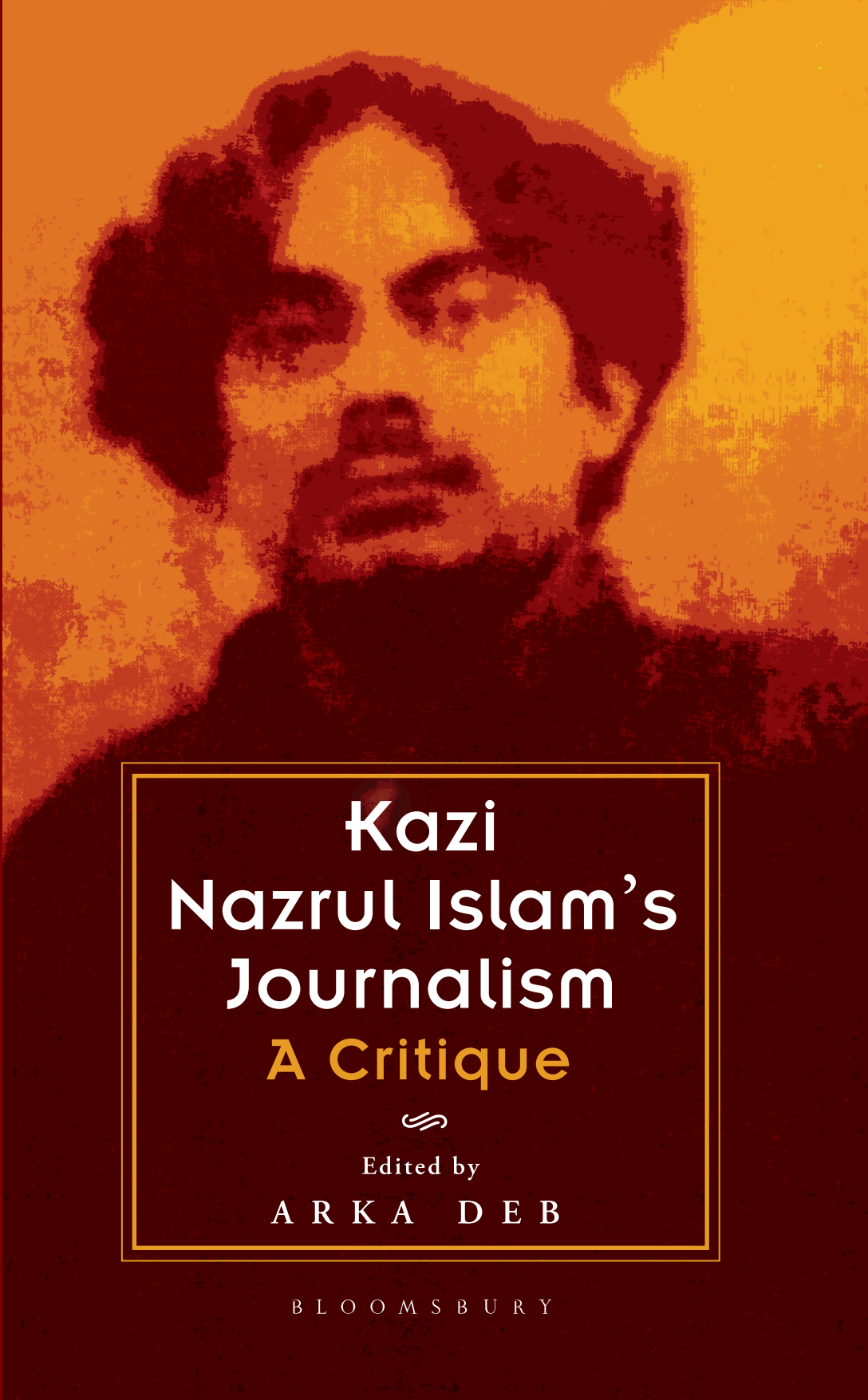

Kazi Nazrul Islam's Journalism

A Critique

Edited by

ARKA DEB

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Preface

Nazrul was no sage, nor was he gentle; he didn't preach, he rather intervened. An anti-colonial revolutionary, and a great music composer, the 'Rebel Poet' Kazi Nazrul Islam (1899–1976) is celebrated as the national poet in Bangladesh and remembered equally fondly in India. While his biographies, songs and poetry have remained bestsellers, it has almost gone into oblivion that he was primarily a journalist. His journalistic writings in the first decades of the twentieth century engaged with prominent issues of the time, which remain socially equally pertinent even today. His journalistic prose, immensely popular amongst the youth of Bengal, introduced new styles of writing, new expressions and rhetoric, as well as set eclectic examples for contemporary journalism. Unfortunately, though, this significant body of Nazrul's journalistic exercise largely remains un-archived.

In this book (an aptly abridged version of my research project 'Translation of the Editorials by Kazi Nazrul Islam and a Critique of his Journalism' at The Nazrul Centre for Social and Cultural Studies [NCSCS], Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol, India), I aim to resituate and illuminate Kazi Nazrul Islam in the history of Indian journalism, analysing the historical context and the ideological underpinnings of his editorials. Here, I have compiled a collection of English translations of select editorials, which duly uphold and support my arguments and critiques of Nazrul's journalistic style and goals, and contextualise the relevance of his works vis-à-vis contemporary affairs.

The book is divided into two parts: (a) a critical introduction to Nazrul's journalistic oeuvre and (b) select translated editorials from Bengali originals published in *Nabajug*, *Dhumketu*, *Langol* and *Ganavani* and *Nabajug* (new phase). Divided into four subsections, the first part of the introduction is a critique of and an attempt at historiography. It also discusses the challenges of such an endeavour—absence of proper archiving being the primary one—which this book attempts to fulfil.

The first part of the introduction delves into key characteristics of Nazrul's journalism. The three subsections thereafter rigorously engage with his work published in the three key newspapers, elaborating the chief thematic entanglements. The introduction situates Nazrul in a particular tradition of Bengali journalism, through a genealogical study, and explores its shifts with respect to political ideology. It opens up Nazrul the public intellectual through a study of his body of work, and interrogates his modes of representation of the