

MAHMUD SHAH QURESHI

**L'ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE
DE
CHITTAGONG**

A BRIEF HISTORY WITH PERSONAL NOTE

ANDRÉ MALRAUX INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

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*I learned Italian to speak to the Pope,
Spanish to speak to my mother,
English to speak to my aunt,
German to speak to my friends,
And French, to speak to myself.*

Charles Quint
(1500-1558)
King of Spain
who wanted to establish
a universal monarchy.

*French language permits
the magistrature of the essential.*

Pope Paul VI
Speaking in French at the U.N.
October 1965

To
Madame Sophie de Vilmorin
Whose gracious presence with André Malraux
at the AFC in 1973 is still fondly remembered.

M.S.Q.

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Avant-Propos

The founding of the Alliance Française in Paris was a very special occasion in the year 1883. What do these two words mean and what does the organization stand for?

Alliance Française means French connection or union. Originally an association was started with the intention of teaching French to foreigners, supplying reading materials, studying French language, literature, and culture, and arranging seminars, film shows and other kinds of exhibitions, especially, in foreign lands. In course of time, it turned into an international movement for good living with sophistication.

In Bangladesh, the first Alliance Française was officially started in the early days of the 60s at Dhaka (AFD). The second Alliance Française in Chittagong had a premature birth in 1965. And it suffered a natural death by 1968 as the founding members have left the port city. Then it had been my arduous task to restart it in 1969, and I was actively associated or rather deeply involved with it uptill 1977 and had been indirectly connected even now.

By 1993, Mr. Gérard Oppé, the erstwhile director of Alliance Française de Chittagong (AFC) and Syed Ifzal, secretary during that period requested me repeatedly to write a history of this august organization. Initially, I was reluctant to write this "historique" for I knew that it is bound to be too personal, too autobiographical. However, as Oppé considered me as their "only memory," I had to leave aside my inhibitions. Yet, I feel sorry that after writing this short account, I may have omitted about many other important events or may not have mentioned many names, or if mentioned, have not written much about their contribution. I had even forgotten the name of my

student in Paris (1966-1968) who came to Dhaka as the first Second Secretary of the French embassy (1972-1974). Was he Alain Moreau? Although some other names are very much in my memory but I could not use them properly in my text. They are: their excellencies, French ambassadors in Bangladesh - Pierre Millet, Robert Devauchelle, Loic Moreau, Samuel de Beavais, Stanislas Filliol, Serge Degallaix, J.M. Lacombe (a son of my teacher at the Sorbonne), Renée Veyret, Alain Briottet and Michel Lumeaux, besides some other officers of the embassy like M. Beau, Mme. France Lasnier, M. Castagenet, M. Alain Reynourd *et.al.* Our committee members, particularly, Mr. Shamsul Alam, Librarian of Chittagong University, Prof. Amal Nag (CU), and of course our late lamented friend, Feroz Kabir, Treasurer, AFC, and why not late Nurus Safa who in exchange of an extremely modest salary served us as twenty-four hour guard during the beginning years—are to be remembered, too. All of them had helped in the growth of the AFC to make it what it is today.

I am extremely proud and happy that since it's founding, the AFC has become a unique cultural institution: It has contributed immensely through its activities during the past years. This is indeed remarkable on the part of the present administration, members, teachers, and students without forgetting the benefactors at Dhaka and at Paris.

I feel, therefore, obliged to publish this short history of the AFC even after so many years of its first draft. I am grateful to Prof. Terence Penheiro for composing it in his computer and making necessary corrections.

December 27, 2004
Gono Bishwabidyalay
Savar, Dhaka

Mahmud Shah Qureshi

Alliance Française de Chittagong

A Brief History with Personal Note

In 1968, Monsieur Louis Sekutowicz was the Consul-General of France at Dacca, capital of the erstwhile East Pakistan. Early September I called on him just after my joining at the University of Chittagong. Having passed nearly nine years in Paris, I just returned to my home town for summer holidays. I was still then working at the prestigious National School of Living Oriental Languages (E.N.L.O.V., now I. N. A. L. C. O.) attached to the University of Paris (Sorbonne). M. Sekutowicz was eager to help me in introducing French Language course at the University. He arranged two or three dinners at the Alliance Française de Dacca (A.F.D.) and at his residence. Several tripartite *tête-a-tête* were held between the Director A.F.D., Professor M.A. Aziz, Head, International Relations, University of Dacca (where a certificate course in French Language was being taught) and myself. The Consul-General was however very keen that the teaching of French should be introduced immediately in Chittagong and I should not go back to Paris. Originally, I had intended to stay home to teach and research and to work for Bangla-French cultural exchanges. And I may stay for a year but it so happened that I was granted two years leave. For the kind of activities mentioned above I needed more helping hands. My friends like Rasul Nizam, Juned Chowdhury, F.H. Abed (of Brac fame) were all

preoccupied. Fortunately, I came to know Mr. Hyder Reza, a young company executive who told me that an Alliance Française was organized in the city in 1965 when nearly one hundred engineers and technicians came from France to install the Eastern Refinery. Some of them brought their wives too, and the French ladies were getting bored in Chittagong. So they found the idea of creating an Alliance Française which would keep them alive in this far-off port city. We do not know how many people had really learnt French but for sometime there was an active film club. However, the organization was registered under the Societies Registration Acts 1860 on July 15, 1965. Those who promoted this are Mr. S.M. Afzal, Chairman, Railway Board, Mr. E. F. Aragon, Barrister-at-law, Mr. & Mrs Vachier, Mr. Shabbir Ahmed, Company Director, Mr. Hyder Reza, Mrs. N. Thomas, and Mrs. R. Sutter. Hyder Reza gave me a copy of the Memorandum which I sent to the Consul-General. Hyder Reza also told me that he had in the garrage of his Mehdiabag apartment a good number of French books, chairs and tables of the short-lived Alliance Française.

