superstitions in the Muslim society of India. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a Hindu scholar took the initiative to translate the whole Qur'an and was followed by Muslim scholars along the same line. The translation of the Qur'an brought about a positive change in the educational system and the life-style of the Bengali Muslim community. This paper focuses on how written translation of the Holy Qur'an begun and the scholars who contributed in such an undertaking.

**Keywords:** The Qur'an, Muslim Bengal, Bengali translation of the Qur'an,

Hindu translation, Qur'an in poetry

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## Introduction

Allah (SWT), in His infinite mercy, revealed the Qur'an progressively so that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) may recite it to the people. This is clearly stated in the Qur'an, 17: 106-108 as follows:

[This is] a Qur'an which We have separated [by intervals] that you might recite it to the people over a prolonged period. And We have sent it down progressively." The Qur'anic verse 25:32 is much more terse. It reads: "[But] those who disbelieve say, 'Why was the Qur'an not revealed to him all at once?' Thus it is that We may strengthen thereby your heart. And We have spaced it distinctly.

Thus, the Qur'an was revealed to be recited and understood. But most people did not know the Arabic language in which the Qur'an was revealed and hence the people thought of translating it into their languages.

Translating the Holy Qur'an into modern languages has always been a difficult issue in Islamic theology. Muslims argued that the Qur'an is inimitable (i'jaz al-Qur'an) and hence should not be translated into another language. The Qur'an is in Arabic, and so it should be read in its original form. Nevertheless, people did translate the Qur'an but called it the meaning or interpretation of the Qur'an. Thus, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1875-1936) called his translation *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*.

It would be wrong, however, to say that no translation was made in the early period. The first complete translation of the Quran in Persian, along with its *tafsir*, which has survived till today is known as *Tafsir al-Tabari* and is the translation of the book with the same title in Arabic. There were other scholars who translated the Qur'an into Urdu and Persian languages but these did not sit well with the Muslims who considered these attempts as blasphemous. Scholars such as Shah Waliullah Muhaddith-e-Dehlvi, (1703-

1762) was severely criticized for his translation of the Qur'an into Persian language. He wrote a book, *Fathur RahmÉn* because of which a group of Orthodox Muslim scholars gave a *FatwÉ* (decree) and declared him a *KÉfir* (Infidel) and some even conspired to kill him. The Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent could not easily accept any reformation or modern explanation of Islamic practices. Bengali Muslims believed that the Qur'an could not and should not be translated in any other languages. Such attempts were considered unforgivable sin and would definitely incur divine displeasure and societal wrath. Observing such a situation, Bengali Muslim scholars did not make any attempt to translate the Qur'an into Bengali. But the Christians and the Hindus took the initiative to translate the Qur'an which were not looked upon with favour by Bengali Muslims. This might have antagonized the non-Muslims leading to an increase in the activities of the Christian Missionaries with propaganda against the religion of Islam and the Qur'an. They produced some translations which were not acceptable to the public. The leader of the Baptist Missionaries, orientalist William Cary came to the fore with what has been termed by many as a misinterpretation of the Qur'an. Following the development of Bengali language, Bengali educated Muslims felt the need for a vocal or oral translation of the Qur'an. Many poets and litterateurs emphasised the importance of understanding the religion of Islam and of the Qur'an and hence an emphasis on the need to provide Bengali translation of the Qur'an at least to the educated public. Some Muslim scholars did join the chorus but orthodox Muslims severely criticized and opposed the translation of the Qur'an into any language including Bengali.

Apparently, the educated Muslims succeeded partly in their mission for various reasons. Reading the Qur'an in Arabic gained some momentum for praying, and other ceremonial purposes. The Education Board under the British rule permitted the inclusion of part of the Qur'an in school and college curriculum. Muslim preachers from the 9<sup>th</sup> century onward were

using and explaining Qur'anic passages to the public in Bengali language but not in writing (Haque, 1993: 220). So, at the introductory stage of preaching Islam in Bengal, the translation of the Qur'an into Bengali began. The translation was verbal not written and the preachers in their attempts to motivate the people quoted references from the verses of the Qur'an. The effect of such preaching was that the newly reverted Bengali Muslims gained some ideas about the principles and code of the Qur'an regarding marriage, divorce, giving alms and keeping fast and the like.

