The conquest of Bengal by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad Baktiyar Khalji in 1200 AD was a significant event in the history of Medieval India. The Ulemas, Pir-fakir, Gazi-shahid, and Murshid have come to Bengal immediately after the domination of Islam in Bengal. Being coming West and North India, Sufi and Shia community of Iran also came to Bengal for their security and safety of culture in Bengal. Thus, Bengal became the centre of Indo-Islamic culture. In course of time, both the Hindu and the Muslim Community came to contact with each other. In spite of two different cultures in Bengal both they could work secularly to give a beautiful creations of the Bengali society, a good harmony of the two different religious believes - the Hindus and the Muslims which may be called as an inter communal literature as inter communal culture integration of the Muslims and the Hindus in Medieval Bengal. It is known as composite form of culture.

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those of the autochthones, is indisputable fact. But for its perpetuation here, in the subsequent stages Islam relied more on its functionaries from amongst the members who came from the erstwhile society than on the non Bengali ruling elite or the theologians. One consequence, deposited Islam survival in Bengal and of its dependence on the local converts is that Islam assumed some local characteristics which would distinguish it from its philogenetic roots. If not in theology but the change is undeniably noticeable in the local Islamic culture, which perhaps would partly explain why a composite culture could involved in Bengali literature.

The overwhelming influence of the generative forces which have originated from the functional structural semiotics, affected the Hindus in such as the Muslims. So much so that when each was prepared to accept the other within a perimeter of culture tolerance, a homogenisation process too had started to operate without interruption towards mutual integration in a composite cultural system. Bengali is the language, had emerged in the process as the premier symbol of cultural homogeneity.

Theological literature – Chaitanya Bhagabat or Chaitanya- Mangal, Mangal Kavyas, Vaisnav Kavyas, romantic literature(vidyasundar) kavyas, translations and some Muslim writings are the major literary prop of Medieval Bengal. The theme, language and social concern address suitability to the demands of our proposition.

The Bengali literature, during Medieval Bengal under revived was profoundly influenced by the Neo- Vaishnava Movement initiated by Chaitanya (1486-1533) whose life and doctrine have been reflected on Bengali society. In the late 15th and the early 16th century, Vaishnava Kavyas, composed by Hindu poets, and claimed to have proceeded only the basis of revelation from the local deities with love of human character. One of them was composed by Brindavan Das, a classmate of Chaitanya in Bengali is Chaitanya-Mangala. It is certainly the most authentic and perhaps the most popular biography of the great religious leader. It has two historical importances; firstly, though the author regarded Chaitanya as an incarnation of God, he presents Chaitanya as a human being, rather than divine being. Secondly, it gives us interesting details of the social life in Bengal at that time. There are ‘lyrical tablets’ in the narrative of Brindavan Das and “his sincere devotion and enthusiastic admiration have often imparted a glad to his diction which rescues his expression of sectarian dogma from triviality”. Another important biography is the Chaitanya-Charitamrita of Krishnadas Kaviraj. He looked upon Chaitanya not as an incarnation of Krishna alone, but of Krishna and Radha, in the same person and his treatment of the life of master who from this viewpoint. Here we can find a composition of intermingle relations between Hindu and the Muslims. A classical example is furnished by his account of the quarrel between Chaitanya and the Muslim Qazi of Navadwip who forbade the singing Kirtana in public. But ultimately, being defeated in the debate Qazi was charmed by the incarnation of Chaitanya and follows him. Chaitanya Charitamrita is regarded by many as the most important work in Vaishnava literature. It is “as a biography and as a work of thought it is a landmark in new Indian literature”. Among other biography of Chaitanya are Chaitanya-Mangal of Jayandas and Gauranga Vijoy of Chudamaindas. Another creation of Vaishnava Kavyas in Bengali literature deals almost exclusively with Parakitya Prem (love outside wed lock) of Radha and Krishna.

In the late 14th and early 15th century, Mangal Kavyas, were composed only by the Hindu poets, and claimed to have proceeded on the basis of revelations from the local deities, the reference to communities other than the Hindus was hostile. It consists of a series of poetical works describing the glories of many popular gods and goddesses, such as Manasas (Snake- goddess), Chandi (a form of Durga), Dharma-Thakur, Shiva and others. In the 14th century, Bijoygupta, Biprodas Pipilai, Narayande, and Ketakadas Kshemananda were the writers of full length literary texts called Manasa Mangal, introduced in their compositions, stories of interaction with the iconoclasts as metathesis. But this posture of hostility appears to have been replaced by author in the 16th century that was comparatively tolerant. Understanding, realism some authors of Mangal Kavyas, namely Manikdutta, Mukundaram Chakrabarty, Madhab Acharya and Ketakadas Kshemananda took the entire Bengali society into their folds. The Muslims, as a community featured of their stories, which is fast they did, even more than it was necessary for the development of the story. Moreover, in their hands Bengali language underwent momentous changes, unhesitant use of Arabic and Persian words, appropriately reduced to vocal harmony, was an instance of the receptivity of the society, gradually it also became reformative and finally it partially smoothened the way towards inter-communal understanding.