There was also an old film projector which could only be maneuvered by him and could be used to show French films. Sometime in mid 1969 an adhoc committee of the new Alliance Française de Chittagong (AFC) was formed with the following members;

- Dr. M.S. Qureshi President
- Mr. Hyder Reza Secretary
- Mr. Sabbir Ahmed Treasurer

I can give neither the exact date of the meetings nor its minutes because the records were with the secretary and the treasurer who left this country in 1971. I too, lost some of the papers during the liberation war.

It was very difficult to find a suitable accommodation for the AFC. There were only a few modern houses in Chittagong. We searched for a long time for a suitable house at Panchalaish, Mehdiabag, or Jamalkhan. Fortunately, the last French engineer who was living in the Jamshedyia house (123, Khan Bahadur Fazlul Quader Road) was returning to Paris and the Iranian land-lady was quite nice to me in renting out the ground floor of the present house, minus the auditorium. On July 3, 1969 we celebrated the inauguration of the AFC at the present house. The Consul-General and Mr. Nuruzaman (who is still with the Embassy at Dacca) joined us.¹ The last named person had all along been very helpful to us. At this point, I recall the services of Mr. Pernet who was the Vice-Consul at Dhaka. He was an extremely sympathetic person and visited Chittagong at least twice with films and books.

Initially, the AFC became very active in organizing film shows which were very popular too. For me, they were like essential "nourritures" (food) as I was almost a film addict while living for a long time at the Latin Quarter in Paris and being a regular member of the Cinemathèque

¹ An invitation letter of the occasion is found in my dossier. It is interesting to note that I signed the letter "on behalf of the Pakistan-France Cultural Association," an imaginary name indeed! But the Consul-General offered a reception on the occasion, and the matter was reported in the national dailies as well as in the *A. F. Bulletin* in Paris.

Française. Needless to say that, I was all along been quite nostalgic of my life passed in France. At AFC the following films were shown in the early days:

La Poursuite	31.7.69
Le Signe Du Lion	1.8.69
Le Mirroir A Deux Faces	8.8.69
Orfeu Negro	
La Cage Aux Rossignols	8.12.69
Amélie Ou Le Temps D'aimer	15.12.69
Le Père Goriot	16.1.70
Le Salaire De La Peur	30.1.70
Les Cousins	6.2.70

We showed these movies not only at Jamshedy House i.e. The AFC (the present auditorium was yet to be conceived) but also at Chittagong Club, Burma Shell Club, St. Placid School and sometimes at Fauzdarhat Cadet College. In 1972, we organized one or two shows at the University Campus, too.

I do not have all the papers to narrate the history in a chronological fashion of our shows but I can illustrate the undated Orfeu Negro viewing from the perspective of the presence of important personalities:
 Professor Syed Ali Ahsan, at that time
 Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of
 Chittagong later Vice-Chancellor, Minister, etc (3 seats)
 Professor Mohammed Ali, former V.C. of C.U. (4 seats)

Professor S.A. Ather, Economist, C.U.	(4 seats)
Professor (Mrs.) Salma Khan, now at the Planning Commission and husband Habibulah Khan, M.D. Gandhara Motors, later Minister of Information	(2 seats)
Professor M.A. Qayyum, now at JNU	(3 seats)
Professor R.I. Chowdhury now V.C., C.U.	(1 seat)
Professor A. Momen now in U.K.	(1 seat)
Professor Osman Jamal, now in U.K.	(1 seat)
Professor M. Abu Zafar, now at D.U.	(1 seat)
Mr. Latif Khan, Controller of Exams. C.U.	(1 seat)
Professor S.Z. Hyder, now at D.U.	(1 seat)
Professor S. Hoque, now Chairman, UGC	(1 seat)
Mr. S. Alam, former Librarian, C.U.	(1 seat)
Mr. Feroz Kabir	(1 seat)

Likewise, in most shows we could attract city élites—doctors, engineers, teachers, and journalists to be present at the AFC. Very soon the number of members also rose. I have a list of members of the period which show fifty (50) names. Strangely enough the names of Rasul Nizam and Juned Chowdhury—two prominent members of the later days are not in the list. It may be mentioned here that for these film shows I used to go from door to door to invite personally and also to know for sure, whether the invitees were coming or not. We did not have enough seats to keep the door open to all. At the same time, we

did not like that any seat should remain vacant either. Hydar Reza used to take care of all technical aspects: receiving the films from Dhaka, handling the projector, arranging for other shows outside the city and then sending back the films. Lots of work and some problems too! The projector would not work properly particularly when Hydar could not remain present in person. Moreover, we did not have cinemascopic screen or projector. This annoyed two of our members in an unusual way. Although a former student of mine at the Govt. College of Commerce (1959), Mr. Khosru, an accountant in the Burmah Shell and his French wife would even go to the extent of insulting me and Hydar publicly and then to lodge complaints against us with the Consul-General. The matter was well attended to as evident from three surviving letters. Later on the couple left Chittagong in self styled exile during 1971.

So far I have not mentioned anything regarding the teaching of French, which must be considered as the principle activity in any Alliance. In fact, we started the functioning of the AFC *de nouveau* as we got by chance a young French man amidst us. He was Jacques Ducrtet, a blond in his late 20s with all the burning enthusiasm of a bohemian intellectual. He might have arrived from France at the same time as me and he was privately teaching French to some students and teachers of Chittagong College. He used to live very modestly in a hotel somewhere behind the College paying only Rs.5 for his room! I used to see him usually in the same trouser and yellow short sleeved shirt. He had completed a novel and

had sent it to Paris for publication and was quite confident that the novel would be published and he would obtain the following Prix Goncourt, the most prestigious literary prize for fiction in France. A simple man, he was liked by all. We discussed a plan to keep him at the Alliance and also to engage him at the University where I had already started the French certificate course. Thus he was teaching French at the AFC, but shortly afterwards, he left us for a trip to Calcutta-Nepal-Bangkok. And he disappeared. Enquires were made but no trace was found. I remember to have received a copy of the manuscript with a regret letter that remained unopened for long time in the Alliance.