The preachers of Islam tried to translate daily and practical life related instructions from the Qur'an. They used the translated verses of the Qur'an during such occasions like the prayer, fasting, travelling for pilgrimages, slaughtering, marriage and divorce etc. Besides this, the stories and episodes of Prophet Jesus, Moses and Yusuf which were known to the Bengali people from the ancient times were laced with quotations from the Qur'an by the preachers.

The Bengali Muslim scholars of the Indian subcontinent knew the Persian and Urdu languages. During the period of Muslim rule in Bengal, the state language of this subcontinent was Persian. For this reason, many Bengali scholars (*'UlamÉ*) learnt, and translated and preached the Qur'anic spirit through Persian and Urdu languages. The availability of the translation of the Qur'an into Persian was one of the reasons for the late translation of the Qur'an into Bengali (Rahman, 2009: 27). Given the availability of the Urdu and the Persian translations of the Qur'an, the Bengali *'ulamÉ* did not feel the need to translate the Qur'an into Bengali language. Ordinary people, however, were not familiar with Persian or Urdu language. As such, Bengali Muslim scholars explained the Qur'anic verses to the public Bengali.

With this brief historical overview, this study analyzes the origin, development and achievements of those who translated the Qur'an into

Bengali language. It argues that, in the beginning some parts of the Qur'an was translated in the form of poetry, followed by its translation in the prose form. The first translation of the entire Qur'an was carried out by a Hindu scholar and was followed subsequently by Muslim scholars.

### **Translation of the Qur'an in Bengali poetry**

Some of the ancient poets and litterateurs wrote poetry and produced few manuscripts about the inner meaning of the Qur'an. These were not the textual translation of the Qur'an. Shah Muhammad Sagir (1389-1410) wrote "Yusuf Julaiikha poetry" which, in a sense, was the translation of Surah Yusuf of the Qur'an. Sayed Sultan (1503-1648), poet Abdul Hakim (1620-1690), Golam Akbar Ali, Mir Wahid Ali, Nasir Uddin Ahmed, Kari Nasir and many unknown writers, translated or wrote the inner meaning of the Qur'an. Md. Mujibur Rahman mentioned about 200 names of the translators of the Qur'an. Some of their writings were published in Bengali newspapers and few also appeared in the form of books.

Bengali Muslims were certain that Arabic was the appropriate literary vehicle for the transmission of Islamic ideas. However, they could not use a language with which their Bengali audience was unfamiliar. This exactly is the reason for translating parts of the Qur'an. Thus Sayed Sultan (Cited in Sharif, Ahmad, 1972: 203) explains:

Nobody remembers God and the Prophet;  
 The consciousness of many ages has passed.  
 Nobody has transmitted this knowledge in the local language.  
 From sorrow, I determined  
 To talk more and more about the Prophet.  
 It is my misfortune that I was born a Bengali.  
 None of the Bengalis understand Arabic,  
 And so not one has understood any of the discourse of his own religion.

Gradually, many Muslim scholars took part in this exercise with the expectation of enhancing the religious understanding of the Bengali Muslim masses, who did not know Arabic. The ulama presented the daily prescribed prayers in Bengali.

### **Translation of some parts of the Qur'an:**

Soon, Bengalis embarked upon translating the parts of the Qur'an in Bengali language. Golam Akbar Ali, Amir Uddin Boshonia among the Muslims and Rajendra Nath Mitra, Girish Chandra Sen among the Hindus were the pioneers in the field of the translation of the Qur'an in Bengali. Golam Akbar Ali of Patwar Bagan, Kolkata, translated the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'an in 1275. This book has been preserved at Bangla Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh. This is the first Bengali translation in the history of the Qur'an translation in Bengali language. Some sources consider Amir Uddin Boshonia to be the first translator of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'an. However, not much information about his identity is known and no copy of his writings are found in the public libraries (Khan, 1997: 32). Bengali scholars like Muhammad Mujibur Rahman (Rahman, 2009: 36) and Mofakhkhar Hussain Khan (1997) did mention Amir Uddin Boshonia who might have published his translation in 1866 but they did not provide much information. There is evidence, however, of one Hindu scholar, Rajendra Nath Mitra, who translated and published the first part of the Qur'an in 1879 (Rahman, 2009:49).

