

Book Review

British Policy on Education and Muslims in India- A Pioneer Work of Md. Shamim Firdous

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British Policy on Education and Muslims in India is a pioneer work of Author Dr. Shamim Firdous. This Book reflects the new facts with historical references on the British Policy on Education and Muslims in India. This Volume explores the historical object of the development of education in Bengal with special reference to Burdwan and Murshidabad. Prof. Ranjit Sen in his foreword of this Book says that, " *The Colonial education in India started with an element of display in it. The Muslims a robust community of the country, lagged fifty years behind the Hindus, the pre dominant community in India. This was partly due to institutional handicaps that imposed a brake upon the Muslims and partly due to the indifference of the colonial masters who did not take the Muslims into confidence.* "

The present Book unearths the whole story without showing any aspersions to any man, body and policy that must have been responsible for Muslim backwardness in India. The length and breadth of study which includes the position and situation of education in India in general and Bengal in particular just before and after the arrival of the British people needed the overall study and examination of the revenue proceedings and endowments granted by number of private owned and state owned agencies.

The author of this Book Md. Shamim Firdous excavates facts from government records and discovers statistics which show in unmistakable terms how and where the Muslims failed to catch up the Hindus in formal and institutional education in India. He does it with a candour that is often missed in community writing of history. Dr. Firdous has consulted several revenue proceedings, the endowment reports and the committee of public instructions reports. The author acknowledged that the, " *Reports prepared and presented by William Adam were*

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quite helpful in carrying out this particular work. Several individuals and one institution helped in preparation of this present Volume.”

This Book includes nine important Chapters. The first chapter entitled, “Development of Modern and western education Among Muslims in Bengal from 1835 to 1947 is very well footnoted with historical facts and includes eleven statistical tables. These tables provided the information of the systematic development and the numerical strength of Muslims, statistical of representation of Muslims in different educational Institutions in Bengal. The second chapter reflects the details of Development of education for Muslims in Burdwan. This chapter is based on the William Adams third report of 1838, provided information about the state of education in the district of Bardhaman (Burdwan) on and around 1835. William Adam conducted investigation under his personal supervision in on Thana culna of the district and employed other agents to collect information in the other Thana’s of the district.

The third chapter throws the light on the Roll of different kinds of Institution in the Development of Modern education Among Muslims in district Burdwan town. The most important school that was established in Burdwan town is church Missionary Society English School. These missionary schools had tremendous contributions for the propagation of modern education in the district. The fourth chapter indicates the Roll of Kashiram Das institution in the time of Development of Modern Education among Muslims in Katwa sub division. A number of Institution have played a great role in the development of Modern and scientific education among Muslims in the district. The fifth chapter discuss about the important centers of learning for Muslims in Burdwan. The sixth chapter states the Roll of Modern Education in socio. Economic and Political development of the Muslims in Burdwan. Seventh chapter throws the light on the development of education among Muslims in Murshidabad. William Adam limited his attention to the city of Murshidabad and than Daulabazar for his enquiry to indigenou and vernacular education for the district. The historical facts and dates have been displayed through various tables in this chapter.

The eight chapter gives us the details of the development of the female education in India during 19th century and 20th century. Education among women (For female education) was not given recognition as a branch of the state system of Education in India during 18th and 19th centuries. During 18th and 19th centuries, the Education of the enterprising individuals and private organizations. The conditions of the women’s Education was not satisfactory even for the elites and the upper class women in the 18th and 19th centuries and even during medieval period were educated at home.

The ninth chapter of the Book has concluded the topic very successfully and discusses the Education system in Medieval India with special reference to the women Education in Medieval Bengal. Education made rapid progress both for the Hindu and the Muslim communities during Medieval India. The most of the Medieval India rules both from the Hindus and the Muslim communities patronized

education for male and Zanana. These rules made all possible arrangements for education in Royal Haram. Medieval India in general and Bengal in particular experienced the development of the Perso Arabic system of education.

Dr. Shamim's thrust is at statistics and his outlook is shaped by an objectivity that allows him to widen his focus in the context of appropriate analyses and interpretations. This gives the reader the necessary insight in the inner working of the colonial form of education both in space and time. The Book has a defined geographical area where the research finds its core. It is Burdwan with Murshidabad in the fringe. Broadly, therefore the present work is a micro study, a district specific survey of the progress of colonial education in Bengal. The author hails from Burdwan and finds an affinity with genre of Muslim upcoming in the district. His efforts thus turn out in the long run to be an-in-depth engagement with his subject which yields in the end a fabulous mapping of the process which Burdwan modernized itself. The periphery of the story is thus broadened into a further zone of research namely the economic and political development of the Muslims in Burdwan. The worth of the present work lies here. It does not have the pretension to be either a pioneer work or a work of masterly interpretations. It humbly presents some unknown facts gleaned from official sources so that a coherent account emerges for Muslim education in Burdwan and Murshidabad district. From this account one will get a glimpse of the Muslim mind that was slowly typing to come out of the stereotype of Medieval existence. The area covered in the Book has defined perspectives. The presence of the Muslims in academic institutions, their progressive participations in western education and their coming of age in a world of colonial modernization are the primary approaches that have been adopted in Book.

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