

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSIAN IN UNCOVERING THE HISTORY OF BANGLADESH: A HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Bangladesh is a South Asian country with an incredibly rich and multifaceted history. Spanning thousands of years, it is intertwined with various languages, cultures and traditions. During the medieval period, particularly under Muslim rule (1206–1857), Persian served as the administrative and literary language. The Persian language has become deeply embedded in the subcontinent's language, literature, culture, history, and heritage. Over this extensive period, significant aspects of Bengal's history, politics, culture, and economy were documented in Persian. Consequently, understanding and studying Persian is essential for uncovering and researching Bangladesh's past history. To explore the various layers and dimensions of this history, it is crucial to consider the contributions of different languages and cultures, among which Persian plays a particularly vital role. During the medieval period, Persians had a profound influence on Bengal's political, cultural, and administrative spheres. This language was not only a medium for preserving historical records but also left behind numerous manuscripts, inscriptions and coins. It significantly impacted the development of Bengal's society and culture. This article will discuss the importance of Persian in Bangladesh's history and the significance of writing new historical narratives.

Keywords: *Bangladesh, Persian, history, medieval period, subcontinent.*

Introduction

Since the dawn of history, Iran and Bengal have come into contact with each other. As a result, Bengal developed not only commercial ties with the Middle East

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and Iran but also cultural relations. Along with Iranian merchants and trade goods, soldiers, engineers, artisans, Sufis, dervishes and artists also arrived in Bengal. Such interactions gradually extended to the royal court, society and the art and literature [6:174].

The late writer Syed Abul Maksud, in his book *Sir Philip Hartog: The First Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University*, wrote, *Hartog believed that to conduct objective research on the history, heritage, and culture of East Bengal, proficiency in Arabic and Persian was essential. This is because all documents from the Muslim era were written in Arabic and Persian. Deciphering and analyzing these texts requires expertise in these languages, just as studying Islamic theology and history requires proficiency in Arabic* 12:73].

Hartog's writings make it clear that there is a need for Persian studies. The spread and use of Persian in Bengal began with the conquest of Bengal in 1204. Subsequently, during the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal periods, Persians gained significant influence in the region. It was used in administrative, political, economic, literary and cultural spheres. As a result, the history and heritage of the Indian subcontinent, now Bangladesh, were recorded in Persian. The books written in Persian during that time are the primary sources for uncovering the history of the country. Therefore, understanding Persian and conducting research in this language is crucial for exploring these unknown aspects of history. Through this research article, we aim to highlight the importance of Persian in uncovering Bangladesh's past history.

Research Objectives and Background

The practice of Persian in the Indian subcontinent has a long history. Academic study, teaching and research in Persian began in the Indian subcontinent, now Bangladesh, during the British era, particularly after the establishment of Dhaka University in 1921. Since then, numerous research articles on Persian language and literature have been published. Most of these research articles focus on the influence and position of Persian language and literature on Bengali language and literature, as well as similarities between Iranian and Bangladeshi poets and their literary works and Sufism, etc. Research articles on the importance and relevance of Persian in Bangladesh include:

1. Tanjina Binte Nur, Teaching and Learning Persian in Bangladesh: Relevance and Applicability, Sankalp Research Journal (SRJ), Volume: 3, Published by Sankalp Publishing—A Unit of SEDF, January–June, 2023.

2. Mahadi Hassan, Tanjina Binte Nur, (The Relevance of the Study of Persian in Bangladesh), Chapter of Book: Department of Persian of the University of Dhaka and Persian Studies in Bangladesh (1st Edition, Publisher: Department of Persian Language and Literature, Dhaka University, Dhaka, June 2022).

Apart from this, various writers and researchers have emphasized the importance of Persian documents, manuscripts, inscriptions and coins in uncovering the history and heritage of Bangladesh in their writings and speeches at seminars and conferences. However, large-scale research on these topics has not been conducted, and what has been done is insufficient compared to our needs. This is why the relevance of teaching Persian in Bangladesh is often debated and criticized. The primary goal of this research is to explain and present why Persian should still be studied in Bangladesh, even if on a limited scale.

In addition to discussing other topics, this research delves deeply into previously overlooked or less emphasized areas, particularly the role of Persian documents, manuscripts, inscriptions and coins in uncovering history. It also examines historical texts such as *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Riyaz-us-Salatin*. Translating more such historical texts could reveal further aspects of the history and bring new historical narratives to light. By conducting thorough research, exploration and translation of these materials, many unknown aspects of history can be uncovered.