During the absence of Ducret, several persons took classes, Mrs. Khosru, Mrs. Khan, Bro. Hamel on payment and myself on honorary basis. Before the end of 1969, we had about 60 students and 50 members. Our next course was to start from Sept. 15, 1969 after frantic demands finally Paris sent us a teacher-cum-director of courses, one Mr. Gaudin who was quite youthful but not very sympathetic. He started courses from Jan. 13, 1970 and left abruptly during the last week of March 1971 because of the war of liberation of Bangladesh.

Besides teaching of French we started other cultural activities like library services, seminars, and exhibitions. I remember to have organized a seminar with Dr. R.I. Chowdhury at that time Reader and Head of the Department of Political Science at Chittagong University.

He spoke on French political system. It was highly enjoyable with lively participation from the floor.

We also tried to have various types of exhibitions. In this my memory fails and I do not have records to support any. However, in a letter to me from Hydar Reza, the secretary on August 29, 1969 I find that a parcel containing photographic display of the celebrated artist Toulouse Lautrec was received by me to hand over to the Librarian, University of Chittagong. So, I am sure an exhibition was held there if not at the AFC.

The grand exhibition of artist Rashid Chowdhury's work - tapestries, gouaches, water colors, and oil paintings were held at the AFC from Jan. 23 through Jan. 31, 1970². Professor Syed Ali Ahsan, Dean of Arts and a noted art critic inaugurated it that was a considerable success, to say the least. Rashid was trained in Dhaka, Madrid, and Paris and had started showing his outstanding talents. Because of his insistence I wrote the introductory notes of the catalogue in three languages : French, Bengali, and English.

A great event was still ahead. H.E.- M. Michel Legendre, French ambassador to Pakistan was to visit for the first time. A reception was given on January 26, 1970 in which he awarded Mr. Rasul Nizam the diploma of Honorary

²A facsimile of the invitation card is reproduced here. One can see Rashid and my choice of letters of the card that we jointly drafted; please notice the two French words, although known in international connoisseur circles, may have been used for the first time in this country.

Consul of France in Chittagong.³ We received one hundred and twenty distinguished guests and it was a talk of the town for a long time. Reports with photographs flashed in the news papers. The ambassador took keen interest in the activities of Alliance Française and paid a very impressive visit to the University of Chittagong. His wife took fancy in the mystic songs of our country. She took the manuscript of my *Poèmes Mystiques Bengali* to Islamabad which I could get back during my visit to West Pakistan in July the same year. Later on, this book was published by the UNESCO (Éditions St. Germain-dès-Pres, Paris, 1977)

One last word about this formative phase must be said. Although Alliance Française started in the city, one main objective of this organization was to develop closer relationship with the University. Even a casual reader of the above lines would feel that we tried to achieve this goal - no less a gigantic task in itself, particularly because the University of Chittagong was just beginning its active life and it was situated some thirteen miles away from the Alliance area. One should not forget that those years of 1969-71 were the days of hectic political movements which finally ushered independence for the country, hence attention of the intellectuals were diverted to that direction as that was the destiny of our people.

By Fall 1970, Mr. L. Sekutowicz was replaced by Mr. André Berthelot, a knowledgeable and sympathetic person as Consul-General. It appears that he could visit us only

³ The invitation card is reproduced in the appendix.

once. I saw him first on February 10, 1971 at his office where I went to meet H.E. M. Legendre. The Ambassador was on a sudden trip to Dhaka. Quite unusually he asked me several questions on the political situations and without commenting on my optimistic assertions, observed quietly, as if from aside: "Something terrible is coming ahead!" In fact, the most terrible thing happened here, more terrible than the cyclone that devastated us less than three months back.

By the middle of April, I found myself in exile- without money or even clothing and books, but it was not a totally hopeless situation for me. A newly married man, I turned out to be a freedom fighter; my doctoral dissertation *Étude sur l'évolution intellectuelle chez les Musulmans du Bengale: 1857-1947* was then published from Paris (Mouton/C.N.R.S., 1971) and my French friends (my departmental head in Paris, Prof. Gilles Philibert and some students) assured me their support and they sent me French franc 300, at least three times. The French government had also taken steps to offer me and my wife (who had already obtained a certificate in French language Course, C.U.) scholarships to live in Paris until we could feel safe to return to our homeland. But I did not have to go to France; for, by July 1, I became a Special Envoy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on a mission to Arab countries and as anybody can imagine, all this happened because of my French connection.

After liberation, it took some time to get things settled. However, by mid 1972 we tried to activate the AFC again. Artist Rashid Chowdhury, (Head of the department of

Fine Arts, Chittagong University, died in 1986) and his French wife Annie (who still teaches French in Dhaka) returned from their short exile in Paris and stayed for sometime on the first floor of the Jamshedya house. Then on Sept. 13, 1972 Mr. Bernard Galichet joined us as director of courses. A handsome and sophisticated young man, Galichet became our first serious teacher and organiser. We called a general meeting of former members and other interested persons on Sept. 30. To an audience of over one hundred, I explained the purpose of Alliance and our duties. An extra-ordinary meeting was held and I was elected President again with Juned Chowdhury as secretary. From then on, it was more or less Juned's affair. He worked assiduously and prepared reports, budgets, etc almost single handed. Juned, the oil company executive and the successive directors of courses of the AFC used to come to my University residence and we decided matters there. Perhaps, I started behaving really like a president not indulging, as advised earlier by the Consul-General, Sekutuwicz, in all sundry matters. This happened also because by fall 1972, I moved to the University campus and by 1974, my car started to be in disorder on and off and the fuel became expensive and sometimes a rare commodity. But in running the show we had another set back. Just after three and half months work our young friend from France, M. Galichet went to India for a short visit and just disappeared somewhere in Rajasthan. Regrettably enough, we did not hear of him any more. And this was the second incident within a very short span of time.