marginal, his constant conflict with censorship and oppression, and his unique journalistic ethics of embracing the 'other'. An exploration of Nazrul's engagement with *Nabajug* reflects his belief in secularism, his expertise in capturing the current affairs under catchy headlines for his editorials, often borrowed from popular texts with a cultural appeal, as well as his vision for *Nabajug* as a tool to fight against imperialism. The subsection on *Dhumketu* elaborates Nazrul's emergence as a public intellectual and a voice of revolution. His editorials in this paper exhibit an intertwining of his political ideals with religious iconography; they draw a connection between truth, power, religious conflict and boundaries of independent journalism—facets integral to Nazrul's journalistic career. The final section of this introduction brings Nazrul's socialist beliefs and activism to light—evident in his active involvement in the welfare of peasants and labourers. In a discussion of *Langol-Ganavani*, the introduction not only elaborates on the evolution of Nazrul's journalistic style but also his vision. This critical synthesis, however, does not only reflect my own understanding of the journalist Nazrul. I have taken the liberty of discussing various issues, pertaining to Nazrul's journalistic sojourn, with two imminent journalists of modern-day India—Paranjoy Guha Thakurta and Swati Bhattacharya—who shared their invaluable perspectives, emerging from their respective expertise, to address Nazrul's current relevance, particularly pertaining to a fastly developing sector of Indian journalism today. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, one of the most celebrated independent journalists of contemporary India, having assumed his own share of anti-establishment stances throughout his career, possibly represents the true successor of Nazrul. In his thoughtful responses to a series of multivalent questions, Guha Thakurta, illuminates the future of independent journalism in India. Swati Bhattacharya, on the other hand, although being a senior assistant

editor in one of the renowned mainstream media houses, has explored areas of peasant journalism in her own rights. Bhattacharya shares her insights with us, contextualising Nazrul's activism for peasants' rights, and its relevance in today's Indian political scenario. Throughout the first part of the introduction, I have incorporated their valuable inputs in my analyses of Nazrul's journalistic life and its relevance with certain critical concerns of modern Indian journalism. This initial section of the book, therefore, maps Nazrul as a social journalist, as he evolved according to the developing political milieu of India, thus establishing an image, exemplary to independent journalists of present-day India.

