

TEENS and TWENTIES

US vs THEM

A War Between the Two Generations

by Susmita Roy

B ANGI! Bang! Drat. someone's at the door again. Can't a teenager have some peace and privacy? What is it Ma? No. I am not trying to bring the whole house down. Mother, I'm just trying to concentrate on "Nirvana". No. Ma its not the Nirvana you think it is, its the name of a band (my heart and soul). (sheesh!) O.k if you insist I'll lower the volume.....

Man. They just don't understand music, this generation of theirs. Heavy metal, hard rock, now thats what we call music — music that talks about us. What do they get out of listening to the same old stereotyped sentimental stuff? The same old Eric Clapton, Cliff Richard — blah! The same goes for all those old Bengali songs that they never seem to tire of.

"Ritu darling, do you really have to wear that thing?" "Ammu, its not a "thing". They're called leggings and they're in style. All my friends wear them. What's so bad about

them, they cover my legs don't they? And besides, didn't you wear horribly tight-fitting sarwar kameezes with georgette dupattas in your times?"

"Well its not the same thing, Ritu dear." "Ammu, you know, the other day a teacher told off Amio for wearing really tight jeans. Its deplorable! If the teachers could've worn those bell bottoms and suffocating shirts with weird collars in their times, what's wrong with the world-wide accepted blue jeans of today? I wonder what your parents thought of the 60's and 70's fashion!"

Anirban, stop laughing and

let's go somewhere else. The guardians are eying us suspiciously and staring at us with a condemning look. They're probably whispering to one another how insolent we are and are probably wondering what the world has got to. One of them is very likely remarking with a frown. "How 'beyadap' these girls and boys are, to be slapping each other's backs and giggling their heads off in front of senior respectable citizens like us! In our days it would be sacrilege to even talk to boys in public. Chh, Chh..... these spoilt teenagers should be locked up by their parents". Its a pity Anirban, that our parent's generation still refuse

to recognize the fact that girls and boys can simply be pals to one another.

Papa, if one more time, you say, "when we were young," I'll scream! I've heard at least a hundred and fifty times how obedient and respectful you were towards your parents and seniors.

How you never spoke back or argued; how you said "yes mother" and "no father" all the time; and how you kept your head lowered in shame when you were scolded. But papa this is the nineties and it should not be wrong to express your own opinions and views about things with parents and to talk freely about anything and everything. Don't you see, if I listened to you and you listened to me for a change there would be no generation gap and we'd understand each other so much better. We may be young and immature and not understand a lot of things but at least you could patiently consider what we have to say....

how the good things in all generations multiply and then lets try to divide wisdom among all.

The last and the most important thing that really frustrates me, and I am sure it frustrates many others like me; is that when you talk about the moral character of our generation and our society, you must remember one thing, man makes a society for good or for worse, there are certain problems which you should help us to solve rather than put up a protective umbrella, you should not consider your generation with our's because you are actually miles away from us. You should not have a negative attitude towards our generation you should look to it with positiveness, because I think there is nothing wrong with us.

Lastly what I would like to mention here is let go of your son/daughter set them free and you will see that when they learn about whats right and whats wrong they will change, and if you don't set them free they will do something very wrong that will provoke you to talk against our generation, but actually their is nothing wrong with our generation it is you who are in the wrong and living life in the past. It was a different time, a different era and we simply cannot adjust to that, neither can we bring it back!

To all the young people of this generation I would like to say, break this barricade build your own world and lets up hold the good things of our generation to our parents, and let them know that you want to be set free like a bird flying in the sky rather than be caged and spent your time in misery. Dear parents set us free!

There is nothing wrong in our generation that cannot be changed and assist us to reach for that star in the sky you promised to bring to us while we were in the cradles.

WE must consider ourselves lucky because of the fact that we will be witnessing the end of a great century and the beginning of yet another great one (most probably). Sometimes when I sit alone in the middle of the night in my balcony I wonder how the generation following us would be like, what would be their feeling, how would it be like? What are the changes we are going to have? Where will science go? What will it discover and most of all will there be peace in this world that all of us so long for?

I am pretty sure that all the dreams that we have for the new century will turn into reality: new vaccines for deadly diseases will be even more sophisticated and most of all, all the battle fields in this world will turn into rosefields or working fields whatever.