Before I conclude, I would like to mention three great events that happened in these early years of the post liberation period:

1. Twenty delegates from the United Town Twinning Organization of Bordeaux, Biarritz, Brive, Marly Le Roi and Poitiers visited Chittagong from December 28 through December 31, 1972. I was made a member of the proposed Chittagong Town Twinning Committee under the presidentship of Mr. A.K. Khan, the renowned industrialist and socio-political leader. For few days, Juned, Rasul and I were busy with this group, later I visited Bordeaux, and thanks to the helpful suggestions and hospitality of Philippe Racle, (one of the visiting Bordeaux group members) I was even received by M. Chaban Delmas, Mayor of the city and one of the most famous political personalities of the 20th century France (September 1973).
2. In April 1973, a great event took place. It was the visit of André Malraux. As the interpreter, I was travelling with him from Dhaka to Rajshahi to Kaptai. In Chittagong, I was also secretary, André Malraux Reception Committee (Professor Abul Fazal was President) as well as secretary of the newly founded Chittagong Art Gallery and Folk Museum (Mr. A.K. Khan was President). As part of the State function, André Malraux inaugurated the art gallery and its first exhibition. I wrote about this in my book on Malraux published by the AFD in

1986. (A detail description of Malraux' visit to Chittagong is the subject matter of my *opuscule*, *Chottogramme André Malraux* printed from Gono Prokashoni, Savar, Dhaka, in 2001.) While Writing this report, I discovered in Juned's financial statement of the year ending 31 Dec. 1973 that AFC spent Tk. 394 for Malraux's visit. A very small amount was spent for a very great man's visit, but it was indeed an exceptionally memorable moment for all of us!

3. Following Malraux' visit, my wife and I were invited as "personalités invitées" to spend three months in France for study and research. I had also been received in the Alliance Française head quarters. In 1974/75, M. Marc Blancpain, Secretary-General of Alliance Internationale and an eminent French writer visited Bangladesh and I went to Dhaka to pay homage and to hear him which was indeed a privilege.

The next important event for me was to help Proloy Dutta, a student of the AFC and the C.U. and Gérard Dupuy, director of courses in preparing the text of *Parallèle/Somantoral* and its publication (1976).⁴ On their insistence I had to write an introduction both in French and Bangla. Again in 1977, I found myself in Paris for three months study and research tour. During this visit I could meet French literary luminaries like Mare Blancpain,

⁴ The AFC was again featured in the *AF Bulletin* of Paris for its activities; see also the frontispiece of *Parallèle*.

Eugène Guillewick, Roger Caillois, Jean d'Ormesson, André Guimbretière and others who appreciated heartily our literary venture, I mean, *Parallèle* which contained several French poems in Bengali translation and vice versa.

The previous year I received the French government honour: *Chevalier dans l'ordre des Palmes Académiques* (Knight in the order of Academic distinctions). This was not an award for me as an individual alone, I considered that it was an honour also to our organization, the AFC, too.

In 1977, I left Chittagong to join the University of Rajshahi as Professor of Cultural and Intellectual History at the Institute of Bangladesh Studies. It would have been logical for me to resign from my presidentship of the AFC. But my friends insisted that I should remain President as I would often come to see my family members in Chittagong. This gave me opportunity to witness and preside over another great occasion, i.e. the inaugural ceremony of the auditorium, a few years later. In the meanwhile, I could introduce French Certificate Course in Rajshahi University which was incidentally of greater success than my efforts in the University of Chittagong as there had been less dropouts and more regular classes. But my dream to have another Alliance Française in Rajshahi to cover the northern and western zones of Bangladesh is yet to be materialized. Almost as a consolation and compromise solution I floated on the good advice of H.E. M. Serge Degallaix *The Friends of Alliance Française Society* and held a dinner-debate during April, 1992.

Although my resignation from the AFC as president became effective since April 25, 1980 and my friends in the executive committee have been extremely kind to keep me as *Président d'Honneur*.⁵ Whenever in Chittagong, I do not forget to visit our very dear cultural club sandwiched between the religious temples at Chowkbazar, and I am always welcomed by the directors, teachers and students of the AFC. I feel happy that the "love for good language, respect for the civilization and the cult of friendship" as eloquently uttered by George Duhamel in his famous speech at the inauguration of the Alliance Française de Paris are being cultivated here to the fullest strength. Perhaps more than what George Duhamel would have imagined as the *raison d'être* of the very idea of an Alliance Française.

Another important aspect of Alliance Française de Chittagong members is the contribution which we, individually or collectively could contribute in the domain of international understanding and making our humble country known abroad. We - I, Rasul, Juned, Proloy, Gurupada, and others had the privilege of rendering our services to that effect. Personally, I had the good fortune to enter into the "royaume de la francophonie" as an unofficial ambassador of my country to the "famille culturelle française" that we find everywhere in the world. In fact, I was invited to attend the World Congress of the *Association des Universités Entièrement ou Partiellement de Langue Française* (AUPELF, founded in 1963) at Strasbourg in

⁵ The Minutes of AFC Executive Committee meeting is also being appended.

