



“Fascism in Bangladesh: Reflection of Anti-Fascist Sentiment in Bengali Poetry”

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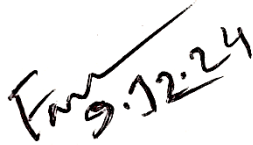
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Certificate of Completion

This is to certify that Syed Rohan Revi, bearing student ID number: 211-10-2358 of the 19th Batch of the Department of English, has completed his thesis paper as part of the academic course ENG 431: Project Paper with Internship, with a special focus on academic research, under my supervision during fall 2024. I affirm that this work reflects his genuine efforts, demonstrating dedication, academic rigor, and scholarly integrity. He conducted this research independently, with proper acknowledgement and citation of all consulted sources.

The scholarly contributions of this research significantly enhance literary discourse, questioning negativity, destruction and transformation studies of the soul, marking a noteworthy achievement in academic inquiry. Working with him has proved very rewarding, and I value his dedication and intellectual acumen. He has shown remarkable courage, exceptional skill, and unbridled ambition-qualities that undoubtedly position him for a bright academic and professional future.

I wish him every success.



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Declaration

I, Syed Rohan Rezvi, affirm that I have spent enough time adequately reviewing the research paper guidelines set by the Department of English at Daffodil International University. I am bound by all the policy's particulars, complete rules, and regulations. My original scholarly contribution to English literature is a thesis titled "Fascism in Bangladesh: Reflection of Anti-Fascist Sentiment in Bengali Poetry." During my research, I have carefully examined all relevant resources and adequately cited and mentioned each one.

The research paper was conducted during the Fall 2024 semester under the supervision of Ms.

Farjana Yesmin, Senior Lecturer in the Department of English. The project significantly contributed to my English Honors degree. I endorse that this document, or any part, has never been submitted to anything similar, like scholarship, degree, publication, or others. I guarantee that the text of this particular piece is the result of my efforts. I take full responsibility for this work's authenticity.



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Abstract

The relationship between fascism, anti-fascist movements, and Bengali rebellious poetry is examined in this essay, along with how these poems have historically represented political resistance. The study emphasizes how Bengali poets have utilized their craft to oppose oppression and spur social action, focusing on themes like the celebration of freedom, the denunciation of tyranny, the criticism of dishonest leadership, and the appreciation of resistance. This paper examines how poetry reflects historical struggles against colonialism and authoritarianism through an analysis of important poets such as Shamsur Rahman, Sukanta Bhattacharya, and Kazi Nazrul Islam. The study comes to the conclusion that, in the face of contemporary oppression and inequality, Bengali rebellious poetry remains a potent instrument of resistance, advocating for social justice and political participation.

Key Words: Fascism, Authoritarianism, Anti-Fascist Sentiment, Protest, Poetry.

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CHAPTER – 1

1.1 Introduction:

Fascism is an authoritarian political ideology that emphasizes dictatorial authority, radical nationalism, and the suppression of political opposition. Although Bangladesh has not officially adopted fascism as a style of government, its political history is marked by authoritarian inclinations that align with key fascist features. Notable instances of these tendencies include the legacy of Pakistani hegemony, the military regime of General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, and the 2008–2024 rule of Sheikh Hasina. Pakistan's history of hegemony over East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, has a significant impact on the country's political mindset. For nearly two decades, the East Pakistani people were neglected politically and economically by the West Pakistani central authority. This exclusion sparked the bloody Liberation War of 1971, which led to Bangladesh's independence. The desire for a strong, unified national identity and the trauma of the war created a political climate where authoritarian tactics were seen as necessary to preserve stability and protect against threats from inside and beyond. The military rule of General Ershad (1982–1990) is one noteworthy era in this history. After taking power in a coup, Ershad consolidated power, suppressed political opposition, and used national identity to defend his leadership. His rule had characteristics of fascism, including state control over the media, exclusionary nationalism, and government militarism, even if it was not overtly fascist. Under Sheikh Hasina's administration (2008–2024), authoritarianism has returned in part due to the consolidation of power, the erosion of democratic institutions, and the persecution of political opponents.

Poetry has historically been a potent weapon for opposing political tyranny because it provides a forum for underrepresented voices and a means of critique. Poetry has been essential to the fight against colonialism, imperialism, and fascism in South Asia, especially in Bengal. Bengali poets have employed poetry as a tool against political oppression and as a means of expressing cultural identity thanks to their expressive language and audacious concepts. The "Rebel Poet," Kazi Nazrul Islam, was among the first to employ poetry as a direct protest against societal inequities and British colonial power. He became a symbol of resistance because of his ferocious poetry, which called for rebellion against both religious orthodoxy and colonial persecution. His poem "The Rebel" (Bidrohi) is a classic hymn to rebellion. Another significant figure, Sukanto, carried on this legacy by expressing the rage and fury of a people subjected to colonial and post-colonial oppression. His poetry, which was frequently imbued with revolutionary passion, urged the Bengali people to struggle for justice by expressing their suffering and tenacity. Poets such as Shamsur Rahman and Helal Hafiz used their writings in the 1970s and 1980s to comment on Bangladesh's political situation, especially during the military dictatorship. Poetry by Shamsur Rahman that talked of revolution and hope, such as "You, Oh Independence" (Shadhinota Tumi), came to represent the fight for democracy. Through his works Rudro Muhammad Shohidullah encapsulated the suffering and defiance of the Liberation War, securing poetry's position as a crucial cultural and political instrument in Bengali society.

In light of Bangladeshis' continuous fight against authoritarianism and fascism, the main research question examines how Bengali poetry has expressed the anti-fascist sentiment of the people of Bangladesh. Bengali poets have historically used their art to oppose colonialism, imperialism, and fascism, and their poetry has been a potent form of resistance against political tyranny. Poets have expressed the collective rage, tenacity, and resistance of the Bengali people from the colonial era through the independence movement of 1971 to the current political conflicts. Studying this reflection is crucial since poetry may be used to both shape political consciousness and reflect societal feeling. Figures like as Kazi Nazrul Islam, Sukanto, and Shamsur Rahman have used poetry to not only criticize fascist and authoritarian regimes, but also to rally people, leaving a legacy of resistance that still resonates in Bangladesh's political climate today. Understanding how Bengali poetry articulated and embodied anti-fascist feeling is crucial in an era of escalating political polarization, censorship, and authoritarian tendencies. It emphasizes the significance of culture in political opposition, as well as how literature, particularly poetry, continues to serve as an important platform for preserving democratic values. This research is critical for understanding how past tales of resistance are ingrained in Bangladesh's cultural fabric and how they influence current struggles against modern forms of authoritarianism.