The second section of the book serves as a representative archive of his available editorials in prose and a particular one in poetry ('Anondomoyeer Agomone'). The relevance of keeping the latter as the sole poetry-editorial in this volume owes to its immense significance in Nazrul's journalistic career, which we have further discussed. Forty pieces (fourteen from *Nabajug*, twenty from *Dhumketu*, four from *Langol-Ganavani* and two from the new phase of *Nabajug*) have been collated, chronologically arranged, and translated in this book. Methodologically, the volume chiefly relies on communicative translation from Bengali to English, as the principal objective of this collection is to expand the access to the body of Nazrul's journalistic work to a wider readership. However, occasionally the volume takes flexible recourse to other methods like literal translation, free translation and idiomatic translation. The glossary serves as a supplement to the translation as it offers short notes on culturally rooted lexicons and idioms.

We strongly believe that this book would open up new vistas of scholarly pursuits, providing the scope for further exploration by Nazrul-enthusiasts—discovering the journalist-editor Nazrul, beyond his most prominent identity as a litterateur. Essentially, our effort was to strike a prism with the brilliance of an unfathomed facet of Nazrul, thus, unfurl his persona from a novel perspective. We hope that our humble effort, represented in this book, possibly yields itself into rediscovering unencountered colours in the Nazrul spectrum.

Arka Deb

Introduction

Resituating Kazi Nazrul Islam in the History of Indian Journalism

The first ever newspaper in India was published on 29 January 1780. Having tried his luck at several business ventures, the founder of Indian print media, James Augustus Hicky, had to go to prison for not having paid his enormous debts. Later in his life, his attempt at the newspaper business was more to build back his finances from the ensuing profit. However, it is undeniable that he somehow managed to start the news business in this country. Considering this the coronation of the sector, the history of Indian newspapers has already existed for a good part of over 240 years. Naturally, it had been a rather eventful voyage; there could be a million possible perspectives to explore the evolution of this field. Systematically, a multifaceted Indian news media was therefore born. 1 May 1819 marked the publication of the first English daily; 14 June 1839, that of the first Bengali daily. Initially, lured by the prospect of profit, many Europeans came into the Indian newspaper business; nevertheless, it soon unfurled otherwise. The seed of an anti-imperialist tradition gradually germinated and assumed a towering stature in no time, preceding the independence of the nation. Looking back, one could certainly admit that Bengal provided the fertile grounds for Indian journalism to evolve into its present form. Several exceptionally talented Western-educated people from this land exemplified a tradition of audacious journalism. Alongside, this period had the figures of balladists (*charan-kobi*) and orators (*kathak-thakur*), whose verses were a source for keeping up with the affairs of the time. However, it is an irrefutable fact that as early as 1818, Englishmen such as James Silk Buckingham embodied an inspiration for democratic ideas and compassionate journalism through anti-bureaucracy activism, as visible in the bi-weekly papers, *The Calcutta Chronicle of Politics*, *Commercial* and *Literary Gazette*. Owing to the close acquaintance

of Raja Rammohan Roy and Buckingham, the newspapers *Samachar Darpan* and *Digdarshan* initiated by the Serampore Baptist Mission primarily represented the middle-class Bengali orthodox mentality. However, we see the emerging association of libertarian personalities such as Henry Louis Vivian Derozio with it. On the other hand, journalists such as Ishwar Gupta, staunch believers of nationalism, who nurtured ideas which were diametrically opposed to Derozio, were a part of the same news agency. Overall, the British Government never quite approved of the rise of an Indian brand of journalism. In 1823, John Adams implemented the licensing regulation, also known as the Adam's Gagging Act, which by transforming itself in various ways, continues to exist until this day, even after over two centuries. However, one could borrow from Tagore's lyric and reiterate, 'No matter how much you restrain us with governance/ The weakest of all still is endowed with strength' (1992, 266). Essentially, Indian journalists have proved this idea repeatedly.