1977 and found myself elected President of the Asian Committee and Member of the International Council for the following five years. It had been a pleasure and honour for my nearly fifty years of professional life to spend in francophile position . If I could not do much in my own creative arena, at least, I could inspire many to be interested in French language and culture.

Last but not the least, I find one interesting word used as the designation of Juned Chowdhury which I did not notice earlier. I did not know how and when my clever friend had managed this "Honorary" title before his legitimate "secretaryship". Well, was I or other members then paid president or paid members? No, we were not. In the beginning, M. Sekutowicz wanted me as part-time director and in 1970, an allowance was even proposed for the expenses of the President. But I did not receive any. The AFC had financial crises and I did not want it as I liked to work voluntarily and out of love for the cause. It was indeed a love's labour that was not lost. And not me alone; Rasul, Juned and me, we three worked in a team for this goal and we were rewarded, too. We three were knighted by the French authorities, recognition of unimaginable dimension indeed! But what was more, we incited love for French/France in Bangladesh on the one hand and French people's care for Bangladesh on the other. So, Vive L'AFC! Vive L'amitié Bangladesh-France !

Rajshahi

December 12, 1993

AFC IN PICTURES



H.E. M. Legendre speaks; Qureshi, Shamsul Huq (Head of Physics Department, C.U.) and Mme Legendre are also seen. [January 26, 1970]



Mr. Rasul Nizam accepting the position of Honorary Consul speaks; also seen M. Legendre, Mme Legendre, Mr. Giusuddin, and Mr. Sekutowicz. [January 26, 1970]



In the same reception, journalist Moinul Alam, Sekutowicz, Legendre, Qureshi, O. R. Nizam (former mayor of Chittagong) and H.R. Nizam (face not visible). [January 26, 1970]



In the reception the Iranian land-lady, a Bahai friend of AFC is seen on the extreme left. [January 26, 1970]



Gaudin, Legendre, Qureshi, Sekutowicz, and Mrs. Dolly Nizam (who had a special role to receive the French dignitaries as her house guests for more than three decades. [January 26, 1970]



Visit to the University: Qureshi, Sekutowicz, Syed Ali Ahsan, the Dean, A.R. Mallick, the Vice-Chancellor, and the French Ambassador discussing about the area of exchange (one of the earliest tapestries of Rashid Chowdhury is on the wall). [January 27, 1970]



Mme Anne, (French sculptress) & artist Rashid Chowdhury
with Sekutowicz. [January 26, 1970]



Visit to the University library: Shamsul Alam, the librarian, Legendre, Mohammed Ali
(Head, English) & Moqbul Islam (secretary, V.C.) [January 27, 1970]



Inauguration of art exhibition: H.E. Pierre Millet, Mrs. Millet, Prof. Abul Fazal (V.C.
CU), Qureshi (speaking), Mrs. Maryse Khan & Feroz Kabeer. [April 1973]



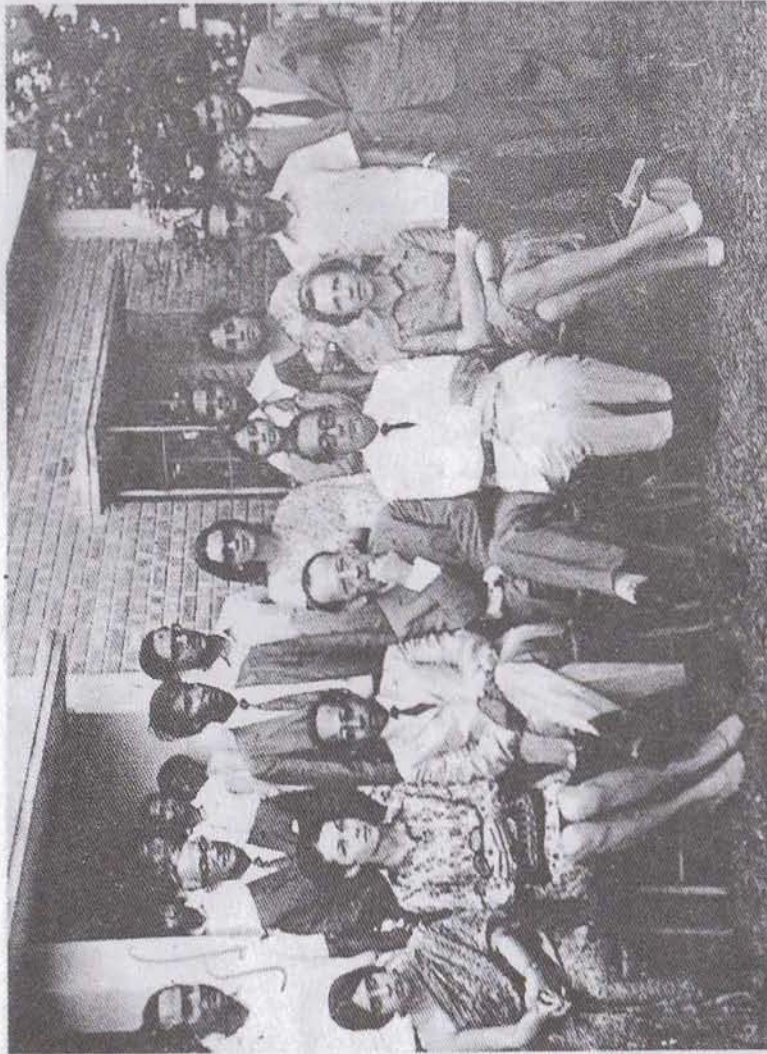
Ms. Asma, a young artist, Rashid Chowdhury, Qureshi, Millet & Mme Millet (also a painter). [April 1973]