Historical Context of the Persian Language

The Persian language originated in Iran, but it was not confined to Iran alone. With the spread of Islam, the Persian language expanded to Central Asia, South Asia and Anatolia. Particularly during the Mughal Empire, Persian became the administrative and cultural language of the Indian subcontinent. Bangladesh, which was then known as Bengal, was also influenced by this.

From a linguistic perspective, Persian is part of the Indo-European language family. Among the language families of the world, the Indo-European family is the largest 17:2].

The Persian or Persian-speaking ethnic group is primarily part of the ‘Aryan’ or ‘Arya’ ethnic group 10:15].

About two-thirds of Iran’s current population are of Aryan descent. The interaction between the indigenous people and the migrated Aryans led to the emergence of a new language and culture. This new language became known as Persian. The

Persian language developed in three stages: Old Persian (Farsi Bastan), Middle Persian (Farsi Miyane or Pahlavi), and Modern Persian 10:17].

The Arrival and Spread of Persian in Bengal

*Persian was the official language of Bengal for over six hundred years (1203–1837) 1:16]. The Persian language arrived in Bengal during the Muslim rule. After the conquest of Bengal by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1204, Muslim rule began in Bengal. From this time, Persian became the administrative and cultural language of Bengal. Muslim rulers used Persian for administrative purposes, as it was the *lingua franca* of the Islamic world. Persian was not only used in administrative affairs but also in literature, education and religious contexts.*

Muslim rule in Bengal was established in 1201–03 with the conquest of Bengal by Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji. From the beginning of Muslim rule until its end, Persian was the language of the offices and courts. It is assumed that when Bakhtiyar Khilji established the city of Rangpur, the madrasas he founded there must have taught Persian, and these institutions became centers for the practice and spread of Persian 1:17–18].

Persians also made significant contributions to Bengal's literary heritage. During the medieval period, many Bengali poets and writers composed literature in Persian. Persian poetry, stories and historical texts became an integral part of Bengal's cultural history.

The zenith of Persian literature in Bengal was achieved during the reign of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1389–1409). *This period is considered the golden age of Persian literature in Bengal. The Sultan was a patron of Persian poets and writers, and he himself was a Persian poet. He was particularly fond of the great Persian poet Hafez Shirazi (1315–1389). He invited Hafez to Bengal by sending him a Persian verse and requesting him to compose a ghazal in the same meter. Unable to come himself, Hafez sent a self-composed ghazal as a gift to the Sultan [15:59].*

Influence of Persian on Bengali Language and Literature

Until the introduction of English education by the East India Company in 1835, Persian was the official language of the subcontinent during all phases of Muslim rule. For 634 years, Persian, as the state language, profoundly influenced Indian art, literature and culture. During the Mughal period, Indian education, culture, language, literature, knowledge and science were influenced by Persian. Additionally, the language of the common people was also influenced by Persian. With the arrival of

Muslims, the Bengali language was enriched by the vast vocabulary of Arabic and Persian 11:55].

Persian was not limited to administrative and historical records in Bengal; it also deeply influenced Bengali culture and literature. During the medieval period, Muslim rulers in Bengal patronized the Persian language and culture, leading to a unique fusion of local and Persian cultures. Bengali poets and writers were inspired by the Persian language and literature. The extensive use of Persian words in Bengali literature is a testament to this influence. The development of the Bengali language was also shaped by Persian. Many medieval Bengali poems and literary works incorporated Persian words. The works of Abdul Hakim, Syed Sultan and Mir Mosharraf Hossein bear the imprint of Persian vocabulary and ideas. The influence of Persian is not limited to the use of Persian words in Bengali but also extends to grammatical aspects such as suffixes, prefixes, sentence structure and gender.

Persian literature also significantly contributed to Bengal's literary tradition. During the medieval period, many Bengali poets and writers composed literature in Persian. The influence of Persian literature is also evident in Bengali literature, particularly in Bengali poetry and prose, where Persian words and sentence structures are frequently used. The literary influence of Persian in Bengal is vast. Persian poetry, ghazals and Sufi literature deeply influenced Bengal's Muslim society. Shah Muhammad Sagir, a prominent medieval Bengali poet, extensively used Persian words and literary styles in his work *Yusuf-Zulekha*. Additionally, Persian Sufi literature played a significant role in Bengal's Bhakti and Sufi movements.