1.2 Research Question:

1. Does fascism exist in the history of Bangladesh?
2. Do the people of Bangladesh have an Anti-Fascist Sentiment?
3. Is the Anti-Fascist nature of Bangladeshi people reflected in poetry?

1.3 Research Objective:

1. To define fascism and examine its manifestations in the political history of Bangladesh.
2. To explore the historical and political context of anti-fascist movements in Bangladesh.
3. To analyze key works of Bengali poetry and investigate how poets have expressed resistance to fascism and authoritarianism.

CHAPTER – 2

Research Methodology:

This study will use a qualitative research model focusing on literary analysis and historical research. It will take a critical, interdisciplinary approach to selected poems, historical texts, and political movements. This study combines close readings of poems by prominent Bengali poets such as Kazi Nazrul Islam, Sukanto Bhattacharya, Shamsur Rahman, Helal Hafiz, Rudro Mohammad Shahidullah, and others to investigate their responses to fascism and authoritarianism. Secondary data consists of scholarly articles, books, and historical documents that investigate fascism, anti-fascist movements in Bangladesh, and the role of Bengali poetry in political resistance. This multidisciplinary approach seeks to understand how these poets used their work to challenge oppressive regimes and reflect on sociopolitical issues. This research will use thematic analysis to investigate how themes of resistance, rebellion, nationalism, and freedom are expressed in the poetry of Kazi Nazrul Islam, Sukanto Bhattacharya, and Shamsur Rahman. Furthermore, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will be used to investigate how these poets use language to criticize fascism and authoritarianism, focusing on the power dynamics and ideological underpinnings of their works. This dual approach seeks to reveal the poets' nuanced interactions with political resistance and social change. The paper will explore historical events (1971 Liberation War, 1990 Anti-Dictatorship Movement, and contemporary politics) with the poetry analysis to contextualize how these poets collaborate with general people through their words.

CHAPTER – 3

Literature Review:

Fascism, as a political ideology, has received extensive scholarly attention. Umberto Eco's "Ur-Fascism" (1995) provides an important framework for viewing fascism as a collection of shared characteristics rather than a single, monolithic ideology. Eco identifies features that apply across historical contexts, such as the rejection of democracy, the glorification of violence, and the creation of a "enemy" against whom people can unite. Similarly, Robert Paxton's "The Anatomy of Fascism" (2004) offers a thorough examination of fascist movements, contending that fascism is a dynamic, opportunistic phenomenon that frequently emerges in response to societal crises and exploits existing political instability. Paxton emphasizes the importance of mass mobilization, leader cults, and power centralization in fascist movements. Arundhati Roy's critical writings offer a powerful lens through which to understand the rise of authoritarianism and fascism, particularly in postcolonial contexts such as India and Bangladesh. In works such as "Field Notes on Democracy (2009)", Roy contends that the rise of authoritarianism in India is inextricably linked to the state's nationalism and attempts to consolidate power in the hands of the elite. Roy sees this shift as marked by a growing intolerance for dissent, the marginalization of minorities, and the militarization of the state. While Roy's primary focus is on India, her analysis resonates with the political dynamics in Bangladesh, where the suppression of democratic voices and the rise of right-wing nationalism resemble fascist rhetoric and action. Fascism in postcolonial states, including Bangladesh, takes on distinct characteristics. In these contexts, it frequently combines with nationalism, as seen in efforts to strengthen national identity in the face of postcolonial challenges. Scholars such as Tanika Sarkar have argued that fascist ideologies in South Asia frequently intersect with religious and ethnic nationalism, resulting in the rise of authoritarian regimes in the region "*Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism*". 2001.. Bangladesh's 1971 Liberation War against Pakistan, as well as the subsequent political turmoil, have provided fertile ground for investigating how fascism manifests itself through state repression and nationalist extremism.

Political resistance theories, particularly those applied to literature, provide critical frameworks for understanding how intellectuals and poets can challenge fascism and authoritarianism. Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony is especially useful for examining how power structures maintain control through ideological and cultural means rather than through direct coercion. In *Prison Notebooks* (1971), Gramsci contends that the ruling class maintains its dominance by shaping the cultural norms and values that guide society, making their control appear natural. Resistance, therefore, must operate within the cultural domain, countering hegemonic narratives by producing alternative visions for society. Gramsci believes that literature, poetry, and intellectual discourse play important roles in questioning and subverting the dominant ideologies that underpin oppressive regimes. Poets such as Kazi Nazrul Islam and Sukanto Bhattacharya's work can be interpreted as forms of resistance to cultural hegemony, providing counter-narratives that challenge colonialism, fascism, and authoritarianism. Edward Said's work on postcolonial resistance adds to this perspective. In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said emphasizes the role of intellectuals and writers in questioning colonial and

postcolonial power dynamics. He contends that literature can be an effective tool for subverting imperialist narratives, providing a platform for marginalized groups to express their opposition. Said's ideas are especially relevant in postcolonial contexts such as Bangladesh, where poets have long used their work to oppose both colonial and fascist oppressions. Said defines the intellectual as a figure capable of articulating a counter-hegemonic discourse aimed at reclaiming identity, history, and culture from dominant ideologies. The Renaissance political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli is more frequently linked to pragmatism and *realpolitik* than to fascism, a political philosophy that developed centuries after his own. However, some academics have interpreted his ideas—particularly those found in *The Prince* (1513)—as providing a basis for authoritarianism, which is somewhat consistent with fascist ideals. Machiavelli's main concerns were political stability and power, and he argued that in order for leaders to stay in power, they must be crafty, merciless, and flexible. His well-known maxim, "the ends justify the means," holds that any course of action—no matter how immoral—is justified if it advances the ruler's objective of maintaining power and maintaining order. This is consistent with fascist ideology, which frequently places a higher value on national power and unity than on individual liberties and democratic procedures.