Doyen of arts in Bangladesh, Zaynul Abedin speaking. [April 1973]



Qureshi with H.E. Mr. M. Loic Moreau who travelled to Rajshahi to decorate him with the insignia of *Chevalier dans l'ordre des Palmes académiques*. But this picture was taken at his Eskatan residence which used to be of interest to film directors of Bangladesh for shooting purposes. [April 1973]



AFC Committee members with André Malraux. [April 1973]



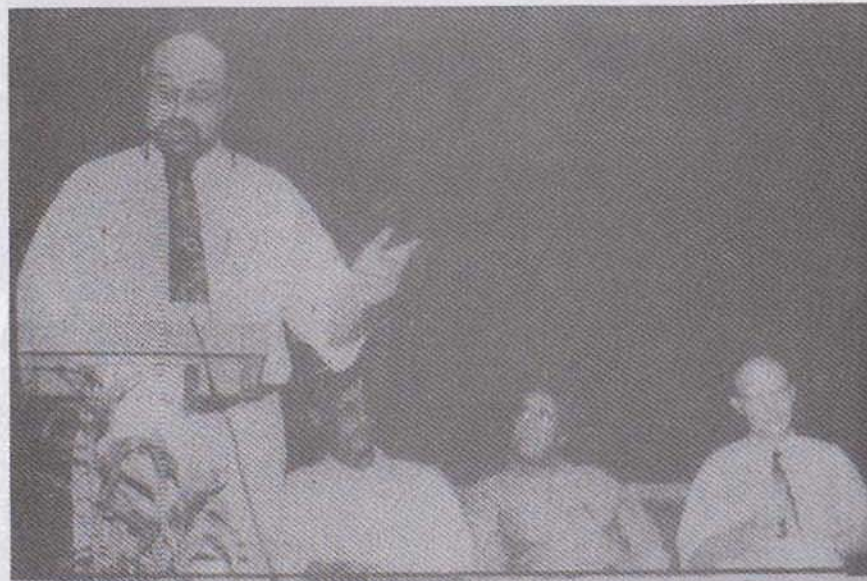
Asian Committee members at an AUPELF seminar at Bangkok: Tabrizi (Iran), Yamamoto (Japan), Qureshi (Bangladesh), Hidayat (Indonesia), Mahale (India), Lumpapong (Thailand), Muragayan (secretariat), Amanugama (Sree Lanka). [1985]



Qureshi speaking at the AFC on the occasion of publication of French-Bangla dictionary; Dr. Gurupada Chakraborty, the lexicographer, teacher and secretary of the AFC is in the background. [1991]



S.E. M.S. Degallaix is decorating Prof. Qureshi with the insignias of officer d'aus l'ordre des Palmes Academiques & Officier d'aus l'ordre des Arts et des lettres in 1992.



অনিয়ম ফ্রঁসেজ এর বিদায় সম্বর্ধনা অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখছেন বিদায়ী পরিচালক মিঃ জেবার ওপে।

Director AFC Oppé speaking at his farewell, (Sitting behind) Juned, Qureshi & Bares. [1991]

আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজের পরিচালক ওপে'র বিদায় সম্বর্ধনা

(বার্তা পরিবেশক)

গতকাল সন্ধ্যায় এক অনাড়ম্বর অনুষ্ঠানের মধ্য দিয়ে চট্টগ্রাম আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজের পরিচালক মিঃ জেবার ওপে কে বিদায় জানানো হয়েছে।

আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজ মিলনায়তনে অনুষ্ঠিত বিদায় সম্বর্ধনার শুরুতেই ১৯৯৩-৯৪ সালের কৃতি ছাত্র ছাত্রীদেরকে পুরস্কার ও সম্বর্ধনা প্রদান করা হয় ঢাকাস্থ ফরাসী সচিবাবাসের

দ্বিতীয় পুষ্ঠায় দেখেন

ভালো বেগেছে। বিদায় নিলেও তিনি পরবর্তীতে আবারও বাংলাদেশে আসার ইচ্ছে রাখেন বলে জানিয়েছেন, অত্রতঃ চট্টগ্রাম আনিয়ঁসকে নতুন আনিকে দেখতে হলেও তিনি আসবেন।

আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা ডঃ মাহমুদ শাহ কৈরেশী, মিঃ ওপে'র বিদায়ে দুঃখ প্রকাশ করে বলেছেন চট্টগ্রাম আনিয়ঁসকে বর্তমান অবস্থায়

আনতে মিঃ ওপে অক্লান্ত ও অপরিণীম পরিশ্রম করেছেন। তিনি মিঃ ওপেকে একই উদ্যোগে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরাঞ্চলে এমনি একটি আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজ প্রতিষ্ঠা করার বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ জানান। তিনি বাংলাদেশে নিযুক্ত ফরাসী সাংস্কৃতিক প্রতিনিধি মিঃ বারেস চট্টগ্রাম আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজ এর তাঁর সার্বিক সহযোগীতা ও গুচেষ্টা অব্যাহত থাকবে বলে মত ব্যক্ত করেন। তবে তিনি বলেন এক্ষেত্রে ছাত্রছাত্রী এবং সদস্য এবং এর কমিটির বিশেষ দায়িত্ব রয়েছে।

চট্টগ্রাম আনিয়ঁস ফ্রঁসেজের কমিটি ভারপ্রাপ্ত সভাপতি মিঃ জুনেদ চৌধুরী তাঁর বক্তব্যে বলেন মিঃ ওপে'র গত পঁচ বৎসরের চেষ্টা আর পরিশ্রমের সুফল আজকের ছাত্র/ছাত্রীরা ভোগ করছে। তিনি এ ব্যাপারে তাঁর সহযোগীতা প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রেও নিশ্চয়তা দেন।

সদ্যশেষে মিঃ ওপে'র অনুরোধে আনিয়ঁসের ছাত্র/ছাত্রী ও উপস্থিত ব্যক্তিদের অংশগ্রহণে চট্টগ্রামের একটি আঞ্চলিক গান পরিবেশনের মধ্য দিয়ে অনুষ্ঠানের সমাপ্তি ঘটে।

২৩. ১১.১০

L'Alliance dans le monde

PAKISTAN ORIENTAL

Chittagong

Le Consul général de France, M. Sekutowicz, a donné, au début de juillet, une réception en l'honneur de l'inauguration de l'Alliance Française de Chittagong, présidée par le Dr M. S. Qureshi.