At the beginning of the 13th century, the Turks conquered Bengal, but it took nearly a hundred years for Muslim rule to spread across the entire region. From this time, under the patronage of the Pathan Sultans of Gaud and their courtiers, Bengali language and literature saw significant progress. With the patronage of Persian-speaking rulers, Persian language and literature began to flourish in this region, and Bengali language and literature were directly and indirectly influenced by Persian. When the Turkish-Afghan conquerors began to settle permanently in Bengal, their interaction with the local Bengalis led to the influence of Turkish and Mongol culture in the region. This cultural evolution lasted for seven hundred years, resulting in Muslim poets and writers in Bengal composing original Bengali literature alongside translating numerous Persian works on Islamic themes. Through these translations, countless Persian words entered the Bengali language. Similarly, many Persian literary forms became prevalent in Bengali literature. Examples include *Marsiya* literature, heroic tales and narratives. Muslim poets and writers replaced the earlier *Mangalkavya* tradition of praising Hindu deities with Muslim practices, particularly

Iranian traditions of Hamd (praise of God) and Naat (praise of the Prophet). In this context, when Daulat Qazi (1600–1638) or Alaol (1607–1680) composed poetry based on Hindu princes, they also began their works with Hamd and Naat. The literature of Persian-influenced Muslim writers is primarily known as ‘romantic literature.’ In ‘romantic literature,’ the use of Arabic and Persian words is prominent when describing Muslim courts, Islamic ideals, the Quran and Sunnah, or Muslim Sufis and scholars 15:35].

Notable Historical Texts of the Medieval Period

Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi

Written by Ziauddin Barani, this text provides significant information about the history of Bengal.

Ziauddin Barani composed *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* in Persian in 1357 CE, chronicling the history of all the sultans of Delhi up to Firoz Shah Tughlaq. The text covers the history up to the sixth year of Firoz Shah Tughlaq’s reign. As a historical work, it not only describes the deeds of Indian kings, emperors and nobles but also discusses the regulations, laws, administrative matters, procedures and advisors of the contemporary government 10:244].

Riyaz-us-Salatin

Authored by Ghulam Hussain Salim, this book offers a detailed account of the Nawabi era in Bengal.

Riyaz-us-Salatin provides a comprehensive history of Muslim Bengal up to 1788 CE. Ghulam Hussain collected historical materials from various regions of Bengal, particularly Gauda and Pandua, and even gathered information from inscriptions. His work includes descriptions of Bengal’s geographical conditions, agricultural and industrial products, as well as insights into the lifestyles of the people involved in agriculture and industry 15:193).

Ain-i-Akbari

Written by Abul Fazl, this text contains information about the administrative and economic conditions of Bengal.

Abul Fazl Allami wrote *Ain-i-Akbari* in Persian. Among the Mughal emperors, Akbar was exceptionally talented. His full name was Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar (1542–1605). Abul Fazl (1551–1602), the historian and author of *Akbarnama*, was

Akbar's contemporary and served as his minister. *Ain-i-Akbari* is essentially a volume of Abul Fazl's *Akbarnama*. The first volume of *Akbarnama* describes the lineage of Timur, the reign of Babur and the Sur dynasty, and the history of others. The second volume provides a detailed account of Akbar's nearly 46-year reign. The third volume of *Ain-i-Akbari* contains various events and information related to Akbar's governance. These materials are invaluable for understanding the great Emperor Akbar. As a close associate of the emperor, Abul Fazl presented Akbar as he saw him, in a restrained and authentic manner, making *Ain-i-Akbari* one of the most authoritative and accepted works in Muslim historical literature [15:328].

Tabaqat-i-Nasiri

Written in Persian with a simple and unadulterated style, this text is linguistically pure. The author avoids excessive flattery and instead presents events in a straightforward manner. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* holds a special place in providing historical information about the early phase of Muslim rule in Bengal 3:265].

Authored by Minhaj-i-Siraj, this text includes an account of the conquest of Bengal.

This is a significant source for the history of the subcontinent and Bengal, containing historical materials from the Turkic conquest up to 1259 CE. Minhaj-i-Siraj, an official of the Mamluk Sultan Nasiruddin, composed this work in Persian while residing in Delhi and dedicated it to the reigning Sultan 10:243].