Pakistan's military regime during the 1971 Liberation War is widely regarded as fascist, particularly its brutal response to the Bengali independence movement. Under General Yahya Khan and the military leadership, Pakistan's actions against the Bengali population were marked by extreme violence, repression, and an attempt to erase Bengali culture and identity. Operation Searchlight, which began on March 25, 1971, was a systematic military crackdown aimed at suppressing the Bengali independence movement, with widespread massacres, mass rapes, and the targeting of intellectuals, activists, and civilians. This brutality is recognized as a hallmark of fascist regimes, which use violent repression to maintain control and suppress resistance. Fascism is defined by authoritarian rule, violent nationalism, dissent suppression, and state control of cultural institutions. These characteristics were exhibited by Pakistan's military regime under Yahya Khan, which imposed martial law, attempted to eliminate Bengali nationalist movements, and used propaganda to portray the independence struggle as a threat to national unity. The military also attempted to impose Urdu as the national language, undermining Bengali identity and demonstrating fascist tendencies to enforce cultural uniformity. Rashid, S (2011) and Bhatia, N. (2014) have noted that Pakistan's policies and actions during the war are consistent with these characteristics of fascist governance, establishing the Pakistani military's response to the Bengali liberation struggle as a clear example of fascism in South Asia.

Bengali poetry has long been a powerful tool for political and social critique, especially in the fight against colonialism, imperialism, and fascism. The use of poetry as a tool for political resistance dates back to the colonial period, with poets such as Kazi Nazrul Islam and Sukanto Bhattacharya playing key roles. Nazrul, also known as the Rebel Poet, used his poetry to

challenge British colonial rule, advocating for liberation, social justice, and equality. His works, including *Bidrohi* (The Rebel) and *Bisher Bashi* (The Poisoned Bow), emphasized rebellion against both external oppression and internal societal injustices, establishing him as a prominent anti-colonial figure. Scholars such as Muhammad Shahidullah: *Kazi Nazrul Islam: His Life and Work* (2008) and Kabir Chowdhury: *Kazi Nazrul Islam: A Revolutionary Poet* (1996) have written about Nazrul's radical nationalism and his role in mobilizing the Bengali masses against colonial rule, framing his poetry as central to Bengal's cultural and intellectual resistance movements. Similarly, Sukanto Bhattacharya emerged in the 1930s as a revolutionary poet whose work was heavily influenced by Marxist ideals and the anti-colonial movement. His poems, including *Jwala* (Flame) and *Dweep Joler Gan* (Song of the Island Water), addressed the plight of the oppressed, particularly the working class, and advocated for social upheaval. Scholars such as Shib Narayan Das: *Sukanto Bhattacharya: A Revolutionary Poet* (2003) and Gauri Ma have analyzed Bhattacharya's critique of colonialism as well as the emerging capitalist structures of postcolonial Bengal, emphasizing his commitment to revolutionary ideals. Shamsur Rahman and Rudro Mohammad Shahidullah continued the tradition of poetry as a form of political resistance in Bangladesh after independence. During the 1970s and 1980s, Rahman used poetry to criticize military regimes, particularly General Ershad's dictatorship, as well as to address disillusionment after liberation. His poems, including *The Struggle of Our Own*, criticize the betrayal of the ideals of the 1971 Liberation War. Scholars such as A.K. Fazlul Haq: *Shamsur Rahman: Poet of Struggle* (2005) have looked into Rahman's role in shaping public discourse on democracy and social justice. Similarly, Shahidullah, a poet from the 1980s and 1990s, criticized the post-liberation state's failures as well as Bangladesh's growing authoritarianism. His poetry, such as *Buk Tar Bangladesher Hriday* (His Chest Is the Heart of Bangladesh), reflects a profound sense of loss and resistance to political corruption. By confronting both state repression and ideological hegemony, these poets have upheld Bengali poetry's long tradition as an important tool for political resistance and social critique.

CHAPTER – 4

4.1 Fascism: The authoritarian political ideology known as "Fascism" is typified by the repression of political opposition, extreme nationalism, and dictatorial power. It supports the supremacy of the country or a particular ethnic group and places emphasis on a powerful, centralized state that is frequently headed by a single person. Fascism promotes a regulated economy and society in place of socialism, liberal democracy, and individual liberties.

4.2 Characteristics: Below is an overview of the main **characteristics of fascism**, along with brief descriptions of each:

1. **Authoritarianism:** Authoritarianism, which involves concentrated power under a single leader or ruling elite and frequently near-absolute control over the state, is at the heart of fascism. Liberal democracy, which is predicated on civil liberties, pluralism, and political participation, is rejected by fascist governments. Rather, they eliminate checks and balances and frequently marginalize or destroy democratic institutions by consolidating political power in the hands of a dictator or a small number of people. For instance, the rise of Benito Mussolini in Italy was characterized by the installation of a totalitarian government that restricted political liberties and consolidated power over decision-making (Griffin, R. 1991).
2. **Nationalism:** Extreme nationalism, which prioritizes the nation's interests and identity, is the foundation of fascism. Fascists exalt the country's history, highlighting its superiority over other nations, and frequently aim to bring the populace together via a sense of pride and allegiance to the government. Ethnocentrism, which supports the supremacy of a specific ethnic or cultural group within the country and defends discriminatory practices against minorities, is a common byproduct of this extreme nationalism. Adolf Hitler, for example, equated nationalism with racial purity in Nazi Germany by promoting Aryan racial supremacy (Kershaw, I. 1999).
3. **Suppression of Dissent:** The suppression of dissent is how fascist governments keep power; they use censorship, state violence, and intimidation to stifle dissenting opinions. To stop any challenge to the regime's power, independent media, labor unions, and political parties are either completely eradicated or strictly regulated. Opponents were detained, banished, or killed in Mussolini's Italy, where the Fascist Grand Council essentially absorbed political power. Similar to this, Nazi Germany used the Gestapo and other government agencies to detain and exterminate political opponents, especially communists, Jews, and leftists (Evans, R. J. 2003).
4. **Militarism:** Fascism embraces militarism and exalts military might as necessary for maintaining order and national cohesion. Fascist governments frequently place a high priority on military buildup and war preparation because they see conflict as a means of reviving or surviving their countries. For instance, Nazi Germany's aggressive expansionist policies directly caused World War II, while Mussolini's Italy attempted to

restore Roman imperial grandeur through military conquests in Africa. Fascist militarism also promotes a culture of obedience, hierarchy, and discipline that permeates society at large and extends beyond the military. (Paxton, R. O. 2004).

5. **Corporatism:** Instead of permitting a strictly free-market system, fascist regimes embrace "corporatism" as an economic system in which the state controls and divides the economy into state-controlled sectors, or corporations. In order to supposedly prevent class conflict, the objective is to incorporate employers, employees, and the government into a cooperative framework. In reality, fascist corporatism usually serves the interests of the state and elite groups while stifling independent labor movements, despite the fact that it is frequently presented as a system of mutual benefit. A prime example is Mussolini's Italy, where the fascist government dominated businesses and unions in order to preserve social order and national cohesion (Mussolini, B. 1932).