### **Girish Chandra Sen (1834-1910), *Qur'an Sharif*, 12<sup>th</sup> December' 1881**

The first translation of the Qur'an was done by a Hindu Girish Chandra Sen (1834-1910) who was born in the present Narsingdi district of Bangladesh. He was the youngest son of Madhab Roy (Rahman, 2009: 51) who took keen interest in educating his son. It is his father who introduced Girish to a major

poet and lyricist Sheikh Sadi (1175-1295). After completing primary education from a local school, Girish Sen got admitted into a Sanskrit school in Mymensing. Subsequently, he sat for the final examination and secured first position (Rahman, 2009: 52). He first joined the Hardinge school of Pabna as a junior teacher and later he served as a teacher in Mymensing district school (Rahman, 2009: 52). Though a teacher, he was also interested in journalism. He served as an associate editor, in-charge of some fortnightly and monthly journals such as Solov Somachar, Bongo Bondhu & Mashik Mohila in 1302 (Islam, 2003: 174).

Girish Chandra Sen was very much influenced by Brahman religious leader Keshabchandra Sen who built a religious seminary which combined the archaeological features of several religions (Rahman, 2009: 53; Islam, 2003: 463). It is Keshabchandra Sen who inspired and asked Girish Sen to undertake the translation of the Holy Qur'an into Bengali language. Consequently, Girish Sen went to Lucknow, India, and learnt Arabic language & grammar from Mowlana Ehsan Ali in 1876. After returning to his home-town, Girish Sen continued to deepen his knowledge of Arabic literature, history and Tafsir from Mowlana Alim Uddin of Dhaka (Rahman, 2009: 52). In case of commentary and short notes, he took help from the book of *Tafsir-e-Hossaini* (in Urdu) of Molla Waej Kashefi (d.1504) and the book of Shah Abdul Kader (1753-1827) (Rahman, 2009, p.53).

Within six years (1881-1886), Girish Chandra Sen completed the translation of the Holy Qur'an in Bengali which began to be published in 1882. This Bengali translation brought mixed reaction in the contemporary Muslim society. One of the Muslims threatened to kill him due to his rendering of the Qur'an into Bengali as a Non-Muslim translator. On the other hand, thousands of Muslims welcomed him for his brave and great work on the Qur'an. Abdul Ala and Abdul Aziz, former professors of Calcutta Alia Madrasa, highly welcomed and recommended the contribution of Girish

Chandra Sen on the Qur'an, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> march of 1882 and they wrote a letter of thanks to Mr. Sen which was published in the then news papers. This letter had been included in the beginning of the translation of the Holy Qur'an by Mr. Sen (Rahman, 2009, p.57-58). This letter reads, among others, that

the Bengali translation of the Koran and our curiosity is not less excited to find it to be such faithful and literary translation from a classic language as the Arabic which varies so widely in its construction from all other languages of the world. As we are Mohamedans by faith and birth, our best and hearty thanks are due to the author for disinterested and patriotic effort and the great trouble he has taken to diffuse the deep meaning of our Holy and sacred religious Book- the Koran to the public

Contemporary Muslim scholars helped and supported Mr. Sen in carrying out the translation. He said:

when I devoted myself in Arabic language, then many friends requested me to translate the Qur'an into Bengali. Some Muslim friends also requested me. The main objective of the study of Arabic language is to study the Holy Qur'an and the translation of it into Bengali. For the aspiration of my friends and my responsibility, I rendered the Qur'an now" (Rahman, 2009, p.62).

Sen lamented the conditions of the Indian Muslims and the Qur'an. He opined that the Bible of the Christianity had been translated into all of the languages of the world. As a result, it is easy to read any one but the Qur'an is intact in Arabic. The Muslims do not sell the copy of the Qur'an to other nations. The other believers cannot touch the Qur'an. The knowledge of Arabic language is rare among people of other nations. Some Muslims of India can recite it but lack linguistic proficiency, most of the Muslims cannot comprehend the spirit and meaning of the Qur'an (Rahman, 2009, p.62).