Baharistan-i-Ghaibi

The primary author of this historical text is Mirza Nathan, also known as Ala-ud-Din Isfahani. During Jahangir's reign, Mirza Nathan actively participated in all expeditions and wars in Bengal and Assam, as well as suppressing rebellions against Shah Jahan in Bengal. He accompanied his father, the admiral of the royal navy, to Bengal in 1608 CE with Subahdar Islam Khan Chishti. Mirza Nathan spent his military life in Bengal with his father and recorded his personal observations of many events.

This historical text contains military and administrative accounts of Subah Bengal. The book, divided into four volumes, was discovered by Sir Jadunath Sarkar and is considered a highly valuable source for reconstructing Bengal's history.

This text provides descriptions of how Ramadan, Eid-ul-Fitr, and Eid-ul-Adha were celebrated in the Muslim society of Bengal at that time. Mirza Nathan's work also hints at the joyous celebrations of Muslims upon sighting the new moon for Eid-

ul-Fitr. Additionally, it describes the festivities held in Bengal following the birth of a child 15:203].

Siyar-ul-Mutakherin

Siyar-ul-Mutakherin is a vast historical text authored by Sayyid Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai. Compiled in the 18th century, it is a notable historical work.

Siyar-ul-Mutakherin serves as a massive repository of contemporary information. It captures the decline of the Mughal Empire in its entirety. Beyond politics, the text holds special value as a source for understanding the social and cultural history of Bengal during that period 15:198]. In addition to these Persian texts, there are numerous other works that serve as primary sources for understanding the medieval history of Bengal. These texts provide invaluable materials for researchers studying various aspects of Bengal's history.

Administrative Documents and Records

The importance of Persian-language documents in uncovering the history of Bangladesh is immense. During the medieval period, the primary sources of information about Bengal's history were various historical texts, administrative records, letters and deeds written in Persian. These documents contain detailed information about Bengal's political history, social conditions, economic systems and cultural environment. Many significant records of Bangladesh's history were written in Persian. These documents provide crucial information about the social, economic and political history of Bangladesh. For example, various administrative records from the Mughal era, land survey records and descriptions of historical events were written in Persian. These documents play an extremely important role in historical research.

After the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206, Persian became the administrative language of the Indian subcontinent. In the Bengal region, rulers adopted Persian as the language of governance, which continued until the Mughal era. Records of zamindars (landlords), contracts, revenue-related documents and court rulings were primarily written in Persian. One of the most important sources of Bangladesh's history is the revenue-related document from Akbar's reign, the *Ain-i-Akbari*, which provides extensive information about the administrative, political, economic and social systems of the Mughal era. Additionally, revenue-related documents from the time of Murshid Quli Khan were written in Persian, which are essential for understanding Bengal's economic history. During the Delhi

Sultanate and Mughal rule, Persian was the official language, which is why revenue records, court orders and administrative reports of Subah Bengal (Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa) were composed in Persian.

Use in Education and Religious Fields

In his book on the history of Persian literature in Bangladesh, Dr. Muhammad Abdullah writes: *In Bengal, apart from government madrasas, there were many private religious educational institutions. Arabic and Persian were taught in these institutions. Talented individuals from these religious institutions composed religious literature in Arabic, Persian and Urdu over the centuries, and some may have also served this literature. Although their religious works do not directly fall into the category of literature in a comprehensive sense, there is no doubt that they played a role in keeping the practice of Persian and Urdu alive* [1:62].

During the medieval period, Persian was used as a medium of instruction in Bengal. In the Muslim education system, Persian was an essential part. In madrasas, religious and philosophical texts were taught in Persian. Additionally, Persian was used as a medium for Islamic law (Fiqh) and religious education. As a result, Persian became widely prevalent in Bengal's Muslim society.

Persian was also included in the madrasa curriculum. In the Indian subcontinent, famous madrasas such as Delhi's Madrasa, Saharanpur, Kolkata Alia Madrasa, Lucknow, Rampur State, Muradabad, Vellore's Al-Jamiatul Bakiatus Salihat University, Deoband Madrasa, Sylhet Alia Madrasa, Hathazari Qawmi Madrasa and all Alia and Qawmi madrasas across the country included Persian language and literature in their syllabus. Even today, it is included in a limited capacity [15:388]. This tradition continued for a long time.

From the beginning, the Persian language and famous poetic works written in Persian were included in the curriculum of these madrasas. Even today, in the lower classes of these madrasas, the Persian didactic poetry and moral stories written in Persian are taught. Particularly, Sheikh Saadi's Gulistan, Bustan, Attar's Pandnameh, and Jalaluddin Rumi's Masnavi are still part of the curriculum. Thousands of scholars who have graduated from these madrasas still quote eloquent Persian verses and instructive Persian stories in their daily religious discussions in mosques, madrasas, and various gatherings [10:241].