4.3 Variation of Fascism Globally: Although fascism originated in Europe in the early 20th century, it has since spread to other nations and eras. Fascism can be broadly divided into two categories: classical fascism and contemporary authoritarian regimes, which include right-wing extremism and populism. Although these forms differ in their expression, objectives, and the sociopolitical context in which they emerge, they share some fundamental characteristics.

1. **Classical Fascism:** Mussolini's Italy (1922–1943) and Hitler's Nazi Germany (1933–1945) are two prime examples of classical fascism, which was typified by extreme militarism, ultranationalism, highly centralized, totalitarian control, and a rejection of democracy. Classical fascism promoted ethnic or racial purity and suppressed dissent in an effort to create a homogenous national community, frequently using violent methods.
 - **Mussolini's Italy:** To prevent class conflict, industrialists and workers were grouped into state-sponsored organizations in Mussolini's fascist Italy, which placed a strong emphasis on corporatism and state control over the economy. Fascist ideology was centered on expansionism and militarism, as demonstrated by the invasion of Ethiopia (Griffin, R. 1991).
 - **Nazi Germany:** Nazi fascism fused anti-Semitism and extreme racial ideology with traditional fascist concepts. The systematic murder of Jews and other minorities during the Holocaust coincided with Hitler's expansionist goals, which led to World War II. (Kershaw, I. 1999).
 -
2. **Modern Authoritarian Regimes:** Although they share some characteristics with classical fascism, modern authoritarian regimes are fundamentally different. Authoritarianism and nationalist traits are still present in these regimes, which

frequently emerge in modern settings where the difficulties and means of retaining power have changed.

- **Populism:** Taking advantage of public discontent, populist leaders portray themselves as defenders of the "common people" against the "elite." Authoritarian inclinations, such as eroding democratic institutions and repressing opposition through the use of state power, are frequently involved in this. Populist rhetoric and right-wing policies that support authoritarianism, such as limiting the judiciary's authority and targeting the media, have been displayed by leaders like Viktor Orbán in Hungary and Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil (Mudde, C. 2004).
- **Right-Wing Extremism:** Although they frequently lack official state authority, right-wing extremist movements nowadays are influenced by classical fascism. Often combining ethnonationalism and xenophobia, these movements—like those in Eastern and Western Europe—call for a return to "traditional values" and stringent immigration laws. Groups advocating anti-immigrant policies and using national identity as a unifying factor against perceived threats are examples of neo-fascist movements that are active in nations like Italy and Russia (Eatwell, R. 2003).

4.4 Distinguishing Features of Modern Authoritarianism and Populism: Modern populism and right-wing extremism share some elements with classical fascism, but they differ in several respects.

1. **Emphasis on Identity Politics:** Modern authoritarian regimes frequently place an emphasis on identity politics, whether they be ethnic, religious, or cultural, especially in reaction to immigration and globalization. In contrast, classical fascism was primarily concerned with national rebirth through authoritarian rule. Defense of national identity against perceived threats from immigrants and foreign influence has been a priority for leaders such as Marine Le Pen in France and Donald Trump in the United States (Mudde, 2004).
2. **Economic Strategy:** Corporatism, in which the state acted as a mediator between capital and labor, was promoted by classical fascism. Modern authoritarian regimes, on the other hand, might place more emphasis on populist economic policies that promise protection for domestic industries or workers while still largely letting the market drive the economy rather than state-managed corporatism (Laclau, E. 2005).
3. **Digital and Media Control:** Unlike classical fascism, modern authoritarian regimes function in the era of digital media, where social media is an effective instrument for stifling dissent, organizing supporters, and disseminating propaganda. Social media has been a powerful tool for leaders like Trump and Orban to attack critics and spread their messages (Baldwin, D. 2020).

4.5 Theories by Philosophers: Numerous theoretical viewpoints enhance the study of fascism, and important texts provide insights into its political, cultural, intellectual, and historical facets. Some offer insightful background or criticism, while others are more overtly anti-fascist.

1. **"Ur-Fascism" by Umberto Eco (1995):**

Umberto Eco's essay "Ur-Fascism" (also known as "Eternal Fascism") offers a thorough theoretical framework for comprehending fascism by highlighting recurring characteristics across different historical periods. Eco ignores the political and economic details of fascism in favor of concentrating on its cultural and aesthetic dimensions.

- **Ur-Fascism as a Universal Phenomenon:** According to Eco, fascism is a collection of recurrent traits that can take on various forms over time rather than being associated with a particular historical moment.
- **Fascist Symbolism and Aesthetic:** Eco explores how fascism uses violent symbolism, pageantry, and spectacle to foster a sense of power and unity. In order to garner widespread support, fascist governments frequently exploit emotional and illogical aspects of culture.

Characteristics of Ur-Fascism: Eco enumerates a number of characteristics of fascist ideology, such as:

- **Cult of Tradition:** The exaltation of the past, frequently via romanticized or mythical tales.
- **Rejection of Modernism:** The promotion of simplistic ideologies, anti-intellectualism, and rejection of reason.
- **The Fear of Difference:** Racism, xenophobia, and using marginalized groups as scapegoats.
- **The Appeal to the Masses:** The process of fostering a sense of national identity and unity through the use of populist rhetoric.

2. **Robert Paxton – The Anatomy of Fascism (2004):**

The Anatomy of Fascism by Robert Paxton is a landmark book that provides a sociological and historical analysis of fascism. According to Paxton, fascism is a political movement that arises and changes in particular historical contexts rather than an ideology that can be easily described.

- **Fascism as a Political Movement:** Paxton characterizes fascism as a political movement that is dynamic and changes in response to

particular historical circumstances. Paxton concentrates on the social and political aspects of fascism, as opposed to Eco's emphasis on its ideological traits.

- **Origins of Fascism:** Paxton investigates the beginnings of fascism in post-World War I Europe, with a special emphasis on Germany and Italy. He looks at how fascist movements developed during emergencies, gaining widespread support and having charismatic leaders who appealed to anti-communism, nationalism, and militarism.
- **The Evolution of Fascism:** According to Paxton, fascism starts as a political movement that challenges the status quo, moves on to mass mobilization to seize power, and finally consolidates power through authoritarianism and violence.
- **Fascism's Flexibility:** Paxton emphasizes that fascism is adaptable and can take on different forms depending on the social and political circumstances in which it arises. He rejects the idea of a single, unified fascist ideology.