The apocalyptic literatures of the Hindus, in the 17th century, lock inter-community questions again. Firstly, Bijoy Gupta and then Mukundaram Chakraborty admitted the begin disposition of some Muslim rulers and accepted the Muslims as an important and integral element in the Bengali society. The Kalaketu became a King through the favour of the Goddess Chandi. The composition of the Chandi Mangal Kavyas may be traced to Manik Dutta, Dvija
Madhab and Kabikan Kukundaram Chakraborty. In favour of Debi Chandi Kalaketu founded a new city in Gujrut. In his Chandi Mangal Kabi Kankan described the Muslim settlement in Kalaketu’s newly city. He was a keen observer of the Muslim social formation and described them in details with remarkable authencity.  

Kalinga nagar chhari praja laya ghar-bari/ nanajati birer nagar |
Birer piai pan basila musalman/ paschim dik dila tare][
Aise chhariya taji-sayed mogul kaji/ khirate bir dila badi/ 
Purer paschim pati balaia Hassan hati/ ekatra sabar ghar- badi]

[Free Translation: Leaving the city of Kalinga the citizens rushed with their movables and immovable into the city of the Hero. Having revised the pan leaf (an indication of hospitality) from the ruler the Muslims settled down in the western part of the city which was given to them. Mounting their horses the sayads, Mughals and Qazis came to the city where houses were given to them as gifts. In the western side, came to be known as Hasanhati, the Muslim live together]

Krishnaram Das introduced in the Raya-Mangala, 11 which glorifies Dakshina Ray, the god of tiger, the story of a quarrel between a Hindu Dakshina Ray and a Muslim Barakhan Gazi, his purpose however, became clear as soon as a syncretistic deity appeared on the scene with on half as Hindu Narayana and the other half in the Payagambara (Muslim Divinity) to effect a compromise between the warring personalities. Apocalypses, revelations in dreams and millenarianism, all of which were the products of acute social concern in Bengal had at this stage transcended religious and community closets.

Several texts of Kalika- Mangal glorifying the Goddess Kali, were written during the Medieval Bengal. The main theme is the secrete love of princess vidya and sundar and Goddess Kali appears in these texts at the very and when the life of Sundar, condemned to death is saved by her intersession. The stories of the exploits of different deities, whose final objection was beneficiation, were sung to rouse the community of passion in Bengal for survival. Krishnaram Das’s Sitala was as angrier with the apostate Madandas as with the different Muslim Qazis, and both of them were forced to submission in the larger interest of the society. For, their ignoble offences would cause the entire community of offensive denizens to suffer from a dreadful disease. Poet Konk confessed to have had revelations from the Muslim saint, Satyapir and in his Vidya Sundar Kavya he also eulogised Satyapir instead of Kali, as was wont for the fast that his hero. But for the blessings of Satyapir could not have won the heroine.

In the late fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century many great epic were translated into Bengali. Reference may be made such as the Ramayana by Krittivasa, the Mahabharata by Kavindra Parameswara, the court poet of Paragal Khan, the Governor of Chitangong during the reign of Hussain Shah (1493-1519). Similarly, Nusrat Khan, alias Chhuti Khan, son of Pargal Khan, had the Asvamedha-Parva of Jaminis Mahabbharta translated by his court – poet Srikara Nandi. 12 But the best and the most well –known translation of the Mahabharata is the one attributed to Kasiram Das(Debi) which is still the most popular Bengali version. The fact is that during the medieval Bengal in the reign of Islamic ruler both the Hindu and the Muslim poets had arrested their talent forgetting their communal rivalry and their purpose is already reflected as composite culture in society.