Importance and Role of Manuscripts, Inscriptions and Coins

Manuscript

Humans have an endless curiosity about ancient and past history. Therefore, to understand history, people engage in various types of research and investigations. To uncover the history of the past, people conduct research centered around various subjects. One of the most significant approaches is deciphering ancient handwritten manuscripts to learn about history. Before the invention of the printing press, handwritten manuscripts were the primary means of knowledge dissemination. These manuscripts contain valuable elements of past knowledge, science, literature, culture, history and heritage.

The term *manuscript* is used as a synonym for *puthi* (ancient texts). *According to the natural order, it is observed that most objects acquire a grayish hue over time. In ancient times, materials such as animal hides, birch bark, palm leaves and tree bark were used as writing materials. It is believed that these materials had to be dried to make them suitable for writing, giving them a tawny appearance. Over time, these materials would turn completely gray. Perhaps later, handmade paper was also dyed gray to imitate these ancient gray-colored books. Since ancient texts were written on such gray-colored materials, they are called manuscripts*8:59].

Before the invention of the printing press, people recorded history by hand. Since Persian was the official language of the Indian subcontinent during the medieval period, and used in all administrative and official contexts, much of the unknown history of this region is preserved in Persian manuscripts. Therefore, by deciphering manuscripts written in Persian, we can enrich our understanding of social, cultural, linguistic, political, economic and literary history. Currently, Persian manuscripts are preserved in places such as the central libraries of Dhaka University and Chittagong University, the library of Dhaka Alia Madrasa, the National Museum of Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Asiatic Society, and the Varendra Research Museum, as well as other locations within and outside the country. These manuscripts need to be researched and deciphered to uncover unknown history.

From 1204 to 1837 AD, Persian was the official language of this region. Therefore, the majority of manuscripts in the Indian subcontinent were written in Persian. Many of these manuscripts have been lost over time. However, numerous Persian manuscripts are still preserved in libraries across Bangladesh. These manuscripts contain valuable records of the knowledge and science of ancient Bengal. Therefore, it is necessary to take both government and private initiatives to recover and preserve these valuable and rare manuscripts. Millions of Persian manuscripts are preserved in various government and private libraries across India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, many of which have not yet been published. Although some Persian books have been translated into Bengali through English, these translations are not authentic, as they have been influenced by English interpretations

and have lost their original essence. Therefore, it is now imperative to edit and translate these works directly from the original Persian [11:78].

Renowned Bangladeshi historian Dr. Abdul Karim, in his book *History of Bengal: Sultanate Period*, wrote the following about inscriptions and coins: *Many inscriptions and coins issued by the Muslim sultans of Bangladesh have been discovered. As historical sources, the evidence provided by inscriptions and coins is of the highest value, because they are not only contemporary but were also engraved under the direct supervision of the sultan himself or his high-ranking officials. Most inscriptions and coins were engraved in the Arabic language, though there is no scarcity of inscriptions and coins engraved in the Persian language as well* [9:56].

Inscription

During the Mughal era, it was common to write various edicts on stone or copper plates. These inscriptions serve as important tools for determining the dates of historical events during the Mughal period.

Inscriptions are writings carved on stones attached to various structures. In Persian, inscriptions generally refer to carved writings on stone, seals, or metal objects. Since ancient times, inscriptions have been used to record human speech, directions, depictions of humans and animals and commemorations of kings' victories. Over time, the scope of inscriptions expanded. They were used to record royal decrees, religious edicts, biographies, tombstone epitaphs and records of development works and conquests. This practice continues to the present day [4:395–396].

The Bengal region has a long and rich history and heritage. The conquest of Bengal by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad Bin Bakhtiyar Khilji marked the spread of Islamic culture and civilization in this region. During this period, Persian became the language of the court, administration, literature and culture. As a result, Persian was also used in inscriptions of that time.

