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Going through a plethora of articles and dissertations composed on 'Derozio and Young Bengal', I have felt that they deserve a wider and deeper study. That is why I have undertaken the work on Derozio and Young Bengal.

There are, in the main, two trends in an analysis of Derozio and Young Bengal - hero-worship or wholesale condemnation - that is to say, two groups of writers, hero-worshippers and debunkers. Derozio is viewed as a free thinker who derived from Drummond his love of Burns, his faith in the French Revolution and English radicalism, or a rationalist with "a razor's edge", or a pioneer in inculcating anti-English ideas or the French Revolutionary ideal of liberty upon the mind of his pupils. But Derozio is also regarded as an alienator of the Hindu youths from their


culture and tradition⁴ (cultural broker whose single purpose was to lead his pupils astray), or a Christian Collaborator.⁵ Young Bengal called "Derozians" is characterized either as "Radicals",⁶ or "leftists",⁷ or a set of anglicized and denationalized⁸ or immoral youths.⁹ According to Susobhan Sarkar, "The concept of the people and their rights which had flowered in the great western bourgeois democratic revolution that had awakened them did not take much concrete shape in their mind".¹⁰ According to Sumit Sarkar, "The transition from Banylal to Nabakumar and Nimchand ... epitomizes the tragedy of Young Bengal, and the crucial problem for the historian surely

5. Biswas, Dilip Kumar, Rammohun Samiksha (Bengali), p.430.
is to analyze and explain this process of degeneration and withering-away of the original radical impulse."¹¹ They were "a colonial intelligentsia"¹² and their "impact on Bengal society as a whole ... was very nearly nil."¹³ According to Gautam Chattopadhyay, "These educated youths ... were fervent patriots from first to last."¹⁴

In my work on Derozio and Young Bengal I have not been influenced by any of the above views. The intellectual movement of Derozio and Young Bengal was not based upon the repudiation of the colonial context of Bengal, which had not experienced a revolutionary change or basic socio-economic transformation in the sense in which the Western countries like England and France saw after the Industrial Revolution. It would be over-simplification to regard Derozio and Young Bengal either as "radicals" of Western type or a perfect counterpart of a Westerner. P.J. Marshall's

¹³. Ibid, p. 525
observation that "any radicalism among the Calcutta intellectuals rarely extended to challenging foreign rule overtly"\textsuperscript{15} is revealing. No less revealing is Jasbir Jain's remark that "there is no extant reference to it (The French Revolution of 1789-1792) in Derozio's poems."\textsuperscript{16}

Young Bengal's hatred for the word "Tory" and love of Whig liberalism or of Adam Smith's idea of free trade should not be confounded with their radicalism as some writers\textsuperscript{17} consider them to be so. The Government of England, whether it was formed by the Tory or the Whig party, would hardly make any fundamental change in the colonial policy for the benefit of the Indian people at large. The principle of free trade, even if it be honestly applied in the colonial context without any protection to indigenous industries, would lead to the uneven competition between Indian handicraft and British machine industries, resulting in the ruin of the former without any viable alternative industrial growth for progressive national development.

\textsuperscript{15} Marshall, P.J. Bengal: The British Bridge-head, Eastern India, 1740-1828, The New Cambridge History of India, II. 2, p. 177.


\textsuperscript{17} To cite, for example, The Calcutta Monthly Journal, No. XXXVII, 1837, pp. 83-84; Majumdar, B.B., History of Political Thought In India: From Rammohan To Dayananda, pp. 79-80.
One may raise a few valid questions respecting the prevalent analysis of the role of Derozio and Young Bengal. Did Derozio, an East Indian with certain predilections for the west, make outright and wholesale condemnation of Indian culture, religion and tradition? Was Young Bengal as a group alienated from indigenous culture? Was Young Bengal a single unified group in Derozio's time or afterwards? Can they be properly called "Derozians"?

The writings on Young Bengal did not usually cover the role of Young Bengal in the period after the outbreak of 1857. In order to trace the legacy of Derozio's teachings and to make a proper assessment of the role of Young Bengal in the 19th century it is necessary for us to explain the ideas and activity of Young Bengal till their death.

In my work I have avoided hasty generalizations or abstract theorization. There is debate regarding historical methodology or interpretation. Edward W. Said's view of orientalism "as a western style for dominating, restructuring and having an authority over the orient" has raised keen controversy in intellectual circle. Without going into the controversy regarding Said's interpretation of orientalism, it may be said that the contextuality of different

objective situations and the intentionality of the discourse-writers or of the leaders of movements in different contexts require to be treated separately and carefully in analysing trends of history. In my work I have taken care to analyse the context or the historical perspective in which Derozio and Young Bengal appeared on the historical scene.

In my assessment of the role of Derozio and Young Bengal I have tried to make an unbiased academic exercise. Of course, I am cautious about an abstract approach. 19

My humble submission is that I have tried to make an assessment of the role of Derozio and Young Bengal in the light of available evidence. The work consists of nine chapters along with a conclusion, appendices and bibliography.

The first chapter, 'Educational Controversy And the Appointment of Derozio', unfolds the interesting discussions and debate regarding the orientalist policy of the Government and the introduction of English education in India as

19. In this connection one may refer to the curious observation of Jasbir Jain: "In the final instance, it must be admitted that any assessment of Derozio as a poet should not be linked with any historical or political assessment. It has to rest on his poetic merit" - Jain, Jasbir, op. cit., p. 59; This is the view of one who believes in the theory of 'Arts for the sake of Arts' which is highly debatable.
initiated by different schools of thought or by intellectuals, English and Indian. It was at that time that Derozio was appointed a teacher in English and History in the Hindu College.