Many Muslim poets of the sixteenth and seventieth centuries after initial hesitation in the preceding centuries, the response framed was reciprocal to the more talented amongst them religious prejudice was not the main concern in their literary preoccupation. They opted out to be secular in trying to introduce secular in their composition. Further, when they tried to contribute to religious literature including the Vaisnava Padas their principle motivation was to articulate Bengali spiritual passion, instead of the liturgical needs of one community or the others. In the fifteenth century there was no dearth of reliable literary outputs, though the Muslim poets generally addressed themselves to the need of their community. Shah Muhammad Sagir, Jainuddin and Mojamle treatment of purely Muslim religious theme made them same what sect oral. 13 But in the sixteenth century experience was different; Shah Birid Khan, Donagaji, Shaikh Faizullah, Daulat Qazi, Muhammad Kabir etc. initiated a new tradition. 14 Under the influence of Sufism, which taught them to be liberal in religious matters, and partly realising the necessity of cultural accommodation with the Hindus they used allegorical themes bordering on romanticism in addition to purely secular romantic, theme in their Vidya Sundar, Layala Majnu and Madhumalati groups of stories. So, a literary tradition was gradually introduced and brought to a position of stability. We may refer the feeling of the Sufis as follows-

“If I worship Thee from fear to hell, burn me in it; if I worship Thee from hope or Paradise exclude me from it, if I worship Thee for Thy own sake, withhold not from me Thy eternal beauty”.

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Realizing the Bhagabat Love, the Sufi poet Yahya Muaadha says-

‘About God’s love I Hover,
While I have breath
To be His perfect lover
Until my death’.

Saiyad Sultan was one of the greatest poets of medieval period. The sixteenth century Muslim society of Chattagram who reflected on their composition. In his Nabihansh, Saiyad Sultan described about the inhabitants of the world. The seventeenth century Muslim poets, of whom Daulat Qazi and Saiyad Alwal were the most renowned, had advances the sixteenth century tradition by a few paces towards further secularization of literature. In their treatment of form and content unlike their predecessors, a rare degree of maturity, which had organized from their concern for a cultural integrity, lent to their compositions the quality of classics. Md. Daulat Qazi composed in verse the story namely, Lorchandrani or Satimayna (1638) with Hindi Characters the story was woven around a fable in which romance and classical tradition of fidelity and devotion of wife were brought to bear in full significance. But he passed away surviving his composition incomplete. The remaining part of his composition was completed by Saiyad Alwal in 1646. The Padmabati, the best work of Alwal was written at the instance of Magan Thakur who wanted to have a rendering of Jayayi’s Padumavati into Bengali verse. It was composed in 1650 A.D., is however, not a translation, but an abridge version embellished by additions of new episodes to make it more suitable in Bengali Literature. The episode of Padmavati is well-known that the conquest of Chitor by Alaud-din Khalji, who was infatuated by the ‘beauty of Padmini, queen of Ratan Sen. Alwal also rendered into Bengali verse from the Persian romance like Saiful-mulk Badiuj-jamaal(1658-70), Sapte (Hapta) Parkar(1660), Tohafa (1663-69), Sekandarnamah(1672).

Bengali culture consciousness of the Muslim poets further blossomed in another area which was over whelming Hindu i.e. in the composition of Vaishnava Padas and they applied their talent to this category of composition with success. In their language even being Muslalmans and having come from East Bengal, they refrained from using either their dialect or non-Sanskrit words which they considered far all practical purposes, as unsuitable and used the standard Bengali that was gradually emerging. The Muslims also wrote on religious themes such as the life of the prophet the tragedy of Hasan and Hussain at Karbala, the lives of the Ghazis, Nabis etc. Some Muslim poets also wrote on such subjects as the sadhana and yogo system of the Hindus and Vaishnava songs. One of them, Saiyad Sultan, who hailed some from Chittagong, in his Rasulvijaya included some Hindu gods and Avatars among the prophets.

During early phase of Muslim rule in Bengal the iconoclasm of some rulers and the government functionaries hurt the Hindu ego and engendered a sense of insecurity in Hindu mind in religion matters. Therefore, in the early Sultanate period the Hindu religious literature in Bengal viewed the Muslim community as alien and approached them with a sense of total rejection, but this attitude had noticeably changed as soon as the Muslim rulers realised at some stage, that the immigrants were the minorities and the bulk of the members of their faith came from different ethnic backgrounds, kingship system and Hindu cultural heritage, and that a policy of tolerance rather than antagonism would enable them to obtain a support structure which would be very stable. The other reasons for this pragmatic official policy were the ambition to assert independence in Bengal and perpetuate dynamic rule. The regenerative forces that were released by such exceptional adjustments eventually pushed both to seek to homogenise society in terms of the immutable aspects of its structure. A major act of success to remove parallelism, caused by religious diversities, in the Bengali society is the propagation of a common language for ally by which it makes easy for the purpose of composite culture in Medieval Bengal. Beside this, the distinctive characteristic of the Muslim poets mentioned above all as several others were their adoption of pure romantic love, not associated with any religious episode as the theme of their writings, which is almost absent in those of the Hindu poets.