De nombreuses personnalités de l'Université, de la Presse et des milieux d'affaires, et quelques artistes participaient à cette inauguration.

Des cours de français sont donnés sous la direction de M. Jean Ducret, jeune écrivain.

[Source: Bulletin Mensuel
d'information de l'Alliance Française
Octobre, 1969]

Alliance Française—Chittagong requests the pleasure of your company at the vernissage of artist Rashid Choudhury's work.

Professor Syed Ali Ahsan, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Chittagong has kindly consented to inaugurate the exposition on January, 23, 1970 at 6 p. m.

"Jamshedna House"

123, Fazlul Quader Road

Jan. 23—Jan. 31

from 4—7 p. m.

except Sunday & Monday.



Doctor Mahmud Shah Qureshi
President of the Alliance Française
requests the pleasure of the company

of
at a Reception on Monday, January 26th 1970
from 6 to 8 p.m.

His Excellency M. M. Legendre, French
Ambassador will award to M. Rasul Nizam his
diploma of Honorary Consul of France.

Alliance Française
Jamshedya House
123, Fazlul Quader Road
Chittagong

Dress : Informal
Regrets only
82715 from 9 to 14 hrs.

BANGLADESH

Chittagong

Après quelques mois de cours, 30 débutants ont passé le premier examen ; 27 ont été reçus. L'emploi d'une méthode audio-visuelle, implantée par M. Gérard Dupuy, Directeur des Cours, a trouvé un accueil favorable et donne d'excellents résultats ; 62 élèves suivent les cours.

Le Club des étudiants, animé par M^{me} Marie-France Manas, est un lieu de rencontre et de distraction autant que de culture où l'on peut s'exercer à des jeux français, discuter sur différents thèmes, correspondre avec la France par enregistrement sur mini-cassettes.

« L'architecture contemporaine en France », thème d'une exposition, a attiré une foule importante, tandis qu'une soirée poésie réunissait de nombreuses personnalités et remportait un grand succès.

Le ciné-club, avec deux projections par semaine, accueille de nombreux suffrages.

Le Comité, dont M. Mahmood-Shah Quraishi est Président, déploie de multiples efforts pour contribuer au développement de l'Alliance qui sera bientôt trop petite pour accueillir tous ses amis.

Source : Bulletin mensuel
d'information
de l'Alliance Française
Juin, 1976

Parallèle

সমান্তরাল

বাঙলা-ফরাসি কবিতা

poèmes français et bengalis

traduits par : Proloy DUTTA

অনুবাদ : প্রলয় দত্ত

সহযোগীতা : জেরার দুপুই

assisté par : Gérard DUPUY

poèmes illustrés par : Marie - France MANAS

ইলাস্ট্রেশন : মারী-ফ্রান্স-মানাস

সম্পাদনা : ডঃ মাহমুদ শাহ কোরেশী

présentés par : Dr. Mahmud Shah QURESHI

publiés au nom de l'Alliance Française

par : Juned A. CHOUDHURY, secrétaire

et : Rasul NIZAM, trésorier

আলিয়ঁস ফ্রান্সেজের পক্ষে

প্রকাশ করেছেন :- জুনেদ এ. চৌধুরী, সম্পাদক

এবং রাসুল নিজাম, কোষাধ্যক্ষ

আলিয়ঁস ফ্রান্সেজ চট্টগ্রাম

১৯৭৬

ALLIANCE FRANCAISE DE CHITTAGONG

1976

ALLIANCE FRANCAISE OF CHITTAGONG

MINUTES OF MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY
25TH APRIL 1980 AT 5:30 P.M. AT ALLIANCE FRANCAISE

PRESENT

Committee Members: Mr. Gerard Dupuy - Director
Mr. Juned A. Choudhury - Honorary Secretary
Mr. Feroze Kabeer
Mr. Shamsul Alam
Mr. Syed Ifzal Ahmed
Dr. Mrs. Zainab Begum
Mr. Gerard Dupuy presided over the meeting.

1. Leave of Absence

Mr. Rasul Nizam had sent a letter stating that he would not be able to attend the meeting as he was going to Dacca on that day. Leave of absence was granted to him.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th December, 1979 were confirmed.

3. Election of President

The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Juned A. Choudhury as the President of Alliance Française of Chittagong in place of Dr. M.S. Qureshi who had resigned. Dr. Qureshi will be President d'Honneur.

4. Election of Treasurer

By his letter dated 25th April, 1980 Mr. Rasul Nizam had resigned from the post of Treasurer while continuing to remain a member of the Committee. The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Feroze Kabeer as Treasurer.

5. Election of Honorary Secretary

The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Syed Ifzal Ahmed as Honorary Secretary in place of Mr. Juned A. Choudhury who had been elected as President.

6. Cheque Signatories

The Committee decided that any two of the following four persons shall be entitled to sign cheques of Current Accounts Nos. 10123 and 10438 of Alliance Française of Chittagong in Grindlays Bank Ltd., Sheikh Mujib Road, Chittagong.