The second chapter, 'Political And Economic Agitations of Derozio's Time', seeks to explain the reformist ethos of the agitations of Derozio's time. Next, it proceeds to analyse the nature of patriotic spirit as reflected in Derozio's poems, Derozio's attitude towards the British rule, agitations of the Bengali intellectuals led by Ram-mohun Roy or of the Eurasians, and the limitations as well as distinctiveness of Derozio's political views and sentiments.

The third chapter, 'The socio-religious concepts of Derozio', seeks to analyse the sources of Derozio's concepts, his attitude towards Hindu superstitions and customs and his methods of disseminating his ideas. In an assessment of Derozio's socio-religious views and outlook whether the charges of atheism, immorality and collaboration with the Christian missionaries brought against Derozio were valid or not have been examined.

The fourth chapter, 'Derozio: Teacher Par Excellence', gives one an idea about the syllabus of English and History prescribed for the classes in which Derozio taught, the peculiarity of his teaching, his role in the promotion of
English education, his attitude towards oriental learning and his qualities as a teacher. It also explains the reasons why he went into the oblivion.

The fifth chapter, 'Implications And Results of Derozio's Teachings', focusses one's attention upon the impact of Derozio's teachings upon Young Bengal and reaction of the society against Derozio and Young Bengal.

The chapters, six to nine, are devoted to an examination of the ideas and activity of Young Bengal after Derozio's death. The sixth chapter, 'Young Bengal And Anglo-Oriental Education', discusses the agitation of Young Bengal for English education, intellectual, technical or professional, medical, moral and religious. It is noteworthy that they stood for the cultivation of vernacular and oriental languages and education of the masses in vernacular, and left a mark in the field of Bengali prose literature.

The seventh chapter, 'Young Bengal And Religious Views And Reform', analyses the polarity of Young Bengal on the basis of their faith in Christianity, Brahmaism or Natural Theism or on that of their closeness to the Brahmans. The diversity and complexity of religious views of many members of Young Bengal are noteworthy.

The eighth chapter, 'Young Bengal and Socio-religious Reform', discusses the stance of Young Bengal on socio-religious issues in the pre-SAGK (Society for the Acquisition
of General Knowledge established in 1838) period and in the SAGK period and in its aftermath, the controversies regarding Young Bengal and the role of Young Bengal in socio-religious reformation since late 40s of the 19th century along with their limitations and contributions.

The ninth chapter, 'Young Bengal And Political And Economic Ideas And Reform', contains an analysis of the different phases of Young Bengal's views and activity - in the period before the arrival of George Thompson in Bengal towards the close of 1842, or after the advent of Thompson and the formation of the Bengal British India Society in 1843, and after the merger of the Bengal British India Society with the Landholders' Society in 1851. It throws interesting light on Young Bengal's views and role during and after the Mutiny of 1857 or till the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885.

In conclusion it has been contended that neither Derozio nor Young Bengal was purely an Anglicist or an Orientalist or a radical of the western type. Young Bengal cannot be called "Derozian" in the proper sense of the term. Nor can they be properly called "Babus" or "Naba-Babus" or "Colonial intelligentsia" or a set of immoral and denationalized native youths. The intellectual movement of

20. I have not used the term "native" in a derogatory sense in which a number of Europeans used it in those days.
Derozio and Young Bengal bore traits which had something in common with other intellectual movements of the time, or had something separate from them, or shared the basic limitations of the age, or which had their own limitations as well as distinctiveness or positive essence in 19th century Bengal.

In composing this work I have taken care to go through original sources. In analysing and assessing the role of Derozio and Young Bengal writers and historians in general have mainly relied on secondary sources of a selective nature. My work is based on an extensive use of manuscript and printed or published records and secondary sources. The records or works I have consulted are the following:

1) Manuscript records in the National Archives, New Delhi, and the State Archives, Calcutta, West Bengal.
2) Printed records in the State Archives, Calcutta.
3) Published records or selections from records.
4) Parliamentary Papers.
5) Proceedings of the societies or associations of Young Bengal or associations and organizations with which Young Bengal were associated.
6) Works of Derozio and Young Bengal.
7) Newspapers, Journals and Periodicals which were published or circulated by Young Bengal.
8) Selections from Newspapers and Periodicals edited or run by Derozio and Young Bengal.

9) Contemporary Newspapers, Periodicals, Gazettes etc.

10) Biographies of Derozio and Young Bengal or of eminent contemporaries along with autobiographies of some members of Young Bengal or some contemporaries.

11) Other secondary works in English and Bengali.

I have completed this research work under the fostering care and superintendence of my supervisor, Dr. Ramakanta Chakrabarty, Professor of History, University of Burdwan. In the prosecution of my work I have been continually inspired by Dr. Bhaskar Chatterjee, Professor of the History Department of Burdwan University. I am also thankful to other Lecturers, Readers, Professors and staff of the History Department of Burdwan University for their sympathy. I have worked in the National Archives, New Delhi, State Archives, Calcutta, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, Uttarpara Public Library, and in the libraries of the Burdwan University, the Calcutta University, Bengal Legislative Assembly, British Indian Association (Calcutta), Centre for studies in social science (Calcutta), and Deshbandhu Mahavidyalaya, Chittaranjan. I am grateful to the staff of the above-mentioned archives, institutions and libraries for the valuable co-operation they have rendered to me.