In this way we may come to the conclusion that in spite of two different cultures in Bengal both they could work secularly to give a beautiful creations of the Bengali society, from this point of view, it was a good harmony of the two kings of Bengalese- the Hindus and the Muslims which may be called as an inter communal literature as inter communal cultural integration of the Muslims and the Hindus in Medieval Bengal. This was the best element of society that gave a great impetus to the Medieval Bengali literature for its development and growth in secular forms in composite culture. This was possible because the converted Muslims and the Hindus were not deprived of the privileged to pursue their faith but due to their interdependence for economic reasons and the identity which they...
have established amongst themselves in cultural terms a composite culture has developed. From this point of view we may quote Asit Kumar Bandopadhyaya’s observation that sense a person in spite of his Muslim originality, Nazrul Islam has indeed composed Shyama Samgeet. This is certainly an output of the tradition of composite culture of Medieval Bengal. Therefore, we may stress on the point that literature is the medium through which the social aspirations of the people could be articulated and that people in Medieval Bengal expressed the same feeling indicated that the cultural nexus had common components.

Notes And References:
3. From Nayanchand Fakir’s Balakanama,
   Dilse baiithe Ram-Rahim dilse malik Sai
   Dilse brindavana mokam manjil sthan vesta Pai
   Ghare baiithe choudda bhuban mujia alam tare
   Chadyukta meghji Indre baichhe dhare
6. From Chaitanya Charitamrita,
   a. Gram-Samandha Chakrobarty hayamore chacha
      Deno-samandhe haite haya gram-samandhi Sacha
      Nilambar Chakrabarty haya tomar nana
      Se Sammdhe hayo tume amar bhagina
   b. Shribaser bastra siys daraji yavana
      Rohhu tare nija rupa karailo darshan
7. From Chaitanya Bhagabata
   Ai kripa kara ya tomate rahe bhakati
   Anyer ki daya bhismudrati ya yavana
   Taharo pada padme lailo sharana
10. Bijay Gupta ,Manasamangal, (1481-85) :
    Tar bhaye bindusakal Palay
    Tarase jahar mathasi dekhe tulair pat
    Hate gale bandhi neya Kajir sakkh
    [Free translation: On account of his (Kaji’s) fear the Hindus too to flight. Whoever is found to have had a tulsi leaf on his head in tued hand and throat and is dragged before the Kaji.]
13. Majumder, R.C. op. cit, p.560
15. Sharif, Ahmad, op.cit, p.228.
   b. Ibid, p.339
16. Sharif, Ahmad, op.cit, p.229
   Chhari majahan sthane paila chadiveda]
   Samveda bramhata pathailo nairakar
   Tabe jadi vishnur hailo utpan.
Zazu veda tahare pathailo niranjan
Tritiya Mahesh jadi Srijan hailo
Rikveda tan sthane pathaiya dilo
Chatrurtha jadi se hari hailo srijan
Atharva veda tehane pathaila niranjan
Ai chadi vedat sakahya dichhe kartar
Abashya abashya Muhammad vyakta haibar

[Poet accepted Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara and Vishnu and Hari to be admitted separate personalities.]

17. Ibid, p.201
18. Extract from some Vaishnava padas-
   a. Lal Muhamud:
      Jamma niye musalmane bancchita haba sricharana
      Ami mane bhabina ekbar
      Abar lal Mahamude hare Krishna karichhe sar||
      [Not even one did I ever consider that being born as a Muslim I am deprived of the blessings of his sacred feet. Now Lal Muhamud has decided and for all to accept Hare- Krishna as his sole religious pre-occupation]
   b. Sayad Murtuja:
      Sayad Murtuja bhane Kanur Charane
      Nibedan shuna Hari
      Sakali chariya rahila tua paye
      Jiban maran bhari
      [Free Translation: Sayad Murtuja prays before kanu’s sacred feet; please listen to his prayers. Having renounced everything he remained devoted to you in his life and death].
   c. Akbar:-
      Jiu Jiu mera manchora gora
      Apahi nache apan rase bhora
      Oichhana Pahuke yahu balihari
      Saha Akbar tare prem- bhikari
      [Free Translation: Gora (Krishna) ,you steal my love for centuries and keep on dancing in your own pleasure. If I can reach there I would be blessed. So, Shah Akbar is begging you of your love.]
   d. Ratri pohaiya jaya kokil panc
      Nidrate paiyachhe bara sukha|
      Abhagini baliyare nishi gongailam
      Otha ebe dekhi chanda mukhal||
      Amar mathati khao otha ebe ghare jao
      Kakati kariya bali tore|
      Ratri protsa haile loke dekhibe tore
      Kalakini karibe amare||
      [Here poet expresses polite prayer of Radha to Krishna to go home to avoid her naughty/ confession]