But the thing that haunts me day in and day out, the thing that gives me sleepless nights, is the attitude our parents have in rearing us. They never let go of us (unlike the western ones), because they think that we are too young or too immature to be set free in the real world. This mere thought of thinking us down gives me the chilling feeling down my spine, they just don't seem to understand that we need to be set free, we must be strong and bold so that we can survive on our own. But when we try to tell this to our mother or father that leave us alone, let us mix with friend, meet new ones, travel alone, they would say that a boy/girl from a good family never travels alone, they always travel with their parents or take a chaperon. They would simply say that they are trying to protect us from bad company. But I am not quite clear at one point, are they trying to tell us that they did not have bad boys/girls, company to be

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by Shahed Latif



exact, when they were, say, of our age?

During their era they also had drug addicts, they also had punks and gays, lesbians or are you dear parents trying to say that your generation did not have all these, let's call them, diversities? Yes I am not going to say that our generation should be marked as the epitome of all good things but it is

not as bad as our parents say or predict. Yes we have street gangs who roam the streets with shotguns and other deadly weapons but you can always avoid them if you want to; yes we have terrorism, vandalism but then youth of today have plus points too. Do not always count the differences, sometimes try to sum the advantages, you will then notice

Those were the Days, My Friend! For Teens & Twenty-ers of Today and Yesteryears — II

by Asrarul Islam Chowdhury

S o, we've come to the second leg of our "Journey through space and time" in our quest of analysing teens and twentiers of Bangladesh over the last three decades. What can we focus this week? There are so many topics we can highlight that, at times, the Author got carried away by adventurism. But then, we have to reach a decision, haven't we? One can't be driven by dreams for too long. You have to wake up at one time. We thus, finally decided to focus on music this week. Like the Carpenter song goes, "what lies in the future is a mystery to us all". Topic(s) to be discussed in forthcoming weeks rests secretly within the memory bank of the Author.

Music is playing inside my head Over and over and over again, my friend There's no end, to the music — Carole King

When one talks of music that has influenced teens and twentiers, one cannot but refer to music composed by youngsters. Popular music, or pop music in its short form, is the trend of music that started in the Western world — in Britain and America in particular — from the mid fifties. For the first time in human history, creative music fell into the hands of young and enterprising people. Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Elvis Presley, et al were the first generation mentors of the fifties — while The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young and Jim Morrison were the heroes of the second generation from the sixties. The first generation pioneers were of individual character, while the second were of group characteristic in general.

Western pop music was to have its toll on youngsters of Bangladesh too. Prior to liberation, our youngsters did not generally listen to music composed by young people, rather music composed by older people. It was not until "Bangladesh" became a reality in 1971 that young people got hold of the reins of pop music. The aspiration of our liberation war and the bold dream of five young men led to the genesis of this trend in music. These "Five Musketeers" were none other than Azam Khan, Feroze Shah, Ferdous Wahid, Fakir Alamgir and Jane Alam. All of them were individual artists. They jammed together — like David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash and Neil Young, or popularly known as CSNY, did in the sixties in America — in search of "Soul Music". The main impetus that drove them to jam was to guide young people right after independence through music and blend our traditional music with modern trends. The maestro among them was undoubtedly Azam Khan. In later times, Khan was to be unofficially crowned with the title of "King of Bangla Rock". The genius of Azam Khan cannot be measured simply by the rhythm of his music, but also in his exceptional ability to blend two trends of music. These two trends are folk and popular music. Indeed, he is our Bob Dylan. Dylan popularised Folk Rock throughout the Western world in the sixties. This is where the border line between Azam and his contemporaries lie and this is why he has been so much instrumental in successfully influencing young people over the years, 'not mentioning his faculty of being able to keep up with the times.

The main characteristic of the music of the five Musketeers was that they mainly used the harmonium and tabla. All of them had beards and long hair, a trend that was adopted from the "flower power" generation, i.e. the hippies of the late sixties and early seventies of the western world. Another feature that influenced their music was "The Concert for Bangladesh" staged by George Harrison and Pandit Ravi Shankar at Madison Square Garden on Sunday, 1st August 1971. It was not until 1973 that Radio Bangladesh introduced "World Music" as a regular feature. Youngsters used to experience hysteria at the news that someone had the LP in his/her possession.