3. **Field Notes on Democracy by Arundhati Roy (2009):**

The emergence of authoritarianism in modern democracies is criticized in Arundhati Roy's *Field Notes on Democracy*, with a special emphasis on India. Roy's observations provide a potent critique of the decline of democratic values, the emergence of nationalism, and the concentration of power in the hands of elites—all of which are pertinent to comprehending the current threat of fascism—even though she does not specifically address fascism.

- **The Erosion of Democracy:** Roy talks about the rise in state-sponsored violence and repression as well as the breakdown of democratic institutions. She criticizes the increasing authoritarianism and the dwindling room for dissent, traits common to fascist governments.
- **Nationalism and Xenophobia:** The rise of Hindu nationalism in India is also discussed by Roy, who highlights the perils of religious and ethnic exclusivism that resembles fascist ideologies. She issues a warning about the ramifications for minority groups of a homogenous, ethnonationalist state.

- **Global Fascism:** Although Roy focuses on India, he also criticizes the larger global environment, pointing out how nationalism, militarism, and global capitalism have contributed to the decline of democratic values in many nations and heralded the emergence of authoritarian regimes.

4. **Niccolò Machiavelli – The Prince (1513):**

Although Niccolò Machiavelli is not directly linked to fascism, his political theories—particularly those found in *The Prince*—have influenced the creation of authoritarian political tactics that fascist governments have since embraced. Mussolini and other political leaders who identified with Machiavellian ideals frequently referenced Machiavelli's practical approach to leadership and power.

- **Realpolitik and the Use of Power:** A key component of fascist ideology is Machiavelli's theory of power politics, which holds that the ends justify the means. Fascist leaders like Mussolini and Hitler found resonance in his advice for rulers to be brutal and practical in their pursuit of power.
- **Centralization of Authority:** Fascist movements frequently aim to consolidate power in a single leader or party, and Machiavelli emphasizes the value of a strong, centralized authority.
- **Manipulation of Public Sentiment:** In order to maintain loyalty and consolidate power, fascist regimes adopted Machiavelli's ideas about manipulating public opinion and using propaganda to control the masses.

The contributions of these philosophers benefit the study of fascism greatly. When taken as a whole, these pieces deepen our knowledge of fascism and its changing expressions around the globe.

CHAPTER – 5

5.1 An Overview of Authoritarianism and Fascism in Bangladesh:

Numerous episodes of authoritarianism and fascist tendencies, characterized by military regimes, brutal repression, and the restriction of political freedoms, have influenced Bangladesh's political landscape. The emergence of authoritarian and fascist-like practices in the nation's history is demonstrated by three pivotal periods: 1971, 1990, and 2024. Centralization of power, repression of dissent, and the use of state or military force to keep control are characteristics of each of these periods.

5.2 The Display of Brutality and the Dawn of Independence:

Background: The fight for Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan began in 1971, making it a significant year in the country's history. Political, economic, and cultural differences had been causing tensions between West Pakistan and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) for years. Although the election of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League in 1970 marked a sea change, the Bangladesh Liberation War broke out in March 1971 as a result of the Pakistani military's brutal crackdown after the central government in West Pakistan refused to acknowledge the election results.

- **Fascist and Authoritarian Characteristics of the Government of Pakistan:** To quell the independence movement, General Yahya Khan and his followers' Pakistani military regime employed ruthless methods such as mass murder, rape, and the targeting of civilians. Fascist traits are reflected in this violent suppression, especially the use of state power to impose violence and ethnic cleansing on a region that is rebellious. The systematic murder of Bengalis by the military is reminiscent of fascist violence committed to uphold an oppressive regime. According to reports, millions more were displaced, and between 300,000 and 3 million people were killed. Noting the parallels to genocidal repression observed in other fascist regimes, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented the atrocities (Human Rights Watch, 2020; Amnesty International, 2015).

5.3 Militarism in Bangladesh During H.M. Ershad's Era (1982-1990):

After a military takeover, Hussain Muhammad Ershad ruled Bangladesh from 1982 to 1990. Ershad suspended the constitution, dissolved the parliament, and imposed martial law after first defending his takeover of power as a way to bring stability back. His authoritarian rule was characterized by political repression, the outlawing of rival groups such as the BNP and Awami League, and the use of military force to quell dissent and protests. Ershad founded the Jatiya Party in 1986 with the intention of establishing a democratic front despite his oppressive reign. Though they were overshadowed by electoral fraud and political violence, his government also implemented some infrastructure projects and economic reforms (Karim, A. 2002); Siddique, A. 2016).

By the late 1980s, growing public discontent and protests led to Ershad's resignation in December 1990, ending his regime and paving the way for the restoration of parliamentary democracy. Despite some economic growth, Ershad's legacy is mainly remembered for his authoritarianism, political manipulation, and the use of military power to maintain control (**Bose, S. 2011**).; (**Siddique, A. 2016**).

5.4 Sheikh Hasina's Regime Marked as the Suppression of Dissent (2008-2024):

Since taking office in 2008, Sheikh Hasina has steered Bangladesh through periods of authoritarian rule and economic expansion. Her government made great strides in reducing poverty and the textile industry after winning the 2008 elections, but it also started to impose stricter regulations on the media, opposition parties, and civil liberties (**Human Rights Watch. 2020**). Allegations of electoral fraud plagued the elections in 2014 and 2018, and opposition figures like Khaleda Zia were subject to legal action (**U.S. Department of State. 2024**).

According to Amnesty International (**Amnesty International. 2023**), Hasina's rule has been marked by the suppression of dissent, particularly through the Digital Security Act, despite economic achievements such as GDP growth and improvements in health and education (**World Bank. (2023)**). Ahead of the controversial general election in 2024, her government is being criticized for its autocratic tendencies and is seeing an increase in opposition protests (**The Economist. 2024**).

5.5 The Role of Fascist Elements during the Bangladesh Liberation War (1971):

The 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War was characterized by widespread oppression and violence, especially from the Pakistani military regime, which treated the Bengali population in a fascist manner. Under General Yahya Khan's leadership, the Pakistani military brutally suppressed Bengali nationalists and civilians in East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh) in an effort to quell the growing calls for independence. Targeted violence, ethnic cleansing, and the use of force to keep control were all aspects of this repression that were characteristic of fascist authoritarianism.

- **Operation Searchlight and the Military Crackdown:**

The Pakistani military launched Operation Searchlight, a full-scale attack on Dhaka and other East Pakistani cities, on March 25, 1971. In addition to suppressing the political leadership of the Awami League, which had achieved a major electoral victory in the 1970 elections, this operation was intended to put an end to the Bengali independence movement. Indiscriminate killings, rapes, and the forcible relocation of Bengali civilians were all part of the operation. In an effort to destroy the political and cultural foundation of the Bengali nationalist movement, the military targeted Bengali activists, students, and intellectuals (**Sisson, R., & Rose, L. 1990**). The extent of the Pakistani military's systematic killing of civilians and use of extreme violence, including genocidal tactics, frequently drew comparisons to the fascist regimes of Nazi Germany. (**Ghosh, B. 2000**).