Let us consider Harishchandra Mukhopadhyay's newspaper, *The Hindu Patriot*. The founder member of the Bhawanipur Brahmo Samaj, Harishchandra's unforgettable journalistic endeavours stirred up the society, especially in the context of the Sepoy Mutiny (1857) as well as the Indigo Revolt (1859). For his reports, Mukhopadhyay himself visited the districts where he collected first-hand testimonials of indigo farmers, documenting the extent of the ruthlessness of the indigo planters. With the support of poets such as Manomohan Ghosh, Shishir Kumar Ghosh and others, he wrote a fierce report on this subject. Harishchandra never hesitated to state his objective opinions on matters such as farmers' and soldiers' uprisings; his journalism always aligned itself with the demand for justice and taking a position against British rule. A report titled 'Atrocities and Retribution', published in *The Hindu Patriot* on 6 May 1857, stated, 'History will, we conceive, take a very different view of the fact of the great Indian revolt of 1857 from what contemporaries have taken off from' (quoted in Bhattacharya 2008, 108).

The characteristic Indian journalistic tradition of calling a spade a spade began its journey with Mukhopadhyay's efforts. His successor, Shishir Kumar Ghosh, along with his compatriots, started the newspaper *Amritabazar Patrika* in the year 1868, published in the Paluya Magura

village of Jessore district. *Amritabazar Patrika* proved to be a real threat to British rule. In one of the articles published here in 1874, Ghosh called the Indigo Revolt the first ever anti-British revolution of Bengal. When the British Raj imposed the Vernacular Press Act to suppress the rise of this newspaper, it took one night for Ghosh, immensely talented and aptly discerning as he was, to change the medium of language of publication for his newspaper from Bengali to English. In the later years, *Sandhya*, *Vande Mataram*, *Jugantar* and innumerable others carried forward the journalistic precedent set by *Amritabazar Patrika*. The long history of India's freedom movement, along with its multidimensional course of development, gradually culminated in three decisive political ideologies. On the one hand, was the school of Gandhi-led nationalism; on the other was that of revolutionary nationalism, emerging primarily from Bengal. A rebellious political identity was shaping up in parallel, inspired by leftist ideas. Although the common goal of the three political movements was founded on anti-British sentiments, the Indian journalism of the time efficiently captured the unique essence of each of them and illustrated various arguments, both for and against, their activities.

Many believe that journalism in India in colonial times lacked financial support, which is rather a misconception. Many of the news media houses became advertisement-dependent institutions who successfully provided employment for many. However, it is true that journalism as a career was significantly driven by the social cause embedded in this profession. This domain had not yet been converted into an 'industry'. The middle-class intellectual community used this medium extensively to express their voices. In language as diverse as possible, with impeccable consistency, these newspapers reflected the conflict of opinions on contemporary issues, as well as played the primary role of educating citizens of the nation, making them aware of the importance of nurturing a sense of nationalism, notwithstanding the fury of the government. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta reflects upon how this scene has gradually changed under the modern condition. In the context of today's journalism sector, Guha Thakurta says:

> But when you look at the media in India, because what is happening around the world is also affecting the media in India, you are also seeing a huge impact; you are seeing growing dependence of the traditional

> mainstream media on government advertising. Because you are now more dependent on government advertising, you are becoming more and more subservient to the government. You are not criticising the government. So, you are not playing the role that independent journalism is supposed to play in a democracy. (Interview dated 22 October 2020, Kolkata, telephonic conversation transcript)

He goes on to illustrate the situation even further, saying:

> Now, at one level, as advertising revenues across the world, and also in India, have either come down, or remained stagnant or hardly gone up, there's been a double whammy. Because, people don't want to pay for what they read, what they hear, or what they watch. So, who pays the writer, who pays the videographer, who pays the photographer, who pays the designer, who pays the singer, who pays the musicians, who pays the composer, who pays the creative artist? Do they not all have families? Do their children's education or school fees not have to be paid for? Do their home fires have not been burning? (Interview dated 22 October 2020, Kolkata, telephonic conversation transcript)

Guha Thakurta continues:

> Speaking of the modern times, the social media, and the media as a whole, has become the biggest instrument to spread hatred against one out of seven people in India who are Muslims. This is where you have to link it to what happened during Nazrul's time. That was a colonial rule. Today we are seeing authoritarian right-wing rule. We are seeing majoritarianism. We are seeing Indian-style fascism. We are seeing that journalists, among others, anybody who is a critic of the government, is promptly labelled [as] anti-national. And, as deshodrohi … traitors. We've seen the colonial-era laws of sedition being used even today. We've seen how laws like the UAPA (Unlawful Activities [Prevention] Act) have been used to target all descendants. The difference is, no government is happy with criticism from journalists, from independent journalists. (Interview dated 22 October 2020, Kolkata)

This entire historical course of Indian journalism has been academically explored, although after considerable delay. Such discourses even came to be included within the university curriculum; it is mandatory to know about the history of Indian news media for students pursuing a degree course on journalism. Some readings of this illustrious

history have been from a nationalistic perspective, others inspired by Marxism or even a sub-nationalist point of view. One of the oldest, as well as the most revered books on this subject, still happens to be *Romance of Indian Journalism*, published at Calcutta University in 1979. Detailed analyses on how Indian journalism evolved over the years have been skilfully captured, spread across thirteen chapters, in yet another classic text, *History of Indian Journalism*, authored by J. Natarajan. This book is almost irreplaceable in its explanations on a range of topics including the expansion of journalism across Bombay and Madras, after Calcutta, followed by a national uprising; the almost journalist-like role played by personalities such as Tilak–Gokhale and others; the tradition of a Gandhian school of journalism; and even the oppressive laws and policies implemented by the government. Additionally, Communist Party leader as well as the notable journalist of *Amritabazar Patrika* in the pre-independence days, Mohit Maitra, retraces the history of Indian journalism in his book, although this memorabilia slightly suffered in its rendition, perhaps owing to the feeble health of the cancer-affected Maitra.

This subject has been adequately explored even in Bengali. In this context, few books such as Binoy Ghosh's *Samayikpatre Banglar Samaj Chitro*, an edited volume *Sangbadpotre Shekaler Kotha* and *Bangla Samayik Patra* deserve special mention. On the other hand, the chronology of news media has been meticulously documented by Nandalal Bhattacharya. Tarapada Pal authored *Bharater Sangbadpatra o Sangbadikotar Itihash*. Although Indian students of journalism do not get the opportunity to work with the actual newspapers of older times due to insufficient efforts of archiving, it is equally true that there is no dearth of books on this subject for acquiring a comprehensive understanding.

Our particular endeavour in this present volume is not to revisit this history of journalism, but rather to rediscover and resituate Nazrul Islam in the course of that history. One might ask, then, to what effect serves this extended prologue? The name 'Nazrul Islam', for his admirers across Bengal (West Bengal, India and Bangladesh), at once rekindles memories of renowned songs that he composed. Equally fondly remembered is his poetry, verses of which have become

legendary. This is the primary image that has been created for the Nazrul-persona. However, there is a dearth of significant attempts to transcend his existing image, to explore him from a novel and critical perspective. As a true interdisciplinary giant as expressed through his versatility, Nazrul's evaluation hardly does him justice, considering the enormous body of work to his credit. Such a lacuna could be attributed to several factors. A tendency of perceiving him from only a closed box has rendered his image godly. The poet has become legendary, yet his charisma could never outdo the limitations of narrow interpretations. Firstly, his work has mostly been evaluated by literary enthusiasts, who are undoubtedly established in their fields by dint of their training; however, there remains a serious and significant lack in the evaluation of Nazrul's contribution to the history of Indian journalism.