Feroze Shah played a dominant role in our Folk Rock. "School Khusia Chhe", "Line Chhara Chale Na Railgari", Baba Bhandari" are some songs that still ring bells in the minds of youngsters to this very day. The single most popular song of Jane Alam was "Ekti Gandhamero Lagja," a song

Those were the days, my friend We thought they'd never end — Mary Hopkin

that was based on the chronicles of Adam and Eve. Ferdous Wahid is still famous for his "Emon Ekta Ma De Na", "Mamonaria" and "Age Jodi Jantam". In the case of Azam Khan, "Fele Aasha Dinguli" and Shab Manush-ee Shada Kalo" were the two main songs that brought him stardom. In later days, a few more songs were to become anthems for youngsters that are still sung by them today. These are none other than "Highcourter Mazare", "Abhimani", "Alal O Dulal" and many many more. Indeed, only Azam has managed to pass the test of time. Songs written by these five musketeers are still sung as anthems by today's youngsters. They may not be composing as they did in their prime time, but the "music is still playing inside our heads," there's no doubt about it, is there?

My my hey hey Rock and Roll is here to stay He he my my Rock and Roll can never die — Neil Young

Band Music is at the helm of today's popular music. It is no longer a pastime profession, rather a big buck industry. However, in the sixties, and early seventies, band music was not dominant on a national scale. There were a few groups here and there, who were mostly influenced by

Western music. Those were days when Radio was the only medium through which a youngster could get attached with popular music. Many may incline to say that "Souls" was our first band. If so then kindly refer a few years back to "Jhinga Goshtih" of Nazma and Saffat Zaman and that immortal song "Sorry": There were other bands also. They were locally based and not nationally famous as Souls was to be in later years from the late seventies. Most of the members of such groups are business magnates today. "Lightnings", "Ugly Phases" and "Windy Side of Cares" are some of these popular bands that were the harbingers of today's bands. They used to make local shows and sing popular music of mainly western Rock. There were also a few songs of Indian artists that were extremely popular among young people after independence. These were "Mone Pare Ruby Ray" and "Shapno Amar Harie Gechhe" of RD Burman and "Akash Keno Dake", "Ogo Nirupama" and "Ekkin Pakhi Ure, Jabe Je Akashe" of Kishore Kumar. Other than them, songs of Hemanta, Swachin, Manna, Shyamol, Pintu, Bhupen et al were also widely sang.

Now back to our band music. Souls is the Bangladeshi version of The Beatles. Youngsters were long awaiting a group that was young and could sing songs they wanted. Souls seemed to fit into this demand quite well and thus received instantaneous success. They surfaced from Chittagong. The main formers of Souls were, Tapan, Bachchu, Nasim Ali and Kumar Bishwajit. Souls were to divert from the spiritual music the Five Musketeers had widely popularised and focus on modern trends. Like "Love Me Do" and "Please Please Me" brought The Beatles instant fame, "Mon Shudhu Mon Chhucchhe" brought Souls instant popularity and acceptance from the young generation. So, "Band music had come to stay and never die".

Souls paved the way for later day Bands of Bangladesh. They were the visionaries. During the mid and late eighties, many Bands formed throughout Bangladesh. Music as it was in the days of Azam Khan and his four Musketeers, was no longer a profession taken for pastime sake. It had turned into a mega-buck industry. Among the prominent Bands that formed after Souls, probably Miles is at the forefront. Miles is more or less our version of The Rolling Stones, the Band that had the bad boy image. Although Miles formed in the early seventies, it was not until the eighties that they got a really big boost and established for themselves a permanent place in the hearts of young people. "Chand Tara" and "Firie Dao Amar E Prem" are the two numbers that brought them tickets to stardom. A few more bands also surfaced during this period. Different Touch (famous for "Srabaner Meghulo"), Chime (famous for "Tumi Jano Na", "Nati Khati" and "Sadaruddin Ma"), Feedback (famous for "Moushumi"), Obscure (famous for "Koli Kale Bhanda Baba"), Nova (famous for "Rajakarer Talika Chai") and Renaissance (famous for "Bhalo Lage", "Acha Keno" and "Tritio Bishwa") are prominent among them.

From the mid seventies, when Band music was on the rise, there were some individual artists who captured admiration of youngsters. Among them, Lucky and Happy Akhand are noteworthy. Happy died a very "sad" death. "Abar Elo Je Shandhya" and "Shadhinata Tomake Niye Gan To Likhchhi" are the two most prominent songs of the brothers. The dominant features of Lucky and Happy's songs were their guitar works.