- **Massacre of Civilians and Ethnic Cleansing:**

The Pakistani military's actions were similar to ethnic cleansing, which is a fundamental characteristic of fascist regimes and involves targeting entire communities based on their national or ethnic identity. According to reports, between 300,000 and 3 million people were killed by the military (**Moss, T.** 2010), and thousands of women were raped as part of a plan to terrorize and demoralize the civilian populace. The Bengali community was routinely classified as "enemies of the state," and the military executed large numbers of them in East Pakistani villages and towns using death squads. The fascist aspects of the repression were further intensified when the religiously conservative political party in East Pakistan, Jamaat-e-Islami, allied itself with the Pakistani military and formed paramilitary groups like the Al-Badr and Al-Shams, which took part in atrocities against the Bengali population (**Jahan, R.** 1972).

- **The Role of Fascist Ideology and the Pakistani Military:**

Fascist ideology, which aimed to preserve power through authoritarian violence, served as the foundation for the Pakistani military's repression during the conflict. General Yahya Khan's highly centralized Pakistani regime used militarized nationalism as an excuse for the crimes. Similar to fascist ideology, this militarized brand of nationalism sought to maintain Pakistan's unity by violently suppressing any nationalist or separatist movements, particularly those calling for Bengali self-determination. In addition to being a military tactic, state-sponsored terrorism reflected an authoritarian mentality that viewed Bengali Muslims as a danger to Pakistan's ideological integrity and unity (**Ahmed, A.** 2002). Bengalis' psyche was deeply traumatized by the military's brutality and the fascist rhetoric that was used to defend its actions.

- **International Response:**

In the early phases of the crackdown, the international community mostly did not step in. The United States, under President Richard Nixon, supported Pakistan politically even though it was aware of the widespread atrocities, despite some condemnations, particularly from human rights organizations. The war and the suffering of the Bengali people were prolonged because of the lack of substantial international intervention, which permitted the Pakistani military's fascist-style repression to go unchallenged (**Hunt, M. H.** 2015). The lingering effects of the genocide and fascist violence that had occurred, which continue to reverberate in the country's collective memory, were not eliminated by Bangladesh's eventual independence in December 1971.

5.6 The Liberation War of 1971 as an Anti-Colonial and Anti-Fascist Movement:

In addition to being a fight for national sovereignty, the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War—which resulted in the country's independence from Pakistan—was also presented as an opposition to fascism and colonial oppression. General Yahya Khan's oppressive policies were

perceived as an extension of the authoritarian repression and colonial exploitation that had defined Pakistan's rule over East Bengal (now Bangladesh) since its founding in 1947. Thus, the desire to overthrow both fascist militarism and the colonial mindset imposed by Pakistan's central government was at the heart of the independence movement.

- **The Rise of Anti-Fascist Rhetoric and Bengali Nationalism:**

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Bengali nationalist movement expanded quickly, especially under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's and his Awami League's leadership. The movement became strongly anti-fascist, particularly in the wake of the violent suppression of Bengali nationalists by the Pakistani military. Operation Searchlight, which began on March 25, 1971, was a prime example of the Pakistani military's use of fascist tactics, such as mass executions, widespread violence, and ethnic cleansing of the Bengali population. The indiscriminate targeting of civilians by the Pakistani military, including women, students, and intellectuals, was perceived as a manifestation of fascist violence. Similar to the resistance movements during World War II, this repression strengthened the Bengali people's belief that their struggle was not only for independence but also against fascist oppression. (Ahmed, A. 2002).

- **The Role of Anti-Colonial Solidarity and the International Community:**

Many different anti-colonial and anti-fascist organizations supported the liberation movement on a global scale. The war was presented by the Bengali diaspora and left-wing solidarity movements worldwide as a component of the larger fight against fascism and imperialism. In addition to being about Bengali self-determination, the war against Pakistan was seen as a component of the post-colonial world's larger fight to eradicate the lingering effects of colonialism and authoritarianism. The appeal to the international community by the Bengali leadership, which presented the conflict as a struggle for justice and a rejection of colonial exploitation, served to highlight this. The struggle for independence was thus intertwined with the global anti-imperialist movement, with support coming from various countries, including India, which intervened militarily in December 1971 (Sisson, R., & Rose, L. 1990).

- **The Triumph of Anti-Colonialism and Anti-Fascism**

Fascist violence and colonial exploitation were defeated when Bangladesh gained its independence in December 1971. The establishment of Bangladesh as an independent country was celebrated as a triumph for national liberation and anti-colonialism, while the defeat of the Pakistani military signified the end of a colonial relationship. In addition to being a nationalist conflict, the Liberation War's story was presented as a component of the larger movement against fascist oppression, colonial rule, and authoritarianism (Jahan, R. 1972).

5.7 1990: The Fall of General Hussain Muhammad Ershad's Military Regime:

Massive public demonstrations, growing opposition to General Hussain Muhammad Ershad's authoritarian rule, and widespread political unrest led to the military regime's overthrow in 1990. Ershad, who had seized power in a military coup in 1982, defended his rule by claiming it was

necessary to restore political stability to Bangladesh. However, a widespread movement that eventually resulted in his resignation was sparked by his regime's growing authoritarianism, corruption, and repression. Years of public discontent and opposition parties' attempts to bring democracy back to Bangladesh culminated in the events of 1990.

- **Political Repression and Authoritarian Governance:**

Suppression of dissent and political repression were hallmarks of Ershad's reign. He imposed martial law, suspended the constitution, and disbanded the parliament after taking office. This resulted in the imprisonment of political leaders, especially those from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL), and the banning of opposition parties (Karim, 2002). His regime was very unpopular with the public because it repressed any kind of opposition through the use of state-controlled media, security forces, and military influence. Ershad's rule was criticized for corruption, human rights abuses, and electoral fraud despite attempts to present his administration as a "benevolent dictatorship" (Bose, 2011). As a result, the political climate grew increasingly tense during the late 1980s, with calls for a return to democracy growing louder.