Many Muslims, however, criticized the authenticity of the translation of the Qur'an by Mr. Sen. Someone opined that Mr. Sen was more skilled in Urdu and Persian than the Arabic. So, he had taken the theme from the Urdu and the Persian instead of the Arabic, though he tried utmost to maintain the original theme of the Qur'an in his translation. But they do not deny that he is the pioneer in the field of the translation of the entire Qur'an in Bengali. There was no translation which can be compared with that of Mr. Sen. No Muslim had given full attention and devotion to the translation like him at that time. So, Girish Chandra Sen is rightly credited as being the first translator of the entire Qur'an in the history of the Qur'an translation in Bengali language. Professor Dr. Muhammad Mujibur Rahman was of the opinion that despite some pitfalls and problems in the translation of Girish Chandra Sen, he is the pioneer in the field of the translation of the Qur'an in the history of Bengali literature. There were some scholars who translated the Qur'an partly as poetry but they did not produce a translation of the whole Qur'an. Mr. Sen contributed much to the Qur'an literature and to the Muslim society. He was instrumental in adding Islamic themes or spirit to the Bengali literature. He did so at a time when the environment was not conducive for such an enterprise. During his time, the Hindus were ignorant and unmindful of the Muslim culture and the Muslims were backward in education. Under such circumstances, it was an arduous task to translate the Qur'an as a Non-Muslim (Rahman, 2009, p.67). Another great journalist and litterateur in Bengali literature Mowlana Akram Khan (1867-1968) wrote: "the excellent contribution of Mr. Sen can be considered to be the 8<sup>th</sup> wonderful thing of the world" (Khan, 1936, p. Introduction).

It must be noted that Girish Chandra Sen was also the first person to write the historical biography of Muhammad (SAW) in Bengali (1885). All these efforts made religious knowledge accessible to a large number of educated

Muslims in Bengal, which also contributed to the development of community consciousness in the area.

Though the translation of Mr. Sen is replete with the Sanskrit vocabularies, and that the meanings of certain verses are incomprehensible, it is considered a great contribution to Bengali literature. Though Mr. Sen sacrificed his life for spreading and disseminating the Brahman religion, Muslims have benefitted much from his effort. The first copy of Mr. Sen's translation was published in 1881 and the last copy was published in 1886. Most importantly, Mr. Sen has inspired many Muslim scholars to embark upon translation of the Qur'an.

Among the Muslim scholars, Naymuddin (1838-1908) made a commendable effort in producing his own translation of the Qur'an. The first of his translation was published in 1887. Others followed suit including Mowlana Abbas Ali (1859-1932), Khan Bahador Taslim Uddin Ahmed (1852-1927) and Khandoker Abul Fajal Abdul Karim (1874-1947). Overall, there emerged at least 30 copies of the translation of the Qur'an in Bengali language (Khan, 1997, p.15). Later on, the various publishers from West Bengal and Bangladesh published the full volume of the Qur'an in 1908, 1936, 1977 and 1979. The following sections analyze the contributions of Bengali scholars in the field of translation.

**Naymuddin (1838-1908), *Bonganobadita Qur'an Sharif* (26<sup>th</sup> September, 1891)**

Naymuddin was born at the village of Suruj under Tangail district of Bangladesh in 1838. He received early education from his father. He left his house for the search of knowledge and travelled to Dhaka, Morsidabad, Jownpur, Agra and Delhi where he visited Islamic institutions and met scholars. In his professional life, he served as a preceptor in a school of

Bhawalia under Mymensing district of Bangladesh. He died in 1908 at Kortia in Tangail.

Maulana Muhammad Nayemuddin (1838-1908) played a pioneering role in the area of the translation of the Qur'an. Maulana Nayemuddin was unhappy with the translations made by the Hindus and the Christians who misconceived the original meaning and the spirit of the Qur'an. The translations made by Rajendra Nath Mitra (1879), Priest Taracharan Banerjee (1882) and Girish Chandran Sen (1881-1886) were found to be faulty and contained intentional and unintentional mistakes which were not acceptable to Muslims (Khan, 1997, p.64). During his time Mahmud Ali Khan Panni, the landlord of Korotia, and Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhuri, the landlord of Dhonbari patronized the development of a Qur'an-centred piety, Islamic culture and Islamic literature in the Bengali Muslim society.

After receiving the patronage of the landlord of the land lord of Tangail, Hafez Mahmud Ali Khan, Muhammad Nayemuddin began to translate the Qur'an into Bengali. Nayemuddin started the work of translation in 1887. He spent 22 years in the translation of the Qur'an. The objective of his translation was to save Islam and the belief of Muslims from the conspiracy of the Christians and the Brahmans of his time. Mowlana Nayemuddin translated the Qur'an, using terminologies and vocabularies common among the Muslims as against the Brahman or Sanskrit oriented words used by non-Muslim translators. Maulana began by translating only 23 parts out of 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'an. He also translated partly from the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'an. Getting inspirations and patronage, he succeeded to complete the translation and got it published. Three volumes of his translated Quran were published in 1887, 1889 and 1891 respectively. For his outstanding contributions, he was rewarded the title 'Alimud Dahr' (scholar of the age).

**Mowlana Abbas Ali, *Qur'an Majid Motorjam***

Mowlana Abbas Ali (1859-1932) was born in 1859 at Boshirhat under 24 Porgona of India. He studied at least 15 years and took teaching as a profession in the same institution in Tangail, (the religious institute of the land lord of Tangail). Among the Muslims, he is the first to translate the whole Qur'an into Bengali in 1909. The Arabic text of the Qur'an appears along with the translation of the verses. It is said that this was very popular and much read translated copy to the people of this sub-continent. This book is not available in public or private libraries.

**Mowlana Mohammad Akram Khan *Tafsirul Qur'an*.**

Mowlana Akram Khan (1868-1968), was born in a village called Hakimpur of Boshirhat in the district of Chabbis Pargana in what is now the state of West Bengal, India. His father was Abdul Bari Khan and mother was Rabeya Khatun. He was loyal to the sect of the Ahle Hadith (Rahman, 1995: 2). He received early education from his parents both of whom died when he was 11 years old (Khan, 2007: 28). Being an orphan at early age, he suffered negligence, and did not have much institutional education though he managed to appear in the Madrasah Final Examination of Calcutta Alia Madrasah and passed F.M. (Fakhrul Muhaddithin) in 1900. He was well-versed in Arabic and Persian literature and wrote poetry in Persian language. Through personal studies, he acquired proficiency in Bangla, English, Arabic and Persian languages and knowledge of Islam and contemporary society and culture.

Akram Khan chose journalism as his profession. He made Dhaka the center of his journalistic, intellectual, and political work. He began his journalistic career in the early twentieth century and edited major periodicals like Mohammadi and Al-Eslam. He was the President of the Bengal Muslim

League before the partition of the sub- continent in 1947. He died on the 18<sup>th</sup> August, 1968 in Dhaka (Jafor, 2007: 28).

Among hundreds of contributions of Mowlana Akram Khan, *Tafsirul Qur'an* is the most famous. Akram Khan does not follow the tradition of transmitted tafsir, which he shows are contradictory and inconsistent with the normative teachings of Islam. Akram Khan makes linguistic and semantic analysis of relevant Qur'anic verses and follows chiefly the tradition of 'tafsir of the Qur'an by the Qur'an.' He substantiates his arguments by referring to many classical exegetes. The Bangla language he used is a bit old-fashioned but it is by and large lucid. He chose his words very carefully and astutely. In his tafsir, he offers very logical explanations of various events. He had faith in the miraculous abilities of the prophets; however, he did not accept fabricated and irrational stories.

One of the characteristics of his interpretations is that he avoided illogical explanations and customs and gave logical notes and annotations. He criticized those who were engaged in the hypothetical explanation of the Qur'an. He devoted himself to translate the Qur'an in 1905. The last part of his translation was published in 1959. Akram Khan also wrote the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He analyzed the life of the Prophet (SAW) in the light of reliable historical materials that have been verified. The biography of the Prophet and his commentary of the Quran are indeed great and created an enormous awakening and awareness among the Muslims of Bengal.