Most importantly, the biggest hurdle in a critical assessment of Nazrul's journalistic work has been the absence of systematic archiving. Unlike the excellent preservation of Rabindranath Tagore's works, for example, those of Nazrul has never been pursued with comparable care. In the grand collection of Nazrul's works, most articles remain unedited, without supplementary annotations, while others are not even restored. For instance, the satirical articles that Nazrul wrote under the column Chanachur for the paper *Saugat* have not been included in any of the existing collections of Nazrul's 'complete works', thus resulting in a huge gap in a holistic understanding of Nazrul. Our aim, in this book, is to illuminate journalist Nazrul, to archive the available editorials written by him and present them to a global audience, and contextualise the relevance of his work vis-à-vis contemporary affairs. We thus aim to locate Nazrul in the historical milieu of Indian journalism. Strikingly, we notice that as soon as Nazrul began his career as a news editor, he rapidly became quite popular as a public intellectual. Nevertheless, whether in the aforementioned books or the university curricula for journalism, Nazrul's contribution as a journalist remains missing. Our stance, in this book, is to look beyond the available histories of Indian journalism and problematise this omission.

We, being inspired by the tradition of the plurality of Bengali culture, have therefore tried to shed light on Nazrul's extraordinary range in a journalist's capacity. *Nabajug, Dhumketu, Langol, Ganavani* and *Nabajug*

(new phase)—these five particular papers are where Nazrul left his mark of excellence. To put it succinctly, Nazrul succeeded in creating a platform for many to express their opinions, in a post-independent India. As a dutiful journalist, he continued to determinedly shape the public conscience. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, while sharing his views on this context, mentions:

> Without doubts, newspapers and periodicals had a great role to play in Indian nationalism. Editors and journalists of the time were committed to honestly expressing their opposition to the British tyranny. Nazrul was someone who had a peculiar training in journalism—think of how he had, in a way, no formal training in journalism at all, while on the other hand, he could imbibe values from a situation and express his honest opinion, an immediate, unflinching response. The journalists contemporary to Nazrul, himself included, of course, had an intuitive sensibility—the greatest strength of a journalist—courage to speak the truth to power, to express their opinion in an uninhibited manner despite knowing that it would land them in trouble with the colonial rulers. (Interview dated 22 October 2020, Kolkata, telephonic conversation transcript)

In the same veins of discussion, when Guha Thakurta draws comparisons to Indian news media in present times, he regretfully mentions saying:

> Now, let's step back and see what's happening in the world today. The internet is barely over thirty years old. The founding fathers of the internet, individuals like Tim Berners-Lee, Vint Cerf, they thought the internet would be this medium that could not only provide information, it could provide education, knowledge and wisdom. It would make the underprivileged stronger, it would strengthen democracy; it would weaken authoritarianism. But, very few of them could have imagined that what we read, what we hear, what we see on the internet is today controlled by a few multinational corporations.
>
> Alphabet. Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix. Outside the Peoples' Republic of China, just six platforms account for over 90 per cent of all the information that traverses the internet at any given point of time. And these six platforms are actually controlled by two corporate conglomerates. Two of the largest in the world. One is Alphabet, which owns Google, the various Google platforms; it owns YouTube. It also owns the android operating system. Facebook is the biggest social media platform. But, Facebook also includes WhatsApp and also