1. Mr. Juned A. Choudhury - President
2. Mr. Gerard Dupuy - Director
3. Mr. Feroze Kabeer - Treasurer
4. Mr. Syed Ifzal Ahmed - Honorary Secretary

The above resolution is to supersede the authorization given earlier.

1977 Letter of poet E. Guillevic, Paris

Millevin 11 rue Saint Denis, le 10 octobre 1977
75014 Paris

Cher Monsieur,

Je vous remercie douloureusement de m'avoir remis
le recueil Parallels, publié par vos soins à l'Alliance
Française de Chittagong.

Le petit livre me réjouit, j'ai retrouvé avec plaisir
les poèmes français, et également avec joie les poèmes
benzais, que j'ai si fort appréciés.

Bon j'ai et précieux petit livre.

Merci de tout coeur. Avec amitié

Guillevic

13. Bon petit examen me concernant :

je suis Président de l'Académie

Malherme, c'est le 3^e Prix de Poésie

de l'Académie Française que j'ai

reçu en 1976. Cela est sans

importance, au regard

de l'honneur que vous

me faites de la publication

d'un de mes poèmes et de

sa traduction.

অলিয়'স ফ্র'সেজে

ফরাসী কবিতা

পাঠের আসর

(বাতা পরিবেশক)

গত ২০শে জানুয়ারী স্থানীয়
চক্রবর্তীর অলিয়'স ফ্র'সেজে
এক ফরাসী কবিতা পাঠের আস-
রের আয়োজন করা হয়।
অনুষ্ঠানে সভাপতিত্ব করেন চট্টগ্রাম
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বাংলা বিভাগের
ডক্টর মাহমুদ শাহ কোরেশী।
এছাড়া প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে
উপস্থিত ছিলেন চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্-
বিদ্যালয়ের ইংরেজী বিভাগের
চেয়ারম্যান অধ্যাপক হারুন-অর-
রশীদ।

অনুষ্ঠানে কবিতা পাঠ করেন
ডঃ আবু হেনা মোস্তাফা কামাল,
ডক্টর আবদুল আউয়াল, জনাব
আবদুল মান্নান, মিস্ মারী ফুগু,
মিসেস লগী, আবু নুসা, দিবাকর
বড়ুয়া, প্রদীপ দত্ত, আতাউর রহমান,
মিঃ পিটার, মিঃ জা দ্যাপুই প্রমুখ।
এছাড়া অনুষ্ঠানের আদর্শ ও উদ্দেশ্য
সম্পর্কে আলোকপাত করে বক্তৃতা
করেন জনাব আবদুল মান্নান শ্রী
দিবাকর বড়ুয়া এবং চট্টগ্রামের
অলিয়'স ফ্র'সেজের পরিচালক
মিঃ জা দ্যাপুই।

অনুষ্ঠানে অ্যাংগের ন্যাভনারা
কবিতার কবিতা পাঠ ছাড়া ও
ভাদেব মীরনের উপর ভিত্তি
করে নির্মিত একটি প্রামাণ্য চিত্র
প্রদর্শন করা হয়।

20 JAN '75

Poetry
Reading
Session
at AFC

অলিয়'স ফ্র'সেজে বিশেষ
অনুষ্ঠান

(বাতা পরিবেশক)

চাঞ্চল্যবাপী এক চলচ্চিত্র
উৎসবের সমাপ্তি, বর্ষপূর্তি ও
বাংলা ভাষার ফরাসী কবিতার
বই 'সমালোচনা'-এর প্রকাশনা
উপলক্ষে ঐতকাল সচ্যায় স্থানীয়
অলিয়'স ফ্র'সেজে এক বিশেষ
অনুষ্ঠানের আয়োজন করা হয়।
বাংলাদেশে নিযুক্ত ফরাসী
রাষ্ট্রদূত মিঃ রবার্ট ডুবাঙ্কেল ও
মাননীয় ডুবাঙ্কেল বিশেষ অতিথি
হিসেবে এতে উপস্থিত ছিলেন।
স্থানীয় পদস্থ সরকারী কর্মকর্তা,
সাংবাদিক ও বিশিষ্ট নাগরিক-
গণও এই মনোরম অনুষ্ঠানে
ভোগদান করেন।



Prof. Mohammad Ali, Vice-Chancellor, Ctg. University (3rd from left), Dr. M. S. Qureshi, Professor of Cultural History, Institute of Bangladesh Studies, Rajshahi University (2nd from left) and Monsieur Shauislas Filioli, Ambassador of France in Bangladesh (extreme left) seen addressing the seminar on "Andre Malraux Shatabdir Kinbadanti" at Alliance Française, Chittagong Daily Life, 10.7.1987

« Saisir l'insaisissable ... »

par Mahmud Shah Qureshi

Président du Comité d'Asie

des départements d'études françaises

Professeur à l'Université de Rajshahi

Bangladesh

Certains courent par besoin, certains avancent par amour. Nous, les Asiatiques, nous prenons ce dernier chemin : nous apprenons le français par amour. Oui, amour de la langue, de la littérature et de la civilisation françaises! Et c'est ainsi que nous sommes conduits vers le monde francophone. Le poète français a bien raison de dire à sa bien-aimée : «Par bonheur ou par malheur, je connais ton secret par coeur.» Des fois, nous avons aussi le même sentiment pour la langue française, la langue humaine. D'autres fois, nous suivons notre poète mystique qui dit : «Saisir l'insaisissable, c'est bien la tâche. »

C'est par notre collaboration avec l'AUPELF que nous serons heureux d'accomplir cette tâche.

This short write up was sent as message for *Universités* cahier spécial, *Études françaises*, 1972-1982, published from Université de Montreal, Canada, 1982, p. 38.