In the eighties and early nineties, Shakila Zaman (famous for "Mithun Rashir Chhele"), Sheikh Istiaque (famous for "Nilanjana"), Kumar Bishwajit (famous for "Tore Putuler Mato Kore Shajie"), Samina Chowdhury (famous for "Kabita Parar"), Shuvro Dev (famous for "Ami Hamioner She Bashiwala"), Baby Naznin (famous for "Porechhi Lal Shari") and Tapan Chowdhury (famous for "Harie Jawa Goner Koli") dominated the stage for some time before being eaten up by bands of "modern times".

Azam and the foursome had planted seeds of our independence war in their songs, albeit implicitly. It was from the late seventies that youngsters started to find refuge in their songs by singing about our glorious independence war. This trend is still dominant among youngsters of today. All types of music upto now were mainly influenced by our own trends of music, while at times making amalgamation with folk elements.

From the early nineties, some Bands have surfaced who have been strongly influenced by western hard rock music. Among these Bands, Rock Strata (famous for "Pagolta" and "Janalar Baire"), War Faze (famous for "Koishore" and "Brishti Nemechhe"), In Dhaka (famous for "Tup Tup Brishi") and K-OZ are dominant. Iron Maiden, Metallica, Ozzy Osbourne and Led Zeppelin are the main mentors of these Bands.

Long long time ago I can still remember How that music Used to make me smile — Don Mclean

It's been extremely difficult for the Author to focus on so many things within such short space and time. From the sixties, music has been one of the most dominant features that has distinguished young people. It is in this medium that we youngsters express ourselves. Sometimes to get ourselves noticed by elderly generations, while sometimes just for the joy and fun. Whatever the cause, each one of us has her/his special numbers. So why don't you switch on your audio set, sit back and have a "ticket to ride" in the yesteryears, listening to music that "used to make you smile". Music is where I personally find salvation and refuge. Happy listening, for I'm going to put my audio set on, that's for sure.

Time in Frame

'Time in Frame' is for those interested in photography. Send us your best photograph with a caption (if required) and a small technical detail of the shot taken. Show the others what you see through the lens. Your coloured or black and white photographs could be on campus, politics, every day Dhaka, ofcourse beauty and anything different that your creative mind captures which others hardly notice. Every week the best entry would be published in this new column — introduced just for you. Send us your work in time for the next issue.



— by Ahsan Latif

MILES of golden sands Life the Bede Style

by Anam Mahmud

Bedes are the descendant of the Arabians (especially Egyptians). But lack of genuine anthropological evidences makes it difficult to come to such a conclusion.

Rather, the customary code language and counting systems of the Bede's put strong reasons to believe of the influence of Austric language (an ancient language of the country). The habitations of these particular community have developed mostly beside the rivers' bank. A large number of the Bedes created a homestead near the Turag river in Aminbazar. I had cherished in my mind the desire of writing about them for a long time. I collected lots of informations after I had visited there. It is possible to identify all the 'Bedes' by their economic dimensions, and are categorized as such: the snake-charmers, Malbede, Sardar, Bazikor Barial, Tapur, Koska, Beni, Mishnimar and so on. Usually the snake-charmers

live by catching snakes and showing various games with the snakes. Women of Malbede remove so-called insects from either teeth or eyes, while men take the ayurvedic system of treatment as main occupation. The Sardar sells out a varieties of thin bangles, earrings, trinkets etc. Different magics are demonstrated by the Bazikar. Fishing and wrestling are the main sources of income for the Barial and Tapur. Among others, Koska are the singers, while the Beni are the bird-hunters. Males of Mishnimar claim themselves as physicians basically (eye-specialists), and the females are the fortune tellers.

The infrastructure of culture among the Bedes are not hopefully satisfactory. Peculiarities are part of their manners and cultures. The custom of child-marriage is popular among them. Usually the ride-side holds the re-

sponsibility of the expenses for marriage-ceremony. The husbands only own the power to divorce, and the wives are helpless on this connection. The Bedes abide by the general laws of regulations of the country. The sardar (leader) gives verdict to a criminal case. In absence of the leader, the victim appear in the court.

I threw a common question to them, "How is life?" Almost all answered in the same saying, "We become exhausted after the day's works. Often we gamble or so engage ourselves in popular game like "hadudu". They also complained, "The government is blind, till now, we have been oppressed and exploited by the societies. It's a shame that the government didn't take any initiative to improve our lifestyles.

They pointed out that seeking for better opportunities are the major cause of their migration from one place to another.

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