> includes Instagram. So these six platforms, Google, YouTube, Android, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram: together account for over 95 per cent plus, of all the information that moves across the internet at any given point of time. So, these giant monopolies are controlling what people watch, what people hear, what people see.
>
> Not only that, they are documenting human behaviour. Not only your favourite song, or your favourite singer, your favourite musicians, your favourite films, your favourite food. They are going beyond where you live, your sex, your age. They are also mapping your political preferences. They are gathering information about your behaviour to predict what your behaviour would be like. And, you are the product, you are the service. If you see the film 'The Social Dilemma', you will see that the social media and the providers of drugs are the two industries that describe their consumers as users. So, the individual is no longer a citizen. She or he is a consumer. She or he is a product. He or she is the service too. So, this is a huge change that has happened. (Interview dated 22 October 2020, Kolkata)

Nazrul clearly stated his thoughtful opinions on one of the three emerging political views in colonial India, which we have mentioned earlier in this chapter. He even surpassed the limits of political affairs and touched new horizons on a diverse range of topics. The immense expanse of his pursuits made him an inspirational figure for his contemporaries to follow. He had been blessed by the good wishes of luminaries such as Rabindranath Tagore and Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay. He himself published articles authored by political giants such as Subhash Chandra Bose and Chittaranjan Das. He even went to prison as a repercussion of one of his poems published as an editorial. The language he used for his journalistic articles was rather attractive and unique. To express in terms of present-day vocabulary, Nazrul's trend followed that of popular journalism. We intend to identify this particular trend. Before we go into the details of our book, it is important that we first delve into some of the key characteristics of Nazrul's journalism, here.

Nazrul's journalistic career spanned about six years, although not without breaks. For various unavoidable circumstances, the course of his work was interrupted: sometimes, owing to confiscation of his newspapers, at others, due to impulsive decisions that he himself

had taken. For instance, one of the most memorable events was his imprisonment, being charged with dissent, which enforced the termination of his editorial role in March 1920. When the forty-ninth Bengali regiment was dissolved, Nazrul moved to Kolkata and started living with Muzaffar Ahmed. Nazrul–Muzaffar's camaraderie came to become especially significant having established their expansive influence. Initially, though, Nazrul lodged himself in Kolkata at Shailajananda Mukhopadhyay's den, located at Ramakanta Street. After a couple of days, the servant of the abode refused to wash Nazrul's dishes, after knowing his Muslim identity. Although Mukhopadhyay offered Nazrul lodging at his grandmother's house at 20, Badur Bagan Row, a house that was lying unoccupied then, Nazrul did not agree to the offer. He preferred to stay with Muzaffar Ahmed at 32, College Street. Hence, the evening daily *Nabajug*, co-edited by Nazrul and Muzaffar, was launched on 12 July 1920. Within the first fourteen days of its debut, on 26 July, *Nabajug* was banned by the British Government, as the paper had advertised for the Khilafat Committee. Following this incident, on 21 September, the paper was bailed out in exchange for a hefty sum of money, thus continuing with renewed determination. In December 1920, Nazrul however quit his editorial role at *Nabajug* and moved to Deoghar. Thus, in the initial phase, Nazrul was associated with this paper for about five months.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to specify the exact number of editorials written by Nazrul during these five months, as the publications have never been archived. A collection of selected editorials, however, was published in 1922 as a book titled *Jugobani*. The British Government, most evidently, banned this book, which was re-published in independent India in 1948. *Jugobani* comprises twenty-one editorial articles published by Nazrul, the qualitative evaluation of which have been presented here in the subsequent sections. To remark on just the quantity of production, one has no way to deny that Nazrul became intricately involved with his duties at *Nabajug*, no matter how short-lived his tenure might have been.

We learn from Muzaffar Ahmed's *Qazi Nazrul Islam: Smritikatha* (1981) that after returning from Deoghar, Nazrul worked for a month at the newspaper *Sebak*. Effectively, he soon quit *Sebak*, for the journal

editor restricted Nazrul's liberty of expression. Nazrul would henceforth assume the role of editor at a semiweekly paper, *Dhumketu*, which he started with financial support from a certain Masood Ahmed, exactly two years and one month after *Nabajug* had first come into circulation. To put it rather simply, *Dhumketu* took the Calcuttan society by storm, as it also strengthened the prelude to several revolutionary movements, thus motivating the nation to unite under a larger goal of anti-imperialism.