- **Emerging Opposition and the Impact of 1988 Elections:**

Ershad hosted contentious presidential elections in 1988, which drew harsh criticism for being rigged. The elections were tainted by claims of voter suppression and fraud, and opposition parties such as the BNP and Awami League boycotted them (Siddique, 2016). In an election that lacked credibility, Ershad's Jatiya Party declared victory, further alienating the populace and escalating opposition to his rule. Civil society movements, including student organizations and workers' unions, arose as a result of Ershad's absence of valid electoral procedures. These movements called for free and fair elections as well as an end to authoritarian governance. This discontent was a major factor in the subsequent public mobilization.

- **The Revolution of 1990: The Catalyst for Transformation:**

When opposition groups, such as the Awami League, BNP, and student organizations, banded together to demand Ershad's resignation in 1990, the movement that ultimately resulted in his downfall gained tremendous traction. Ershad's growing unpopularity and his refusal to enact democratic reforms in the face of mounting calls from both domestic and foreign sources served as the impetus for the mass uprising. Ershad's security forces brutally put down the student protests calling for the return of democracy in Dhaka in January 1990, killing a number of protesters. Nationwide protests broke out as a result of the public's outrage over this violent response. Strikes, large-scale protests, and widespread civil disobedience were the hallmarks of the protests, which grew more coordinated and extensive (Bose, 2011).

- **The Role of the Military and the End of Ershad's Rule:**

Ershad attempted to keep power with the military's help, but his downfall was largely

caused by the escalating demonstrations and widespread disenchantment with the military establishment. The military leadership started to doubt Ershad's capacity to hold onto power as the demonstrations got more intense. Ershad's political standing deteriorated in early December 1990, and key military factions stopped supporting his government. Ershad's eight-year rule came to an end on December 6, 1990, as a result of growing pressure from the military leadership and civilian populace. This marked the beginning of parliamentary democracy's restoration (Karim, 2002; Siddique, 2016).

- **The Repercussions: The Transition to Democracy:**

Following Ershad's resignation, a caretaker government was established to conduct fresh elections, marking Bangladesh's democratic transition. The movement that brought about Ershad's overthrow was celebrated as a victory for Bangladesh's democratic forces, signaling the end of military rule and the restoration of political pluralism. With the BNP and Awami League fighting for control in the post-Ershad era, the political climate remained tense. A new government led by Khaleda Zia of the BNP was formed after the 1991 general elections were overseen by a neutral caretaker government (Bose, 2011). Even after democracy was restored, the Awami League and BNP remained bitterly opposed to one another in their political rivalry in the following years.

5.8 Sheikh Hasina's Regime: The Era of Darkness in the History of Bangladesh:

The centralization of power, the repression of political opposition, and the use of nationalism to justify rule are some of the essential traits of authoritarian governance that can be used to analyze Sheikh Hasina's regime in Bangladesh from a fascist standpoint. She has demonstrated these qualities in her leadership, especially since taking back office in 2009. Even though the political environment is different from classical fascism, particularly in terms of ideology and socio-political structure, Hasina's government exhibits a number of authoritarian characteristics from a fascist perspective.

- **Centralization of Power and Authoritarian Rule:**

The concentration of power in the hands of one leader or ruling party is a common characteristic of fascism. The Awami League led by Sheikh Hasina, has consolidated power more and more, excluding opposition parties and taking control of important national institutions like the judiciary and law enforcement. Since the political opposition frequently faces legal challenges, incarceration, or exile, critics contend that her government has weakened democratic checks and balances. Notably, Hasina's administration has been charged with influencing the judiciary, and a number of prominent opposition figures, including Khaleda Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), have been charged with crimes and imprisoned for what many believe to be political reasons. The opposition parties boycotted the 2014 general election, which was conducted under a one-party system, claiming that the Awami League had manipulated the results. The Hasina administration maintained its hold on power in the political arena in spite of accusations of vote-rigging and voter intimidation. This kind of political

monopolization is indicative of fascism's subversion of democratic institutions and the leader's increasing control over all state apparatuses. Hasina's administration demonstrates traits typical of fascist regimes by concentrating power within the AL, where authority is not freely shared or challenged, creating a political environment that suppresses dissent (Khan, 2020).

- **Suppression of Political Opposition:**

Political opposition is usually repressed or co-opted under fascist regimes, frequently by legal or illegal means. Sheikh Hasina's handling of opposition has drawn a lot of criticism. She has often been accused of suppressing dissenting voices and opposition parties. Leaders of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami have faced imprisonment or severe restrictions as a result of Hasina's use of the legal system to silence her political rivals. The BNP leader, Khaleda Zia, was imprisoned on corruption charges that her party says are politically motivated. This trend is evocative of fascist governments that use the defense of national security and stability to defend the repression of political opponents (Rahman, 2021).

- **Extrajudicial Executions and State-Sanctioned Violence:**

Extrajudicial executions have become a defining feature of Sheikh Hasina's government's attempts to suppress dissent and keep control of opposition forces. Several cases of state violence have been reported by human rights groups, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. Shahidul Islam, a prominent opposition figure from the Jamaat-e-Islami party, was killed in 2018 under suspicious circumstances after allegedly getting caught in a "crossfire" with police. Many people think that this execution was carried out for political reasons in order to silence opposition figures who were critical of Hasina's government. These extrajudicial executions have been denounced by human rights organizations as being against international human rights norms. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), these killings are a tool used by the Bangladeshi government to eliminate political rivals and suppress dissenting voices (HRW, 2020). Furthermore, Hasina's government regularly employs enforced disappearances as a tactic to silence journalists and opposition leaders who dared to voice their opinions. Activists, journalists, and opposition leaders have all vanished without a trace, frequently following their arrest by security forces. The 2019 kidnapping of Ibrahim Khalil, a political activist with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), is among the most well-known cases. His whereabouts are still unknown, and many people think that his political activities are connected to his disappearance. As part of a systematic attempt to intimidate political opponents, Amnesty International has called for an independent investigation into the numerous reports of abductions (Amnesty International, 2020).

- **Human Rights Violations and the Violent Suppression of Protests in 2024**

State-sponsored violence has increased during Bangladesh's 2024 Revolution, which has been marked by large-scale demonstrations and demands for Sheikh Hasina's resignation.