During the medieval period of Muslim rule, a large number of Persian inscriptions were created in this region. Over time, archaeological evidence of these inscriptions has been found in various parts of Bengal. Analysis of these inscriptions shows that early medieval inscriptions were in Arabic or a mix of Arabic and Persian, while later inscriptions included Persian and a mix of Persian and Bengali. However, the use of Persian script is also observed in Bengali words in these inscriptions. Currently, various religious structures, tombs and development project plaques from the medieval period are being discovered. These inscriptions provide information about mosques, madrasas, public services, development works and the individuals associated with these activities. The inscriptions in Persian often feature poetic

rhythms, Persian calligraphy, and the use of numerology. Historical records indicate that skilled artisans from Persia and Arabia were brought in to create these beautiful and artistic inscriptions. Through the discovery, research and deciphering of these ancient inscriptions, it is possible to rewrite much of the lost history of this region [4:393].

In the modern world, the importance of inscriptions in uncovering the unknown history of ancient civilizations and cultures is immense, and Persian inscriptions are no exception. To understand the history of medieval Bengal, particularly during the Muslim rule of the Sultanate and Mughal periods, it is essential to decipher Persian inscriptions. This will enrich the history of present-day Bangladesh.

The importance of Persian inscriptions as markers of history and heritage in the Bengal region is immense. The deeper a nation's historical roots, the more it is recognized as a bearer of civilization. Therefore, it is essential to place greater emphasis on uncovering ancient information from written and carved inscriptions to build a rich national identity [4:419].

Coins

Coins are an extremely important source for reconstructing the history of medieval India. Mughal coins, on the one hand, reflect the monetary policies of that era, and on the other hand, they provide insights into metal craftsmanship. Coins can serve as valuable tools for understanding the economic and social conditions of any period. Additionally, they are an important source for determining the dates of significant events.

Generally, a coin refers to a metallic object used as a medium of exchange. People use coins or money to buy and sell various goods and items. However, coins are not just a medium of exchange; they are also intertwined with much unknown history. Historical records show that the use of coins in the subcontinent dates back to ancient times. This tradition and trend continued even during the medieval period of Muslim rule.

During the Muslim or Sultanate period, the issuance of coins in the ruler's name and the mention of their name in the Khutba (Friday sermon) were considered symbols of state sovereignty. Therefore, rulers issued coins to commemorate their ascension to power, declaration of independence, or victories. In 1205 AD, to commemorate the conquest of Gaud, the general Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji issued coins in the name of Sultan Muhammad bin Sam. This was the first Muslim coin issued in Bengal [4:426].

Since the Muslim rule began in this region after the conquest of Bengal in 1203/1204 AD, and Islamic civilization and culture spread, Persian was used in all

administrative, literary, and economic spheres. As a result, coins were also inscribed in Persian. The Mughal Empire was established in 1526 AD, and Emperor Akbar ascended the throne in 1556 AD. As part of his various reforms, he modernized the coinage system.

He introduced the practice of inscribing coins in Persian script instead of Arabic in the Bengal region [4:422].

According to Professor Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, after written records or inscriptions, coins hold the most important place as historical sources. Coins are not just a medium of exchange; they are also an important historical artifact. Ancient coins are an important source of history. Contemporary coins hold immense significance in historical research. Coins provide a comprehensive picture of the political, social, economic, religious and cultural life of a ruling period. As a historical source, coins not only confirm information obtained from other sources but also aid in their analysis. On the other hand, when written or relevant sources are insufficient for exploring the history of a particular period or subject, coins serve as a guiding light. The comprehensive analysis of coins in reconstructing past societies and civilizations and understanding the economic systems of states provides new information that can expand the scope of historical discourse. At the same time, it helps protect history from biased interpretations. The widespread use of coins and the decentralization of mints provide tools for reconstructing the economic history of countries and empires. The presence of dates on coins allows us to understand the reign of a ruler and the sequence of empires. Although numismatics is a small branch of archaeology, it is considered a reliable source for the history of ancient cities, towns, and empires [4:421].

Therefore, the medieval period of Muslim rule, particularly the Sultanate and Mughal eras, is no exception. Much known and unknown history is recorded in the coins of this period.

The Practice of Persian during the British East India Company Era

On June 23, 1757, the sun of Bengal's independence set with the Battle of Plassey. However, the practice of Persian continued for a long time afterward.

The defeat of Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 marked the beginning of British rule in Bengal. For the first century of British rule, Persian remained the dominant language. In 1765, Ihtesamuddin traveled with Captain Archibald Swinton and documented his experiences in Persian in his book *Shigurf Namah-i-Vilayat*. Other notable Persian works from this period include *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin* (1783) by Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai, *Riyaz-us-Salatin* (1787) by

Ghulam Hussain Salim and *Tarikh-e-Bangala* (1763) by Munshi Salimullah. Recognizing the importance of Persian in society, the British government continued to grant it the status of the official language for 80 years (1757–1837) even after establishing their dominance in the region [1:63].