The publication of religious literature in general and translated Qur'an in particular received the patronage of influential Muslim individuals. These scholars include, among others, Khan Bahadur Taslim uddin (1852-1927), Khandoker Abul Fajal Abdul Karim (1875-1947), Ruhul Amin (1892-1945), Abdul Hakim (1887-1957), Fajlur Rahim Chowdhury (1896-1929), Dr.

Mohammed Qadrot-e-khoda (1901-1977). All these scholars translated the Qur'an in part or in full by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Translations of the Qur'an during the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

The busy and emerging educated Muslim middle-class preferred to have direct access to religious literature in the form of Bengali Qur'an, tafsir or sirat instead of approaching them through the ulamas or religious scholars. This active interest in religion or printed religious literature culminated in the emergence and sustenance of a Qur'an-centred piety in Bengal. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century began the translation of "Islamic literature" for making known the ancient cultural heritage of the Muslims all the world over to the Bengali Muslims. Table 1 shows a partial list of the Qur'an translated with their date of publication.

Table 1: Translation of the Qur'an in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century

<b>Title</b>	<b>Writer</b>	<b>Publication Information</b>
Qur'an	Rajendra Nath Mitra	Calcutta: Ayourbed Press, 1879
Qur'an Sharif	Girish Chandra Sen (1834-1910)	Calcutta: Deva Jantra, 1889
The translation of the Qur'an	Noymoddin (1838-1908)	Kortia, Tangail: Mahmodia Jantra, 1887
Qur'an Sharif with commentaries and short notes.	William Gold Shake (1861-1950)	Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1908-1920
Bangla translated Qur'an Sharif with simple and brief meaning	Mowlovi Khandaker Abul Fajal Abdul Karim (1875-1947)	Dhaka: Islamia Library, 1914

Qur'an Sharif	Monshi Karim Bakhs	Calcutta: Torika-e-Islam Press, 1916
Qur'an Sharif	Mohammed Abdul Hakim (1887-1957)	Dacca: Mohammed Fajel & Sons, 1922
Qur'an Sharif with details explain	Mohammed Akrom Khan	Dacca: Jhinok Postika, 1382 Bangla year
Qur'an Sharif	Fajlur Rahim Chowdhury	Borishal, Olania, Islamia Library, 1935
Pobitra Qur'an	Osman Gani	Salda Ajapor, Bordhaman
Tafsir-e-Ashrafi (Translated)	Mowlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (1863-1943)	Dacca: Amdadia, 1950
Al Qur'anul Karim	A group of Scholars	Dacca: Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 1986

Availability of these translate works gave readers the option to single out an exegesis carefully from among many. This allows the reader who may be extrinsically motivated to read commentaries on the Qur'an in an attempt to comprehend it. Availability of different versions of the translation also allows room for people with different education and socioeconomic status and different interests to buy and understand the Qur'an and form their own conclusions regarding the beauty of the translation.

### **Conclusion**

The written research works on the Qur'an in Bengali language began to appear in the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At that time the social, religious, political and economic conditions of the Muslims of Bengal were pitiable, to say the least. Specially, the people's understanding of Islam was one of misunderstanding and confusion. People then used to worship the mosques and the shrines. Impostors, in the name of

the saint and piety, polluted and exploited the mind of many people in the villages. People then used to worship saints instead of God.

Given such ignorance, it was essential that people be educated in Islam which required translating the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Interestingly, the non-Muslims took the lead in translating the Qur'an. They did so with ulterior motives either to make money or to benefit their own religion by showing the problems in the Qur'an. Some of their translations were erroneous. The theme of the Arabic and the Bengali language are not same. Phonetics, idioms and phrases are also different. So, the translation did not bring out the original meaning or the spirit of the Qur'an by these non-Muslim translators. It should be noted that in translating the Qur'an, it is essential to have religious devotion, affection and spiritual training. Given the fact that non-Muslim translators had none of these qualities, most of the Muslims avoided the works of the Non-Muslims in Bengal. Nevertheless, their efforts in this direction made some Muslim scholars to embark upon translating the Qur'an into Bengali to remove the darkness about the religion of Islam from the society. Muslim scholars of Bengal believed that through the Bengali translation of the Qur'an, the narrow minded Muslim may come back to the original belief and the spirit of Islam. This explains the increasing number of translated works in Bengali language. Much more is needed along the same line.

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