Dhumketu has merited a single-sentence mention in the book *Romance in Indian Journalism*, as a newspaper published by Afzalul Haque, not indulging in any further information on the book (Basu 1979, 394). Although *Dhumketu*'s publisher indeed was Afzalul Haque, nevertheless it remains astonishingly unfathomable how such a striking name as that of Nazrul, as editor of the journal, did not catch the fancy of the author. The last issue of *Dhumketu* was published on 27 January 1923.

On 26 September, in the twelfth issue of *Dhumketu*, Nazrul wrote a sufficiently explicit yet necessarily understated political poem, titled 'Anondomoyeer Agomone' (On the Mother of Happiness' Advent); it resulted in his consequent arrest from Kumilla on 23 November 1922. Amaresh Kanjilal continued the publication of the paper, even after Nazrul's imprisonment, however not for too long. Thirty-two issues of *Dhumketu* were published in total, twenty-seven of which were eventually compiled as a book, *Nazruler* '*Dhumketu*', by the Nazrul Institute of Bangladesh. This book could be considered the core resource in the pursuit of critical analyses of *Dhumketu*.

On 15 December 1923, Nazrul was released from prison. This phase of Nazrul's life was marked by his alliance in matrimony with Pramila; alongside, in 1924 at the age of 25, Nazrul made his first acquaintance with Gandhi. Thus, his political inclination manifested itself during the following years; moreover, he was already significantly influenced by leftist ideology. It was as if, he now finally took the plunge to be involved actively in politics. He became a regular at party conventions, as an attendee or a spokesperson, which shall be further discussed in the later sections of this chapter. In November 1925, the Labour Swaraj Party was constituted with the Congress party, led by Qutubuddin Ahmed,

Hemanta Kumar Sarkar, Shamsuddin Hosain and others. The mouthpiece of this newly formed party, *Langol*, was written by Nazrul Islam, and first came into circulation on 16 December 1925. Nazrul's name was officially mentioned on the paper in the capacity of the director, and that of Manibhushan Mukhopadhyay as the editor. Nazrul's legendary poems such as 'Samyabadi' and 'Sabyasachi' were published in *Langol*. After sixteen published issues of the paper, *Langol* transformed itself into *Ganavani*, in which we find several of Nazrul's articles that resonated strongly with anti-communal sentiments. It was around November of the same year, nonetheless, that his electoral defeat marked the end of Nazrul's political career. In other words, his journalistic career also effectively ended with this event.

The earlier part of the 1930s saw the emergence of Nazrul's musical ventures. According to Ghulam Murshid, Nazrul ushered in a new era of literature through his remarkable ghazals (2018, 283). At this stage, his association with journals and newspapers was mostly in the scope of literature.

In May 1927, the poet Benazir Ahmed took the initiative to publish the monthly newspaper *Nawroz*, the publisher and printer of which was Afzak-Ul-Haq. The newspaper office was located at 45-B Mechua Bazar Street. Being delighted by the news, Nazrul wrote a congratulatory letter to the editor of *Nawroz* on 27 May 1927. This letter was later published in *Ganavani* under the title 'Letter written to the *Nawroz* editor'. Following this, Nazrul joined *Nawroz*, where his remuneration was fixed at 125 rupees, while a contract was drawn out between Nazrul and the newspaper. It was decided that upon signing the contract, the copyright of all the following articles that Nazrul would author shall rest with *Nawroz*. Nazrul's first publication in the paper was a poem, essentially dedicated to the newspaper itself, titled 'Nawroz'. The first chapter of Nazrul's novel *Kuhelika* was also published in the June 1927 issue of *Nawroz*. Following this, in the same month, Nazrul's play named *Jhilmil* was published; the July issue published the first two scenes of his other play *Sara Bridge*. However, following a restraining order issued by the police, *Nawroz* stopped the circulation in October 1927, thus rendering Nazrul's contractual obligations null and void.