These demonstrations call for democratic reforms and an end to Hasina's authoritarian rule, and they are mostly led by opposition parties, students, and civil society organizations. A number of people have been killed and injured as a result of the government's use of live ammunition against unarmed protesters in response to the escalating unrest. There was a great deal of outrage when Dhaka University student protesters were shot by police during a demonstration in January 2024. Human rights organizations have denounced the use of live ammunition against peaceful protesters, which is against international law. Human Rights Watch has demanded accountability for the deaths and urged the government to stop its violent crackdown on protesters (HRW, 2024). Additionally, the government has used the Digital Security Act to criminalize dissent during these protests by arresting media representatives and opposition leaders. Journalists and activists who document the abuses of the government or take part in protests have been silenced by the law. This law further restricted press freedom and information flow by, for instance, arresting a number of journalists who covered the protests in early 2024. Amnesty International claims that the detention of opposition leaders and journalists is a component of a broader plan to suppress political dissent and manipulate public opinion (Amnesty International, 2024).

- **The Downfall of Hasina's Government:**

Many people consider Hasina's government to be a fascist one because of the extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, and persecution of political activists and journalists. An increasing authoritarianism in Bangladesh is indicated by the repression of protests, the use of violence against nonviolent protestors, and the stifling of the media. The government's violent response may only intensify as the 2024 Revolution gains momentum and more people call for accountability for violations of human rights, which could spark more unrest and ultimately bring down Hasina's government. The government's use of violence to quell dissent has been repeatedly condemned by the international community, including groups like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the United Nations. Many people think that Hasina's refusal to participate in democratic reform could cause her leadership to irreparably collapse.

CHAPTER - 6

6.1 Reflection of the Rebellious Nature of Bengali People in Poetry:

Throughout its history, Bengali poetry has been a vital instrument of social and political change. Poets have continuously used their art to oppose political oppression, advance social reform, and express national identity, starting with the early centuries of Bengali literature and continuing into contemporary movements. Bengali poetry's ability to adapt to various socio-political contexts is reflected in this potent tradition, which makes it a crucial tool in the development of Bengali society and its cultural movements.

6.1 *Bidrohi (The Rebel)* by Kazi Nazrul Islam:

One of Nazrul's most well-known and defiant poems is *Bidrohi*. It is renowned for its unrepentant tone and uncompromising opposition to all types of injustice, tyranny, and oppression. This poem, which was composed when India was under British colonial control, serves as a rallying cry against all governing powers.

- **Rebellion Against Oppression:**

The subjugation and oppression imposed by colonial rule, religious doctrine, and even societal norms are rejected by the rebellious speaker.

"I am the Rebel, I am the storm, I am the wrath of the sun!"

-is among the poem's most powerful lines. The spirit of rebellion and fury against oppression is encapsulated in this line. The "rebel" is presented as a natural force that is strong, unstoppable, and prepared to take on any challenge. The colonial powers and the social structures that maintain subjugation are directly attacked by this. Nazrul's speaker asserts that even divine power can be contested if it results in suffering, or refusing to submit to anyone.

- **The Demand for Revolution and Nationalism**

The rebel leader urges the downtrodden people of Bengal and India to rebel against the British Empire on their behalf. Nazrul's uprising is an appeal to the general populace to oppose colonial oppression; it is neither merely personal nor abstract.

"I will overthrow the thrones of kings, I will drown the oceans!"

This statement highlights the rebel's ability and determination to overthrow the established hierarchies of power. It displays Nazrul's faith in the masses' capacity for revolution. A vow to resist any kind of authority that stifles freedom is embodied by the rebellious figure.

6.3 *Atharo Bosor Boyos (Eighteen Years Old)* by Sukanta Bhattacharya:

The speaker in *Atharo Bosor Boyos* embodies the vigor and energy of young people ready to join the fight for justice and freedom, making it a potent, youthful expression of rebellion. The person is on the verge of adulthood and possesses revolutionary potential at the age of eighteen. The poem encapsulates young people's spirit of rebellion and their wish to escape the limitations placed on them by social conventions, tradition, and colonialism.

- **Rebellious Against Oppression:**

Eighteen is portrayed in the poem as a time when young people are prepared to stand up and confront the injustices they have inherited.

"At eighteen, there is no fear, no will to smash rocks and chains beneath feet!"

This statement rejects the notion of deference to authority, particularly the colonial rulers, and emphasizes the rebellious nature of young people. The number 18 represents the emergence of youthful rebellion and a rejection of oppressive authority. The phrases make direct reference to the literal and symbolic chains of colonial rule, which limit both national and individual freedom. The poem thus exhorts the younger generation to rebel against the power that tries to dominate them.

- **Rejection of Tradition**

Additionally, the poem expresses a rejection of cultural and social conformity. The speaker's defiant attitude is aimed not only at colonial authority but also at the social norms that restrict personal autonomy.

"The age prevents fear, cowardice, and stopping!"

The desire for individual autonomy and liberation from oppressive customs and social hierarchies is reflected in this line. The sociocultural systems that stifle individual expression and self-determination are also the target of the rebellious energy here, in addition to colonialism. The demand for autonomy is an act of defiance against the prevailing social mores of the day, implying that each person, particularly young people, should be in control of their own destiny independent of social pressures.

6.4 *Buk Tar Bangladesher Hridoy (His Chest Is The Heart of Bangladesh)* by Shamsur Rahman:

The particular poem was written to praise the sacrifice of Nur Hossain, an Anti-Fascist protester against H.M. Ershad. The words of the poem acted like a trigger to bring the rebels out of all the

people of Bangladesh.

- **Rejection of Dictator:**

Nur Hossain, mentioned in the poem, protested against Ershad with painted “Democracy may be free, Dictator may be declined” on his chest and back. He was at the front until he got shot by the military. So Shamsur Rahman said;

“They did not shoot Nur Hossain’s chest, rather they shot the heart of Bangladesh”

After his sacrifice, the whole Bangladesh came together and ensured the downfall of Ershad.

CHAPTER – 7

Conclusion: The intricate connection between fascism, anti-fascist movements, and Bengali poetry has been examined in this study, demonstrating the influence of poetic expression in forming political consciousness. Since Bengali poets have continuously used their art to criticize injustice, colonialism, and authoritarianism, one of the most important realizations is the close relationship between poetry and resistance. Bengali poetry's rebellious themes—such as the exaltation of resistance, the denunciation of tyranny, and the celebration of freedom—display a rich history of political participation that is anchored in the experiences of past and present conflicts. From the revolutionary voices of early nationalists like Kazi Nazrul Islam, Sukanta Bhattacharya, and Shamsur Rahman, Bengali poets have incorporated criticisms of fascism and authoritarianism into their poetry, presenting them as a component of a broader struggle for justice and human dignity. These poets actively participated in the larger liberation movements in addition to documenting the sociopolitical milieu of their eras. Their writings, which are full of anti-colonial sentiment and appeals for group action, have stood the test of time and still serve as an inspiration for resistance movements today.

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