In Bangladesh and the Indian subcontinent, Persian was used as the language of religious institutions during both the British East India Company era and the British colonial period. Similar to the Muslim rule, during British rule, madrasas and Arabic-Persian educational institutions remained one of the primary sources of Persian learning in Bengal [1:61].

The Calcutta Madrasa was established in 1780. In 1843, the Company declared Persian as the language of religious and cultural heritage. However, earlier, on November 20, 1837, through a decree, the use of Persian in offices and courts across India was discontinued from December 1 of that year [10:81].

Until then, many official documents and records during the British era were written in Persian. Even the early agreements of the East India Company were in Persian. After the Battle of Plassey in 1757, Persian retained its significance in the early years of British rule. Therefore, translating and interpreting Persian documents from this period is essential for historical research.

After the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, the British realized that if they wanted to stay and rule India, they needed to act with greater prudence and foresight. This led to successful diplomacy with Muslims in the 1870s. In 1870, to address Muslim opposition to the new education policy, the government reintroduced Arabic and Persian education alongside English in official educational institutions [10:80].

Conclusion

The importance of the Persian language in uncovering Bangladesh's history is immense. During the medieval period, Persian played a significant role in Bengal's political, administrative, cultural, and religious spheres. Documents, records, manuscripts, inscriptions and coins written in Persian have enriched our understanding of various aspects of Bengal's history. Even today, the influence of Persian can be observed in the Bengali language and culture, further highlighting its historical significance. To gain a complete picture of Bangladesh's history, the importance of Persian cannot be overlooked. Proficiency in Persian and research in this field will enrich our historical knowledge and help us recover lost information. Therefore, the practice and study of Persian in Bangladesh should be encouraged.

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**Պարսկերենի կարևորությունը Բանգլադեշի պատմության
ուսումնասիրության մեջ. պատմական և մշակութային վերլուծություն**

Հիմնաբառեր - Բանգլադեշ, պարսկերեն, պատմություն, միջնադար

Շոջան Փարբեզ

Ամփոփում

Բանգլադեշը հարավասիական երկիր է, որն ունի հարուստ և բազմաշերտ պատմություն: Հազարամյակների ընթացքում ձևավորված նրա պատմությունը սերտորեն միահյուսված է տարբեր լեզուների, մշակույթների և ավանդույթների հետ: Միջնադարում, հատկապես մուսուլմանական տիրապետության շրջանում (1206–1857 թթ.), պարսկերենը հանդես էր գալիս որպես վարչական և գրական լեզու: Այն խորապես արմատավորվել է Հնդկական ենթամայրցամաքի լեզվական, գրական, մշակութային և պատմական ժառանգության մեջ: Այս ժամանակաշրջանում Բենգալիայի պատմության, քաղաքականության, մշակույթի և տնտեսության բազմաթիվ կարևոր ասպեկտներ արձանագրվել են պարսկերենով: Հետևաբար, պարսկերենի իմացությունն ու ուսումնասիրությունը կարևոր նշանակություն ունեն Բանգլադեշի պատմությունը համակողմանի բացահայտելու և հետազոտելու համար: Այս պատմության տարբեր շերտերն ու չափումներն ուսումնասիրելիս անհրաժեշտ է հաշվի առնել տարբեր լեզուների և մշակույթների ներդրումը, որոնց շարքում պարսկերենը առանձնահատուկ կարևորություն ունի: Միջնադարում պարսիկները մեծ ազդեցություն են ունեցել Բենգալիայի քաղաքական, մշակութային և վարչական ոլորտների վրա: Պարսկերենը ոչ միայն ծառայել է որպես պատմական տեղեկությունների արձանագրման և պահպանման միջոց, այլև մեզ է փոխանցել բազմաթիվ ձեռագրեր, արձանագրություններ և դրամագիտական նյութեր: Այն էական ազդեցություն է ունեցել Բենգալիայի հասարակության և մշակույթի զարգացման վրա: Սույն հոդվածում քննարկվում է պարսկերենի կարևորությունը Բանգլադեշի պատմության ուսումնասիրության մեջ, ինչպես նաև պատմական նոր պատումներ ձևակերպելու նշանակությունը: