THE UNEDUCATED: EDUCATION AND THE MEDIATION OF MUSLIM IDENTITY IN THE BRITISH RAJ, 1858-1882

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Abstract

The 1857 Rebellion against the East India Company and the subsequent establishment of the British Raj had profound implications on colonial policy. It was in this milieu wherein the Raj began to classify Muslims as naturally irrational and fanatic as well as wholly responsible for the Rebellion. At the same time, the state began a push for Muslim education, and the colonial archive demonstrates a desire by the state for Muslims to enter the government-aided educational apparatus.

This thesis examines the development of Muslim education in North India following the 1857 Rebellion until the publication of the Indian Education Commission of 1882. The question asked is two-fold: (1) why did the colonial state begin a push for education in Muslim communities during this era? (2) What were the ramifications of this policy on Muslim identity?

To answer the first question requires an examination of correspondence within the Education Department, which reveals an intersection between colonial ethnography, social classification, and a post-1857 policing of the Muslim community. The second question allows one to trace the emergence of a group identity that has persisted to the present: that of the uneducated Muslim. However, it is the contention of this thesis that this identity was not simply brought into being by the colonial state, but also the language of the Muslim elite.

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The research presented within this thesis may never have happened without the copious support of my parents, who were instrumental in helping me organize my stay in India. I cannot thank my *phuājī* and *phuphājī* enough for opening their doors to me and letting me stay in their home in Delhi for two months as I conducted my research. And finally, I must thank all my friends who have put up with my cries (of anguish, joy, sleep-deprivation, and/or research woes) and my somewhat odd obsession with British colonialism.

TRANSLITERATION AND ABBREVIATION

Transliteration

All quotes taken from documents retain their original transliteration (ex: Oudh or Moulvie) as well as archaic usages (Mahomedan). However, all usage outside of these excerpts utilize commonly accepted standardized spellings (ex: Awadh, *Maulvi*, or Muslim) only when indirectly referencing the versions used within documents. References to titles and names of organizations will retain their original usage (ex: The Select Committee for the Betterment and Advancement of Mahomedan Education). Plurals are formed by adding an s to the loan-word (ex: *maulvis*).

When transliterating from Urdu, the following conventions are applied. Consonants with an English equivalent are left as such (ex: b for *be*, s for *sīn*, k for *kāf,* w/v for *v'āo*). No differentiation is noted between multiple consonants with a single English equivalent: *se, sīn,* and *su'ād* are all transliterated as s; *te and to'e* as t; *ze, zhe, zu'ād,* and *z'oe* as z. Aspiration is indicated by an h after a consonant. Retroflex letters are represented by an underline (ex: d̲ for *d̲āl*, t̲ for *t̲e*). The letters *'ain* and *ghain* are transliterated as ' and ġ, respectively. As per vowels, *alif* is written as a, i, or u; *alif madda* as ā; *vā'o* as o or ū; *ye* as ī; and *barī ye* as ē or ai. The *hamza* is written with ` and the *izāfat* is represented by an -i-.

Abbreviations

MAOC – Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College

NAI – National Archives of India

NWP – North Western Provinces and Awadh

UP – United Provinces (now known as Uttar Pradesh)

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INTRODUCTION
Muslim Education and its Discontents

Following the completion of the 1857 Rebellion against the East India Company and the establishment of the British Raj, Henry Harington Thomas wrote and published a small pamphlet. Titled, "The Late Rebellion in India and Our Future Policy," the pamphlet attempted to define methods of rule within the newly created British Raj – a lofty proposition from a former bureaucrat of the East India Company. Born in 1795, Thomas joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1813 after graduating with honors from Fort William College in Persian and Hindustani languages.[1] He worked in the Civil Service from 1813 to 1847 and served his final post as a judge in Lahore.[2] After leaving the Bengal Civil Service, he retired to his native city of Bath and became a member of both the Royal Asiatic Society and the Oriental Club, before dying in 1879.[3] While it cannot be assumed that Thomas is wholly representative of the views of the post-1857 British bourgeois, his life experiences make him an example of an historical *vox populi* of the colonially imbricated bourgeoisie.

Like many British citizens in the metropole, Thomas felt a deep sense of hostility towards the subcontinent immediately following the rebellion. In this milieu, many called for violent retaliation; for example, the image below was published in a September 1857 issue of *Punch.* Titled "Justice," it portrayed a white, female Britannia, flanked by white soldiers from the Bengal Army violently enacting revenge against darker-skinned soldiers (the rebels of 1857), while frightened Indian women and children watched:

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[1] Thomas Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: The Hindoostanee Press, 1819), 507.

[2] Francis J. Poynton, *Memoranda, Historical and Genealogical, Relating to the Parish of Kelston in the County of Somerset* (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1885), 56.

[3] Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, "Front Matter," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 16 (1856), 12.

Figure 1: "Justice," *Punch*, September 12, 1857, 108.

However, Thomas posited that the British should instead enact a different revenge: a reformulation of the syllabi of Indian schools. Based on his purported interactions with the native population of the North-Western Provinces, Thomas exhorted that "the general introduction of our own language seems, to my view, the most certain way to bring the natives nearer to the Government," going as far as to conclude that, "let them speak and understand English, and they will begin to think in English, and to have English aspirations." He succinctly summarized his rationale behind English education when he asserted that a "growing familiarity with our language and their acquirement of our literature, would render their relapse into barbarism impossible."[4] Thus, the proper response to the rebellion would have been to institute an educational system that would not simply serve as a form of punishment, but instead change the way the colonized were to think about the world around them. The idea to use schooling as a tool for socialization should come as to no surprise: the mid-19th century saw a shift in the opinion of

[4] Henry Harington Thomas, *The Late Rebellion in India, and Our Future Policy* (London: W. Kent & Co., 1858), 22, 24.

public schooling in Britain: schools were seen as locales where working-class children could be both morally and educationally trained in working-class knowledge patterns as approved by many bourgeois reformers. Placing children in these schools eventually benefited a bourgeois hegemony.[5] Although there is no reason to believe that British authorities either in London or India had heeded Henry Harington Thomas' admonitions, it remains so that over the course of the next twenty-five years, his policies would be considered, debated, reformulated, and implemented within the Raj.

To understand how Thomas transformed from Civil Service bureaucrat to prophet, 1857 must be understood as a watershed moment. Though most literature on 1857 mentions the profound change in colonial policy following the rebellion, it is worth repeating a few key points. As the British began to examine who were the primary perpetrators of the 1857 Rebellion, many began to point to the Muslim population as chiefly responsible. This conclusion was reached despite the fact that many of the well-known rebellion leaders were Hindu (including the Rānī of Jhansī, Tatyā Tope, and Nānā Sahib) and that it would have been more accurate to posit the rebellion as a Hindustani rather than communal uprising. Nevertheless, the idea that Muslims voiced their discontent through the name of Bahādur Shāh Zafar and were solely responsible for the rebellion remained pervasive.

For example, following the conclusion of the rebellion, Prime Minister Palmerston wrote to the Viceroy Lord Canning that all buildings connected to Muslim tradition should be leveled to the ground "without regard to antiquarian veneration or artistic predilection."[6] Canning, in reference to Palmerston's letter wrote, "I am quite opposed to touching the Jumna [*sic*] Masjid. . . the Hindoo religion has done this as well as the Mahomedan; and a crusade against one must be a

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5 W.B. Stephens, *Education in Britain 1750-1914* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998), 81.
6 Quoted in Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1972), 71.

crusade against the other."[7] While Viceroy Canning insisted upon an even hand in the response to the rebellion, he could not stem the tide of belief that the Muslims were solely responsible for the rebellion.

Fury against the Muslim population was seen in the metropole as well. In the previously mentioned pamphlet, Thomas wrote that the rebellion was "a result of a Mahomedan conspiracy."[8] Individual citizens began to petition the government to act against the Muslim population as well. For example, James J. Macintyre, a middling historian and member of the English gentry, pleaded to both the Palmerston and Derby cabinets to enact revenge by invading Mecca "for the peace and benefit of Christendom." He made it clear that the present was "the fit time for seizing and leveling to the ground the temple and Caaba [*sic*] of Mecca, and carrying away as trophies the sacred black and white stones." Both cabinets politely replied back indicating that they would not follow through on his advice.[9]

This is not to say that Muslim participation in 1857 did not exist. Peter Hardy noted that members of the religious classes were prominent members, events in the countryside seemed to point to a particular Muslim character, and of course, the presence of Bahādur Shāh Zafar as the re-instated *de jure* leader of India cannot be ignored.[10] Thomas Metcalf has pointed out that in localities such as Rohilkhand, there existed distinct, cohesive, and organized Muslim aristocracy; the rebellion would seem to be a Muslim effort in such areas.[11]

Despite contentions in understanding which religious group was responsible for the 1857 Rebellion, what one cannot take contention with was the fundamental shift of British in the view

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7 Quoted in Ibid., 72.

8 Thomas, *The Late Rebellion in India*, 13.

9 James J. Macintyre, *A Plan for the Military Seizure and Occupation of the Temple and City of Mecca, as a Defensive and Offensive Measure for the War in Asia* (London: Charles Westerton and Edward Stanford, 1858), 9, 14, 20, 23.

10 Hardy, *The Muslims of British India,* 63-65.

11 Thomas R. Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt: India, 1857-1870* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1964), 299.

of the native Indian. As Metcalf makes clear, the post-1857 milieu brought about the popularization of the martial race theory. No longer was everyone to be deemed equal; instead, "races" within India were subjugated to a militarized hierarchy which ranged from the docile Bengali "babu" to the martial Gurkha. The military too, began to change – there began a greater emphasis in recruiting from the metropole, rather than the colony.[12] According to many historians, this represented the dawn of a conservative movement: the civilizing mission had failed. India was not and could not be enlightened – it was to be ruled by force.

The Colonial Archive

This thesis will argue that the sentiment stated above – that Muslims were chiefly responsible for the 1857 rebellion – translated itself not into a *laissez-faire* conservative form of rule, but rather a colonial governance predicated upon ethnography and social classification. Beginning in 1858, educational records in the Home Department archives of the British Raj stress a need for the deployment of Muslim education. This call for education is a constant feature of official Home Department correspondence such as education reports, letters between administrators, and letters from and between the Muslim elite. In the latter case, figures such as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan picked up the mantle for education in the process of establishing the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875. This sentiment reached an apogee in 1882 with the publication of the *Report of the Indian Education Commission*. This report, which contained 600 folios and 222 resolutions, dedicated a significant portion to the question of Muslim education and represented a state meditation upon the question of Muslim education and socialization in the British Raj.

The Argument

This thesis will consider the development of Muslim education in India from the

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[12] Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt,* 323.

conclusion of the 1857 Rebellion and the establishment of the British Raj to the publication of the Indian Education Commission of 1882. What is seen in this period was a rising number of meditations on Muslim education within the colonial archive. The question asked within the scope of this thesis is two-fold: (1) why did the colonial state begin a push for education in Muslim communities during this era? (2) What were the ramifications of this policy on the development of Muslim identity?[13] These questions form the basis for each chapter.

Chapter One asks why the colonial state focused so intently on Muslim education. After a brief discussion on the development of the educational apparatus, the department's notion of "perfect religious neutrality" as delineated in 1858 is examined. Paradoxically, this policy as an *ideology* allowed the colonial state to divorce an ethnographic classification from a religious practice, making it possible to intervene within an ethno-religious identity. This ethnographic consideration acts as a segue into an analysis of educational reports and letters of the Education Department. The rationale behind Muslim education can be located within the lurking presence of the trauma of the 1857 Rebellion; however, this motivation for Muslim education is not readily apparent upon an initial reading. Rather, it must be located as embedded in the deep structure and language of the colonial state. It should be noted that the usage of the school to act as a site of resocialization is in line with a 19th century project by nation-states to create "citizens" within the confines of government-aided schools. For example, Eugen Weber explored how the French state used centralized and national syllabi (containing a national and patriotic pedagogy that utilized civil and moral indoctrination) in government-aided public schools to socialize the peasant population of 19th century France into bona fide Frenchmen.[14] Thus, this

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[13] The usage of the broad identity of "Muslim" is intentional, as it reflects the terminology used in the archive. For the rationale behind using this term, see Chapter I: "'Perfect Religious Neutrality:' An Ethnography."

[14] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1976).

chapter will not simply *present* archival material, but instead examine the structure of these sources to locate the colonial state's desire to socialize the Muslim population.

Chapter Two considers the implications of the colonial push for Muslim education – namely the formation of the persistent identity of the "uneducated Muslim." Beginning with an exercise in taking colonial ethnographic data at "face-value" and determining that Muslims attended colonial schools in similar proportions to other ethno-religious groups, this chapter seeks to understand why this trope developed in the Muslim community in lieu of any other. However, the state was not the only actor involved in the formation of identities. During this epoch, the Muslim elite were instrumental in putting forth an idea of the uneducated Muslim. In particular, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's goal of bringing forth an Islamic modernization was instead predicated upon what Antonio Gramsci and Partha Chatterjee termed the "passive revolution." In this nexus of state and Muslim, the non-elite Muslim student-subject found himself being placed in a moment of subalternity under a dominant discourse.

The identity of the uneducated Muslim has been a persistent trope within the scope of colonial and post-colonial South Asia. For example, the Indian news journal *Economic and Political Weekly* opened a 2001 article on education by invoking a common stereotype: "it is generally thought that Muslims do not prefer to send their children especially girl children to school. They are more concerned about religious education and therefore are inclined to open more and more madrasas."[15] Though the article attempted to dispel this notion, it noted the pervasiveness of this stereotype – leading one to believe that the cultural capital of this trope remains in circulation. More recently in 2006, the Indian government released the *Sachar Report*, which was commissioned to consider the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim

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[15] Asghar Ali Engineer, "Muslims and Education," *Economic and Political Weekly* 36:34 (Aug 25-31, 2001), 3221.

community of India.[16] It too concluded that it is a commonly held belief that Muslims in India tend to dissuade their children from attending government-aided schools. Indeed, the assumption that Muslims are uneducated is alive and thriving. This thesis intends to trace this assumption back to the point where it began: the annals of governance following the Rebellion.

Educational Historiography: A Brief Review

It remains a difficult task to locate the creation of an identity within the purview of education during the Raj. A curious and palpable gap in the historiography of South Asia is the study of education and its studentry. This is not to say that major studies are not widely available; however, these works are often exemplified by two variant streams of historiography. On one hand, one sees a large number of *longue durée* approaches.[17] On the other hand, many studies deploy a historiography that utilizes the educational archive by examining it in contexts of elite circles. A problem with both approaches is that they often leave a visible gap: an evaluation of how institutions of education developed around the Muslim community. This historiographical review will attempt to locate and problematize the presence – however brief – of the Muslim student within South Asian educational historiography.

Following independence, the state of educational historiography largely hinged upon comprehensive histories written by authors who contemplated the gravity of the imposition of English education in creating the socio-cultural landscape of post-colonial India.[18] Here, the term "comprehensive history" refers to the nature of these texts: they often consider the totality of Indian education through a *longue durée* approach. These studies usually involve a discussion of

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[16] For a discussion of the *Sachar Report*, see the Conclusion of this thesis.

[17] These include Anathnath Basu, *Education in Modern India: A Brief Review* (Calcutta: Orient Book Company, 1946), Suresh C. Ghosh, *History of Education in India* (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2007), Syed Nusrullah and J.P. Naik, *A History of Education in India (During the British Period)* (Bombay: Macmillan & Co., LTD., 1951), and P.L Rawat, *History of Indian Education* (Agra: Ram Prasad and Sons, 1970).

[18] Hayden J.A. Bellenoit, *Missionary Education and Empire in Late Colonial India, 1860-1920* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), 3.

education in India during the ancient, medieval, and modern eras, or some combination thereof. What characterizes these texts is a reliance on commissions and reports created during the Raj; their dependence on these sources often binds them to the colonialist discourse found in the archive.

Henceforth, one notices two aspects of these texts: firstly, they are descriptive in scope, consisting of a collection of summaries of the various commissions conducted throughout the history of colonial India. Secondly, because these histories simply regurgitate these narratives, they often lack any information about the students themselves, let alone the Muslim student. It cannot be emphasized enough that this is not simply a case of the subaltern being unable to speak due to the marginalization or attempted erasure of their voice in the colonial archive. Instead, an *entire historical student body* remains missing or marginalized from an extensive corpus of historical texts. Indeed, when texts on South Asian education mention the Muslim student-subject, his or her presence is often relegated to a comment on a lack of Muslim education and the fact that the colonial state wished to propagate education within this community. This thesis represents an attempt to locate a student body that has often been relegated to a periphery and tease out the relationship between the colonial state and the Muslim student. In the current state of educational historiography, is it possible to understand whether the non-elite Muslim subject attended government-aided schools and why the colonial state wished for these Muslims to attend the Raj’s schools?

For example, Suresh C. Ghosh's *The History of Education in India* can be seen as a prototypical example of a comprehensive history in that it attempts to put forth an history of Indian education from the establishment of the Indus Valley Civilization (c. 3000 B.C.) to the present (c. 1997). Ghosh’s work on the history of educational institutions in South Asia is an

example of the previously mentioned *longue durée* approach towards historiography. In documenting 5000 years of educational history, he attempts to track a long-term change in educational standards by comparing educational institutions during varying periods of rule. However, because a *longue durée* history requires an analysis of an extended period of time, the presence of Muslims within his section on colonial education is limited to the Indian Education Commission of 1882, as it represented the largest state meditation on the status of Muslim education. His summary of the Hunter Commission states that it recommended the "encouragement of indigenous Muslim schools like the establishment of Muslim High, Middle and Primary Schools and normal schools as well as institution of scholarship and studentship from primary to college level."[19] One is left with the understanding that education for Muslims was encouraged (an aspect of state policy already evident from the Hunter Commission), but with no idea whether these schools were built or whether anyone attended them at all.

There are texts, however, that contend much better with re-centering of the student-subject in discussions on education. Aparna Basu's *Essays in the History of Indian Education* sets the stage for a student-centric intervention in the study of history. For example, she poses a question that has been heretofore ignored: "why did Indians go to the new schools and colleges?"[20] As has been demonstrated, this simple question was ignored in much of the descriptive *longue durée* historiography that has constituted a significant portion of the South Asian educational corpus. While her answer, "primarily for economic self-betterment,"[21] is located in economic materialism, this text remains one of the few examples of a comprehensive analysis of colonial education that refrains from recapitulating a descriptive history. Furthermore, Basu attempts to locate the Muslim subject when she contends that, "where Muslims were more

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19 Suresh C. Ghosh, *History of Education in India* (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2007), 373.
20 Aparna Basu, *Essays in the History of Indian Education* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1982), 60.
21 Ibid.

urbanized and pursued non-agricultural occupations they were educationally more advanced than the Muslims of East Bengal and West Punjab who were poor peasants."[22] Her brief conclusion represents the first attempt to access the space of the Muslim student-subject by highlighting the geographic and class-based divisions of education. However, why did this split occur? Unfortunately, Basu does not discuss the structures located behind this division. Was this disparity a question of access (more sites for educational opportunity within the cities) or was it purely economic (the economic transience of the peasantry prevented children from dedicating time away from material work)? Basu neglects these important questions, instead opting for her text to set the stage for later historians to make an incursion into Indian education.

In actuality, Peter Hardy's *The Muslims of British India* attempted to answer these questions ten years prior to the publication of Basu's work. According to Hardy, it was the "perennial threat of drought, flood, scarcity, and how to meet the demands of the tax-gatherer and moneylender" that prevented the rural poor from attending English schools.[23] However, this single sentence represents one of the few attempts at accessing a history of the mass population of Muslims attending government-aided schools – again, an example of the insufficiency of educational historiography. Additionally, the focus of the argument on economic materialism ultimately explains little about the peasantry. In spite of materialist analyses saying otherwise, the Muslim masses (including subalterns) have had access to various socio-cultural institutions that would seem to be beyond their reach.[24] Furthermore, Hardy eschews a meditation on the vast majority of Muslim subjects and instead moves on to disparities in higher education (often

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[22] Ibid., 67.

[23] Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, 92.

[24] An example here would be political mobilization. An economic analysis would lead one to believe that the peasantry was unable to politically mobilize due to the same constraints that Hardy exalts. However, various attempts in subaltern studies have shown that political mobilization occurred through the livelihood of the peasants (such as those who participated in the *kisān sabhā*). See: Gyanendra Pandey, "Peasant Revolt and Indian Nationalism," in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, ed. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988), 233-288.

seen as the realm of the elites). While he attempts to make gestures as to why most Muslim subjects did not pursue higher education, he eventually concludes that one should instead make an incursion into the study of the urban middle-class and their entry into tertiary schooling.[25] However, he (like many other authors) chooses not to focus on these members of Muslim community. Instead he settles on a singular figure in the history of Muslim higher education in the Raj and a member of the Muslim elite: Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

It is difficult to access literature on Muslims within South Asian education without finding at least one reference to the life and work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Sir Syed (1817-1898), as he is commonly known, was a foundational figure in the movement for Muslim higher education. He first gained notoriety shortly after the 1857 Rebellion when he penned *Asbāb-i-Baġāvat-i-Hind* (*The Causes of the Indian Rebellion*, 1858). Here, he presented an argument that the rebellion did not stem from an inherent lawlessness and disdain for authority thought to be innate in the Muslim populace. Instead, he argued that the rebellion stemmed from British policies that intimately offended a sense of citizenry (*tehzīb)* that had developed over the course of Indian history. Shortly thereafter in 1860, he published *An Account of the Loyal Mohammedans of India*, wherein he argued that India was not *dar al-harb* and that Indians and the British were not necessarily diametrically opposed to each other. He concluded this book by noting that India could benefit under the enlightened rule of the British. However it was not until after his visit to England in 1869 that he theorized that the Muslim population of India could benefit from a university modeled on Cambridge. His model of education sought to blend an English style of education with religious instruction and social discipline that would educate and uplift Indian Muslims back into an elite position in Indian society. Upon his return to India, he began an effort to establish the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (MAOC) at Aligarh, a city

[25] Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, 94.

in the NWP (MAOC is now known as Aligarh Muslim University). The college opened its doors to its first class of students in 1875.

Hardy's shift to discussing Sir Syed and the Aligarh Movement reveals a common tactic in Muslim educational historiography. An analysis of Sir Syed provides a glimpse into a narrow band of Muslim society through the elite, as it is this elite that often attempted to speak for the Muslim community.[26]

For example, Hardy contended that Sir Syed, as a member of the elite class of educated Muslims, could make the case to fellow members of the intelligentsia that "modern education was not merely opposed to Islam, but was actually Islamic."[27] At the end of the chapter, Hardy emphasizes how limited this intelligentsia was and that the attempt by Sir Syed to establish an Anglo-Islamic site of higher education was ultimately quite small in scope. Noting that of the 1,184 Muslim college-graduates between 1882 and 1892, a mere 220 came from Aligarh, Hardy argued that the purpose of the MAOC was to "produce a class of Muslim leaders with a footing in both Western and Islamic culture ... with a consciousness of their claims to be the aristocracy of the country."[28] It can be concluded that within this Indian milieu, Sir Syed was producing a site of knowledge for the (future) elite of India. David Lelyveld reaches a similar conclusion in that whereas, "the founders of Aligarh spoke in the name of all the Muslims of India," MAOC was, "designed to make contact with a considerably narrower group. The North Indian Muslims literate in Urdu who formed the reservoir of Muslim intelligentsia and government servants."[29] If the subjects of these studies are so limited, then why are they the focus of analysis? Part of this

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[26] This thesis makes reference to a "Muslim elite" while simultaneously arguing that Muslims were no longer elites in Indian society. This is due to a complex and stratified hierarchy – a single community can be non-elite while simultaneously retaining a hierarchy within itself. However, one must always distinguish the Muslim elite from Muslim as non-elite. The former was a small stratum of Muslim society, the latter was a position within Indian society as a whole.

[27] Hardy, *Muslims of British India,* 94.

[28] Ibid., 103.

[29] David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978), 123.

focus can be attributed to a shift in power relations – a shift that reached an apogee with 1857. The 1857 rebellion represented the final loss of power (and access to power) in an empire wherein Muslims represented a sizeable chunk of the ruling elite: it was a moment where a minority ruling elite transitioned into a minority non-ruling non-elite. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan entered this milieu by putting forth the idea that during this period of mourning, Hindus had already begun to enter government-aided educational institutions and were well on their way to establishing their own elite position in Indian society. Thus, the focus on Sir Syed can be attributed to the fact that he was one of the first Muslims after 1857 to make an attempt at documenting how Muslims could reestablish themselves in the South Asian elite.

Additionally, these texts provide inroads into the *zeitgeist* of urban, upper-class Muslims who were willing to enter tertiary education based on an English model. In particular, Lelyveld's work is outstanding in analyzing how pre-British *sharīf* culture (in the Indian context, this refers to the culture of the well-born *ashraf* class) transformed from an emphasis on education based in the home to the propagation of *sharīf*-bourgeois attitudes within the university or college setting. However, to draw upon the 1881 census, of the 50,121,585 Muslims in British India, approximately 25,760,440 were male. Of these, 5,099,463 were between the ages of 15 and 24 (here assumed to be an age range appropriate for entering college).[30] When Hardy states that only 1,184 Muslims attended universities in a ten-year span, one needs to remember that this represents a mere 0.02% of individuals within a peer group. While the idea of post-1857 power relations may answer the question about why these texts focused on a small subset of the Muslim population, the idea of eschewing a study of the Muslim masses in favor an elite class of individuals remains problematic. It must be reiterated that these individuals were *one-fiftieth of*

[30] W. Chichele Plowden, *The Indian Empire Census of 1881 Statistics of Population*, vol. II (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing India, 1883), 3, 9.

one percent of the college-aged male Muslim population. Once again, this is not a case of subalterns being silenced in the historiography of Indian education. These studies, while exhaustive, leave out nearly 99.8% of a peer Muslim population. The Muslim voice in education clearly does not lie within the sphere of university education. But, there existed another site of Muslim education: the *madrasa* and *mahal*. Two historians of Muslim education have routinely been hailed as foundational in analyses of religious education: Francis Robinson's work on Firangī Mahal and Barbara Metcalf's on the Dēobandī school.

Francis Robinson's *The 'Ulama of Firangi Mahall* studies the development of a rationalist school of Islamic thought within Mughal and British India. This school, established by in 1691 by Mulla Qutub al-Dīn in the heart of Lucknow, UP (the term Firangī – Frankish – refers to the fact that the school was founded in the home of a French government servant who had left it to the Mughal state) was created during the height of the influence of Perso-Islamic culture within South Asia. The Firangī Mahal was characterized by Mulla Nizām al-Dīn's creation of the *dars-i-nizāmī* syllabus, which emphasized the rationalist *ma'qulat* study of logic, philosophy, and theology, while also maintaining a balance of the *manqulat* studies of the *tafsīr* (transmission), *hadīth*, and *fiqh* (jurisprudence).[31] The *dars-i-nizāmī* syllabus was a key component of instruction in the Mahal from its inception until the early 19th century. The syllabus balanced formal learning in Persian, Arabic, and Urdu with spiritual development through *manqulat* and *ma'qulat*. Robinson goes as far as to note that by the late 18th century, the Mahal was in a position to become the leading center for Islamic enlightenment. However, as the century progressed, the forces of "Islamic modernization" and "westernization" eventually led to a

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31 Francis Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Firangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (London: C. Hurst, 2001), 42.

decline in religious studies.[32] However, it must be noted that the formation of a *madrasa* at Firangī Mahal did not occur until 1905. At this point, the school cellularized itself into classrooms and later began to refer to itself as "*hamārē hīndustān kā kembridge*" ("Our Hindustani Cambridge").[33] However, Robinson eventually concludes that while the Mahal created scholars, with a select number going on to enter bureaucratic service, it was not necessarily a "school." He notes that those who entered government service were seen as going against the exalted religious standards of the school.[34] While the Firangī Mahal was a leading site for Islamic scholarship and utilized a renowned syllabus, it cannot be considered a site for "education for the masses." It lacked the *geist* of the English educational system: it did not seek to institute universal education, nor did it exist as a system of state-sponsored schools.

However, Barbara Metcalf's work on the Dēobandī *madrasa* presents a religious school that stands in contrast to its Lucknowī counterpart. The *madrasa* was established in 1867 in an old *masjid* in Dēoband, UP and quickly began to emulate the British bureaucratic style for educational institutions, rather than the traditional familial pattern of religious schools. From the moment of its creation, it utilized classrooms, a central library, a professional administrative staff, and annual pledges for its operating budget. Its students were admitted for fixed courses with prizes awarded at a yearly convocation. Later, the school would begin to set up satellite colleges staffed by its own graduates.[35] The Dēobandī *madrasa* attempted to become a school that would rival its secular English counterpart while still remaining firmly Muslim. As such, the school utilized a modified version of the Firangī Mahal's *dars-i-nizāmī* syllabus that contained a greater emphasis on *hadīth* and *fiqh*. While the school did not include English or Western

[32] Ibid., 102.
[33] Ibid., 130.
[34] Ibid., 75.
[35] Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2004), 30.

subjects for study, it did not prevent its students from attending government-aided schools after graduating; however, after the six-year curriculum, few continued on for further study.[36] Metcalf succinctly summarizes the goal of the school when she states that it "produced ulama, recruited from a widespread area, who disseminated a uniform religious ideology to many Muslims who welcomed teachings that emphasized common bonds among Muslims."[37]

Who were these Muslims? Metcalf notes that 12% of donors came from local villages, 28% from the district of Saharanpur to the east, 27% from the district of Muzaffarnagar to the south, nearly 18% from disparate locations in the remaining districts in the sprawl of the United Provinces, and the remaining 15% from the rest of India. The students were equally diverse, with one-third coming from the United Provinces, one-third from Punjab, and the final third from Bengal.[38] However, when noting the social origin of both the students and the donors, Metcalf notes that the overwhelming majority came from the *ashraf*, or the well-born class of Muslims. Any donors who were not from the *ashraf* tended to be subordinates or clients from this class.[39]

Thus, the problem of elite education remains. The Firangī Mahal presented a prototypical example of religious education and the Dēobandī *madrasa* offered an opportunity for education that emulated the bureaucratic style of English education. However, while the list of donors and students were geographically diverse, they ultimately represented an upper-crust of society that could afford to send their sons off for a religious education. However, this should not be seen as a statement of an obvious conclusion. In "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," Ranajit Guha contended that religious locales and apparatuses acted as a site for the

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[36] Ibid., 37.
[37] Ibid., 31.
[38] Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1982), 236-237.
[39] Ibid., 238, 259.

mobilization of the masses.[40] It can be inferred that the Muslim masses may have accessed these sites of education. These schools made it clear that they did not discriminate in enrollment based upon on social class; tuition too was subsidized via public pledges – in short, a historical implication for their non-attendance does not exist. Once again, it must not be assumed that the silence of the masses in this strand of literature is a stand-in for an inability to attend. Metcalf indeed notes that an emphasis on religious education and a revitalized spirit of Muslim camaraderie had developed amongst members all socio-cultural strata during the era whence the Dēobandī *madrasa* was founded.[41]

An examination of the historiography of South Asian education has shown that exploring the presence of Muslims within colonial schools and finding a rationale of why the colonial state encouraged Muslims to attend these schools remains, at best, inadequate. It is important to start an analysis from the historical moments following the 1857 Rebellion: how did the British Raj come to channel a hostility against the Muslims of North India into an obsession with Muslim education?

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[40] Ranajit Guha "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India" in *Selected Subaltern Studies,* ed. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988), 40.

[41] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India,* 260.

CHAPTER I
Dangerous Muslims, Dangerous Children

In "Three Essays on Sexuality," Sigmund Freud posited that the psychoanalytic process of sublimation occurs when sexual instincts are diverted from sexual aims and placed into non-sexual pursuits.[1] While this thesis will not deploy a Freudian psychoanalysis, the idea of sublimation is worth dwelling upon when considering the emphasis on Muslim education following the 1857 Rebellion. Whether consciously or not, the colonial fervor surrounding Muslims in the post-1857 milieu was transferred into the pursuit of socialization through education. Although the idea of sublimation remains a point to consider, this chapter seeks to illuminate why the colonial state began a push for Muslim education in the era immediately following the 1857 Rebellion. In order to do so, it first considers the notion of perfect religious neutrality and its implications in classifying a population. Following this, education reports, colonial correspondence, and the 1882 Education Commission are examined to consider how they represent incursions by a centralized ethnographic state. However, before considering these developments within a post-1857 educational apparatus, below is a brief recapitulation of the context and history of education within the East India Company and the nascent British Raj.

Development of the Educational Apparatus

From the passage of the East India Company Act in 1784 until the implementation of the Charter Act of 1813, education was left under the purview of the East India Company Revenue Department in Bengal. Education first became a department of concern when Warren Hastings assumed the first Governor-Generalship of Bengal in 1773. The period of education beginning with his tenure is often deemed to be an "orientalist" era of education, due to Hastings' interest in

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[1] Sigmund Freud, "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," in *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989), 261.

patronizing systems of education that were in line with assumptions regarding essentialist assumptions on the nature of South Asian culture.[2] Furthermore, this period of orientalist education was characterized by Hastings' desire for the Company to become more sensitive to Indian languages and traditions through a process of "reverse acculturation" whereby civil servants would be trained in native languages and culture in order to become assimilated into South Asian society.[3] Thus, orientalist education not only served to train assimilated civil servants, but also sought to manage or influence native education by using India's own cultural systems. For example, when petitioned for the construction of the Calcutta *Madrasa* by Bengali Muslims, Hastings replied enthusiastically in agreement with the petitioners, noting that "I have prosecuted the undertaking on my own means with no very liberal Supplies [and] I am now constrained to recommend to the Board . . . for a more adequate and permanent Endowment" for the *madrasa*.[4] The *madrasa* would become the first educational institution established by the British, followed by the construction of the Benares Sanskrit College in 1791 and the landmark opening of the College of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800 by Lord Wellesley. Whereas the Calcutta *Madrasa* and the Sanskrit College represented Indian education as patronized by the British, the College of Fort William was established as a site for reverse acculturation. However, taken together, these three institutions represent a strong orientalist tradition within an early phase of educational development.

From 1815 to 1823, the administration of education shifted to the Territorial Revenue Department. However, an important change in the management of education occurred in 1813

2 Bernard Cohn's analysis on the nature of the development of the "orientalist" point of view vis-à-vis education is of great value. See Bernard Cohn, "The Command of Language and the Language of Command," in *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996).

3 Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia UP, 1989), 27-28.

4 Warren Hastings, "Minute, recorded in the Public Department, 17 April 1781," in *The Great Indian Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843*, ed. Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1999), 75.

with the promulgation of the East India Company Charter Act of 1813. Section 43 of the act stated that:

> A sum of not less than one lack [*sic*] rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.[5]

The Charter Act established both an institution for propagating education amongst Indians under company rule and a method for funding the project, although it has been noted that the bursary often remained unspent.[6] Furthermore, the passage of this act granted missionaries – who were before greeted with hostility by the government – free entrance into East India Company territories. The arrival of these missionaries would usher in a new *geist* of "reform": in the process of proselytizing, missionaries began to view Indian society and culture as intricately connected – conversion could only occur within a wholesale condemnation of Hinduism and Hindu society.[7] This point of view would later lead to profound changes within educational policy.

The next shift in educational governance would occur in 1823 when the Bengal government announced the development of a separate political mechanism for education. The Territorial Revenue Department announced that all matters relating to education would be dealt with by a newly formed General Committee of Public Instruction. However, remnants of an idea that education would be best conducted through British perceptions of Indian cultural institutions remained: the committee would be under the administrative control of the Persian Secretary of the Political Department, who would conduct and oversee all correspondence between the

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5 "East India Company Charter Act of 1813, section 43," in ibid., 91.

6 National Archives of India, *Guide to the Records in the National Archives of India, Part II: Home Department/Ministry of Home Affairs (1748-1957)* (New Delhi: National Archives of India, 1977), 104.

7 Bernard Cohn, "Notes on the History of Indian Society and Culture," in *An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays* (Delhi: Oxford UP, 1987), 144.

committee and the governor-general.[8] The committee would remain under the purview of the Political Department until the abolition of the Persian Secretary in 1830. From this point, the administration of the educational apparatus would be transferred to the General Department. During this period, the previously mentioned project by Christian missionaries for reform began to take hold. In response, the orientalist view of upholding South Asian culture would begin to fade away, reaching an apogee with Thomas Babington Macaulay's famous and controversial 1835 minute on education where he stated that the orientalist system of education should be abandoned in favor of one that would create "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."[9]

1854 would represent the next monumental shift in the organization of education. In a despatch to the Governor-General, Secretary of State Sir Charles Wood wrote that the state was to consider how "useful and practical knowledge, suited to every station in life, may be best conveyed to the great mass of the people, who are utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts."[10] More specifically, he called for the establishment of departments of education in each province, institution of university and presidency towns, establishment of teacher-training schools, maintenance of government colleges and high schools, establishment of new middle schools, emphasis on vernacular schools for elementary education, and the introduction of a system for grants-in-aid.[11] This iteration of state-sponsored education was established with the liberal intention that the enlightening hand of English education would benefit the vast majority of Indians. The true weight of this hand would

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[8] "Bengal government resolution in the Territorial Revenue Department, dated 17 July 1823," in *The Great Indian Debate*, ed. Zastoupil et al., 108-109.

[9] "Minute in the General Department by Thomas Babington Macaulay, law member of the governor-general's council, dated 2 February 1835," in ibid., 171.

[10] Quoted in Commission of Inquiry on Education in India, *Report of the Indian Education Commission* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1883), 24.

[11] Ibid.

not begin to fall upon Muslims until after the 1857 Rebellion.

"Perfect Religious Neutrality:" An Ethnography

In 1858, W.R.B Chapman, the Inspector of Education in Bihar, found himself embroiled in a small scandal. After the publication of the "General Report on Public Instruction in the Lower Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1855-56," it came to the Court of Directors of the Public Department's attention that Chapman had informed his native constituents that it was the *order* of government for children to attend school and any actions otherwise would result in punishment.[12] In a public admonishment of Chapman's actions intended "for general information and for the guidance of all officers in the Education Department," the Court of Directors not only stated their displeasure, but went as far as to say that:

> 10. The Government will adhere, with good faith, to its *ancient* policy of *perfect neutrality* in matters affecting the religion of the people of India; and we most earnestly caution all those in authority under it, not to afford by their conduct the least color to the suspicion, that the policy has undergone or will undergo any change.[13]

The conceptualization of perfect neutrality (which would later be referred to as perfect religious neutrality) would carry over into further discourse by the Education Department regarding Muslims and other religious identities. The question raised is: how could the colonial state begin a project of educational reform for Muslims (ostensibly a "religious identity") while simultaneously espousing a conceptual framework predicated upon a process of rigid neutrality vis-à-vis religion? Is this simply a case of governmental dissonance wherein the state enthroned one theory but acted upon a wholly different praxis? The answer, of course, is no.

To understand how the colonial state implemented religious neutrality while engaging in a project of bringing Muslims into the purview of education, ideology must be seen as

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[12] NAI, No. 1-5, Home Department, Education, September 24, 1858.
[13] NAI, No. 52, London, April 13, 1858 (encl. ibid). Emphasis mine.

foundational to this conceptualization. It was stated that the practice of religious neutrality was ancient: the usage of this modifier invokes a diachronic stability to this practice. That is to say, this practice is purported to have existed throughout an extended period of linear time; its stability also hints towards an intention that it will *continue* to exist.

To draw upon the Marxist theorist Louis Althusser, subjects within this framework are "always-already" within the conceptualization of religious neutrality. By always-already, it is meant that the materiality of religious neutrality (through colonial policy) allowed all members of the colonial state to act as religiously neutral subjects. To explain always-already, Althusser uses the example of a police officer yelling to an individual on a sidewalk. Instinctively, this person turns around, regardless of any notions of guilt. One cannot recall the moment in time when this instinctive impulse began – it was always already present. Likewise, religious neutrality acts as a similar concept: one may have accepted or contested its presence, but the presence *itself* could not have been denied. The state and the subject are never "outside" or "brought-into" this policy. This process is ideological – no individual can constitute the self outside of an ideological practice; thus creating an always-already ideology.[14] This formulation lends credence to the idea that the Raj could not have simply said one thing and acted upon another. To put it simply, ideology is so penetrative that even the state must play by the rules of its own game.

What are the implications of considering perfect religious neutrality as an ideological practice? The mid-19th century saw the rise of a particular branch of colonial ethnography that attempted to categorize, enumerate, and survey the colonized (the 1881 census can be seen as representative of these practices). This is to say that the colonial state made incursions to know

[14] See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Towards an Investigation," trans. Ben Brewster, in *Lenin and Philosophy and other essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001).

its subjects; it utilized information to place the colonized into discrete groups and classifications which could be both recognized and quantified.[15]

One is left with an ideology of perfect religious neutrality as put forth during an era of heightened ethnography. By combining these two ideas, it becomes evident that the term “Muslim” was not simply a signifier of a religious identity, but a recognition of a discrete ethnographic group. Ideology is imbued within state apparatuses; in turn, religious neutrality and ethnographic practice collided within the Muslim subject. Muslims were lumped into a discrete group that can be counted and doted upon within the annals of governance.

Why is it important to point out the concept of perfect religious neutrality? It can be argued that all states operate under the conceit of neutrality. Furthermore, the ethnographic divisions that perfect religious neutrality created were not limited to the Muslim population – not only did Muslims become “Muslims,” but Hindus became “Hindus.” However, perfect religious neutrality goes beyond the idea that it only accounted for a delineation of a discrete ethno-religious/ethno-social group; this concept must be contextualized within a post-1857 mindset.

Faisal Devji contended that the rumors spread during the 1857 Rebellion – whispered in bazaars and transmitted by way of chapattis to spread the idea that the British were greasing rifle cartridges with tallow – were in actuality not believed to be true by Muslim or Hindu rebels. Instead, these rebels claimed that “they were protesting on behalf of others, anonymous Indians whose opinions put the sepoys, their friends, and families at risk of ostracism . . . there was no presumption of any shared faith in such rhetoric, only the duty subsisting between these soldiers and their kith and kin.”[16] This shared bond between Indian subjects was exemplified by an unspoken moral compact; one that was broken by the British. This idea was exemplified by the

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[15] Cohn, “Notes on the History of Indian Society and Culture,” 154.
[16] Faisal Devji, “The Mutiny to Come,” *New Literary History* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2009), 415.

exhortation put forth by Syed Ahmad Khan in *Asbāb-i-Baġāvat-i-Hind* that the British had violated a religious compact within public spaces by openly preaching and proselytizing in bazaars. In doing so, the British had violated the shared moral compact between state and subject. Keeping this in mind, perfect religious neutrality in the post-1857 milieu should be seen as a device formulated in response to the Rebellion; because this policy stated that all governmental actions were religiously neutral, the colonial state made it clear that it did not seek to operate within a religious formulation, quelling any fears of religious/moral transgression However, because perfect religious neutrality interpellates individuals into a religiously neutral construction, it simply "rebranded" the state's intentions of reform. Though these reforms were targeted at Muslims, the Raj could henceforth say that it did not seek to interfere in religious, moral, or ethnical matters. Instead, it implemented methods for ruling over Muslims by operating on an ethno-social construction that publicly eschewed religion.

However, an issue with this system of ethnographic classification should be readily apparent. Muslim as a catch-all ethnographic category remains vague. Cached within it are identities that cross class (elite, bourgeois, peasant, or subaltern?), caste (*Ashraf*? *Ajlaf*?), intra-religious (*Sunni*, *Sh'ia*?) and wide-spread geographic boundaries (North Indian, Bengali, Dakhni?). This thesis will not contest the lack of a localization of an identity. Instead, it seeks to illuminate a state process that was incredibly vague in its inception. It is *the* Muslim that the state seeks to change; a nebulous categorization that was nevertheless considered an entity that could be analyzed. Nevertheless, in the archival material being studied, this Muslim is mostly confined to North India, tending to come from the NWP and parts of Bengal, a location which Anil Seal described as "a generally backward region in terms of education and economic change," but where Muslims were "in terms of education and economic change, if anything, generally

forward."[17] While this may be true (within an elite sphere of the Muslim community), it must be repeated that British policy did not take this regional contextualization into account; a conclusion that state policy and public opinion were penned *in suggestio falsi* does not allow one to understand the implications of an intervention directed at a specific group (however vague it may be). Thus, this thesis will look into this hazy category in the twenty-five years following the Rebellion to see how and why it was deployed and, ultimately, what were the effects of its deployment.

Educational Reports and Reviews (1862-1871): Fanatical Muslims[18]

In April 1859, the Secretary of State for India circulated an Educational Despatch wherein he stated the Governor-General's desire for the publication of reports furnished by provincial Directors of Public Instruction regarding the progress of educational development.[19] These reports included discussions on revenue collection, attendance, grant-in-aid schemes, scholarships, and the conditions of schools and colleges. Beginning in 1862, these reports were compiled and reviewed by the central government, setting a precedent to create quinquennial reviews of the Education Department.

The 1862 "Note on the State of Education in India" was compiled by A.M. Monteath, the Undersecretary to the Government of India in the Home Department. When discussing aspects of Muslim education, a small section of the report was devoted to the Calcutta *Madrasa*. When discussing the history of the institution, Monteath cited an excerpt from an 1858 minute by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The minute provided a brief history of the *madrasa*, wherein it

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[17] Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1971), 307.

[18] While educational documents of this sort do exist from 1871 to 1882, most (if not all) remain either unpublished or deemed not transferable by the National Archives of India.

[19] Government of India, "Extract from the Proceedings of the Right Honorable the Governor General of India in Council, in the Home Department (Education), under date the 11th June 1859," in *Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay, For the Year 1858-59* (Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1860), 228.

was stated that, "this College was, however, consigned to the uncontrolled management of Mahommedan Professors, and the consequence was that the studies of the College became nominal."[20] However, in 1820 "the College was placed under immediate English superintendence, and after that change the abuses . . . were less gross and flagrant." The excerpt goes on to cite a letter from Dr. Sprenger, the 1850 principal of the *madrasa*: "'The system,' Dr. Sprenger stated, is in fact precisely the same as the one which was in vogue in Europe during the darkest ages.'"[21] In response, the Education Department reorganized the *madrasa* in 1850 by dividing it into a "Senior Department and Junior Department. In the former only Arabic literature and Mohammadan Law are taught." The reformation was declared a success in 1860 due to the introduction of "a more *modern and rational system* of instruction in the Arabic language and in the principles of Mahommedan Law for the *antiquated and faulty system* of the Indian Moulovies."[22] The institution was declared to be on "more satisfactory footing" in 1860 by the new principal of the *madrasa*, Lieutenant-Colonel W. Nassau Lees, who stated that:

> These results show that the Moulovies of late have been more attentive to their duties; and I am inclined to hope that they have at length realized the fact that the Calcutta Madrissa *is a Government Institution*; that it is the *Government and not the Professors* who are responsible for the nature and education given to its Mahommedan subjects therein.[23]

What is presented here is a fairly straightforward example of a knowledge/power relationship. That is to say that the colonial state saw itself as capable of utilizing its own techniques of knowledge transmission and syllabus creation in order to bestow upon the native a knowledge that the irrational Muslim was incapable of putting forth.[24] This trope of irrationality

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[20] A.M. Monteah, "Note on the State of Education in India (Compiled in 1862)," in *Selections from Educational Records of the Government of India*, Vol. I, ed. K.G. Saiyidain (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1960), 20.

[21] Ibid., 21.

[22] Ibid. Emphasis mine.

[23] Ibid., 22-23. Emphasis mine.

[24] Cohn, *supra* Chapter I note 2.

relied on an implication that Muslim forms of education were ossified in the past as a relic – they were incapable of bridging the gap between pre-modern and modern modes of knowledge. Furthermore, there existed a belief that this aversion to rational thinking was endemic to Islam: Sir William Muir, the Secretary to the Government of the NWP (who later became the Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP in 1868), wrote in *The Life of Mahomet* that Muslims were naturally irrational. When discussing the improbability of the miracles conducted by the Prophet Muhammad, Muir wrote that, "under the shelter of the civil arm and fanatical credulity of the people, these marvelous legends grew up in perfect security from rational inquiry."[25] The idea presented is that any form of education borne from such a religion would naturally be irrational.

Hence, the Muslim subject who studied under these pre-modern forms of education would become a victim of an unenlightened educational system. Here, the Raj saw itself as being able to develop a syllabus that eschewed the antiquarian while remaining true to religious laws that were at the heart of a classical Muslim education. When describing the condition of the *madrasa* in 1820, it went without qualification that the "uncontrolled" management of Muslim professors would lead to institutional decay. The use of the term uncontrolled is especially important – it is the reassertion of control of the institution by the Raj that allowed education to begin to flourish anew. What remains most interesting, however, is the insistence of government *control* over the *madrasa's* studentry.

To understand why the colonial state would insist upon ownership of the Calcutta *Madrasa*, one needs to recall the date of publication of this document: 1860. The trauma of the 1857 Rebellion remained a fresh memory in the minds of many state administrators. When recalling the Rebellion, it was the resounding opinion that many within the religious community

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[25] Sir William Muir, *The Life of Mahomet: From Original Sources*, Vol. III (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1859), lvii.

were prominent in revolt.[26] Furthermore, many within the government found Muslims in general to be devoted to a religion that inculcated fanaticism.[27] For example, W.W. Hunter in *The Indian Musalmans* commented that, "Their [Muslims'] fanaticism, *for which ample warrant can always be found in the Kuran* [*sic*], has been hotly excited, until at last there is a danger that the entire Muhammadan community will rapidly be transformed into a mass of *disloyal ignorant fanatics*."[28]

To return to Lees' exhortation, there is an implication in the text that, left to their own measures, the *maulvis* (an honorific title given to *Sunni* religious scholars) – who carry within them an omnipresent threat of fanaticism – are incapable of providing an education. This, in turn, harks to a paranoia borne out of 1857 that saw an uncontrolled religious class as the seeds of revolt. What was seen here was a two-fold process. First, the state utilized a technique of social classification to identify Muslims as naturally irrational or fanatic. Second, the state asserted that *only it* had the ability to take control of the questionable religious school to ensure the *proper* education of its students; this, in turn, was an example of the colonial state positioning itself to placate the fanatic rebels of 1857.

Of course, this classification of Muslims-as-fanatic was a part of a larger post-1857 project of knowledge gathering. As Nicholas Dirks argued: "It was as if during these years after the rebellion the centralization of (and control over) knowledge was tantamount to the centralization of (and control over) power itself."[29] The strategy of the centralized colonial state in using (and deploying) knowledge-gathering techniques, whether they were tracts on the origin of Islam or the Education Department's meditation on the Calcutta *Madrasa*, should be seen as a

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[26] Hardy, *The Muslims of British India,* 65.
[27] Metcalf, *Aftermath of Revolt*, 391.
[28] W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (London: Trubner and Company, 1872), 151. Emphasis mine.
[29] Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001), 199.

part of a larger project by the state to centralize power and reassert control and dominance over the rebellious and fanatical Muslim. Therefore, the identification of Muslims as fanatical and the subsequent use of this knowledge by the Education Department must always be seen in tandem with the perceived trauma of 1857.

For further rationale behind this point of view, one may consult a reform scheme for the Calcutta and Hooghly *madrasa*s penned by Lees in 1870 and forwarded via the Home Department to E.C. Bayley, the Secretary to the Government of India. In a section regarding the study of religious law and the duty of the state to provide for an institution for the study thereof, he stated that:

> I have not had the advantage of seeing any of the papers which are in the possession of Government regarding Mahomedan conspiracies, which might elucidate this portion of the subject; but so confident am I in my own opinion, that I would assert without any fear that it is *not the learned, but, on the contrary, the ignorant, who, as a rule, are most ready not only to listen to, but to preach treason*, and that it has been so in Bengal from all time. In fact it is notorious that those Mahomedans who are now supposed to be the enemies of the British Government, are in the opinion of the Maulawis of the Madrassah and the Sunnies, generally heterodox and outside of the law. *Any system of instruction which would favor the training of biogtted* [*sic*] *Moslems*, *should be avoided*, but . . . I am of the opinion that not only the wisest and best plan, but the easiest and safest plan is, not to deprive them of any of the facilities they now enjoy of acquiring a knowledge of their own literature . . . instead of rooting it up or destroying it . . . and leaving its Mahomedan subjects dependent upon such Madrassahs as Fuzl Alis for the instruction they now get in a Government Institution.[30]

This resolution, along with a packet of over 200 pages containing recommendations by Lees, a committee convened by the Education Department to reform the Calcutta and Hooghly *Madrasas*, and C.H. Campbell of the Board of Revenue, were received by Bayley. Most of the propositions contained therein, including a resolution agreeing with Lees to appoint a "European gentlemen of repute as an Arabic scholar, with the power of teaching the upper classes in

[30] NAI, Index 258, No. 2, "Reforms necessary in present condition and management of the Calcutta and Hoogly Madrassahs," 11.

English," were accepted by Bayley and forwarded to the Secretary of State for India in London.[31] A distinct paranoia regarding the religious classes had developed amongst those in the Education Department; it must be repeated again that, in this post-1857 realm, only the state could oversee and provide for the proper education of its Muslim students.

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The next educational review was compiled in 1867, again by A.M. Monteath. This report covered the period between 1862 and 1866, with an emphasis placed on educational reviews received between 1865 and 1866. This review took a markedly different stance on public education when compared to its 1862 counterpart. In the opening section, titled "General Resume of Educational Operations in the Several Presidencies and Provinces of India," Monteath wrote that, "it may, I think, be reasonably doubted whether the theory of the downward filteration of education, however true as a general principle, will not be found wanting when applied to the lowest strata of the population."[32] This point would again be repeated by Monteath in the 1867 review, wherein he stated that, "schools – whose object should be, not to train highly a few youths, but to provide more opportunities, than now exist, for the acquisition of such an improved education as will make those who possess it more useful members of society in every condition of life."[33] A shift in focus for education beyond the (urbanized) elite classes represented an overall incursion by the colonial state into the countryside – once again a part of the project by the state to *know* its native subject. However, this process of knowledge gathering was not simply limited to the census; here, it is seen to penetrate the impulses behind

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[31] NAI, No. 299, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871 (encl. ibid.). See also NAI, No. 19, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871 (encl. ibid.).

[32] A.M. Monteath, "Note on the State of Education in India 1865-66," in *Selections from Educational Records,* ed. K.G. Saiyidain, 126.

[33] NAI, No. 27 A – 27 C, Home Department, Education, A.P Howell, "Note on the State of Education in India During 1866-67," May 2, 1868.

education.[34] Herein, one must recall the previous point on perfect religious neutrality and ethnographic divisions – attempts at knowledge gathering by the colonial state utilized this ideological maneuver to classify and categorize its populace. The following table, taken from Monteath's review, can be seen as representative of this separation:

Table 1.1: Proportion of Hindus and Muslims attending Government Schools[35]

Pupils attending Higher Class Schools						
	Bengal	**N.W. Provs**	**Punjab**	**Madras**	**Bombay**	**Total**
Hindoos	16,828	2,360	9,377	5,063	1,337	34,965
Mahomedans	1,561	375	3,362	473	28	5,799
Pupils attending Middle Class Schools						
Hindoos	40,896	13,783	5,784	12,085	21,207	93,755
Mahomedans	4,241	3,380	2,238	682	1,634	12,175
Pupils attending Lower Class Schools						
Hindoos	32,374	1,21,713	29,125	14,049	63,653	2,60,914
Mahomedans	5,040	32,903	24,816	87	4,947	67,793
				TOTAL	Hindoos	3,89,634
					Mahomedans	85,767
				GRAND TOTAL		4,75,401

The review went to argue that the percentage of students within the Lower Class Schools is "probably not far from the actual proportion borne by the Mahomedans to the Hindoo

[34] For an example of this process through the lens of the formulation of caste identities, see Nicholas Dirks, "The Enumeration of Caste: Anthropology as Colonial Rule," in *Castes of Mind*, 198-228.

[35] Monteath, "Note on the State of Education in India 1865-66," 222.

population of the country generally."[36] The numbers presented in the above table raise quite a few questions – many of which remain unanswered and will not be considered within the scope of this thesis. First, the drop-out rate amongst Muslims was incredibly high. Within Bengal (a province with a large number of Muslims[37]) the number of Muslim students drops by 16% from Lower Class to Middle Class schools and by 63% from Middle Class to Higher Class (although the latter decrease seems to be a trend that was equally applicable to both Hindus and Muslims in each province). Why were these students dropping out in such large numbers and why was this occurring when the colonial administration seemed to be advocating for Muslim education? Was the colonial push for Muslim education all rhetoric with no teeth? Or was there a norm for Muslim children to receive a few years of education before dropping out? Finally, why were the numbers for Muslim students similar in Bengal (31% of the total province population) and Bombay (18%), even though Muslims were a much smaller percentage of the total population in Bombay?

However, what cannot be contested is that the above table demonstrates that Muslim education was paltry. But why juxtapose it against the ethnographic category of the "Hindu"? Recall W.W. Hunter's warning: the fanatic force of Islam combined with a lack of education would eventually transform into a "danger that the entire Muhammadan community will rapidly be transformed into a *mass of disloyal ignorant fanatics* on the one hand, with a small class of men highly educated in a narrow fashion on the other, highly fanatic, and not unwarrantably discontented, *exercising an enormous influence over their ignorant fellow-Muhammadans*."[38] Thus, even a juxtaposition of numbers and ethnographic categories hints towards a fear of

[36] Ibid.
[37] According to the 1881 Census, Bengal had a total population of 69,536,861. Of these, 21,704,724 were Muslim – approximately 31% of the population.
[38] Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, 151. Emphasis mine.

rebellion. Whereas the "flexible Hindus" have "cheerfully acquiesced" to British form of education, Muslims have held aloof.[39] Their ignorance, combined with an innate religious fanaticism, could only result in a discontent and rebellion that would be led by a small number of individuals who were educated (such as the fanatic/irrational *maulvi*). This ethnographic comparison is representative of the post-1857 milieu as extending to the children of Muslims. This is to say that because Muslims are dangerous, their children represent a *potentiality* of danger. The only solution to this predicament is to bring these children into the school – to socialize them out of fanaticism and into the (perceived) docility of the Hindu community in order to prevent further rebellion. But how would this be accomplished? Through the development of a system of collaboration that would serve to encourage enrollment in government-aided schools.

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The educational report of 1870-71 will be the final quinquennial report discussed. Compiled in 1872 by A.P. Howell, the Under Secretary in the Home Department, it provides insights not only into the ethnographic considerations of Muslim education, but also a window into how the state attempted to cull the Muslim population into government-aided schools following the 1857 Rebellion.

Why attempt to bring Muslim children into government-aided schools – what was the danger of a middle school student? It must be repeated that Muslim children did not present the clear-and-present danger that, for example, Muslim rebels in 1857 presented. However, these children represented the *potential for future fanaticism* if they were not properly socialized into modes of British rule. There existed a need for the school as a site of socialization to prevent another 1857.

[39] Ibid., 11.

However, the question remains: besides classifying Muslims as fanatic and asserting control over religious schools, how did the colonial state go about ensuring enrollment in the bulk of Indian schools? Howell, in reference to the 1854 despatch that established the Education Department discussed the establishment of the position of directors, inspectors, and instructors for Indian schools. These positions were to be filled by Europeans or native collaborators.[40] Howell then goes on to cite an 1859 despatch to note the duties of those in these positions:

> To exercise a close scrutiny into all the agencies in operation throughout the country for the instruction of the people, to point out deficiencies wherever they exist; to suggest remedies to the Government, and bring the advantages of education before the minds of the various classes of the community; to act as the *channel of communication on the subject between Government and community at large*; and generally to stimulate and promote, under the prescribed rules, all measures for having their object the secular education of the people.[41]

The emphasized sentence can be seen as indicative of the development of a bureaucratized system of collaboration. The term collaboration is used here because these officers were "on-the-ground" representatives of the colonial apparatus and as such acted in accordance with the interests of the state with regards to education. This is to say that it was the job of a select number of individuals to collaborate with and act as a proxy of the state vis-à-vis the population at large. Thus, and this is true of all educational systems, the school acted as a site of socialization: wherein the state could watch over and ensure the proper social and educational development of its youngest subjects. To examine how this functioned in the Raj, the table on the following page lists the number of directors, inspectors, and instructors in government schools:

[40] A.P. Howell, "Education in British India, 1870-71," in *Selections from Educational Records,* ed. K.G. Saiyidain, 315.
[41] Ibid., 316. Emphasis mine.

Table 1.2: Government Officers in Schools in 1870-71[42]

	Number of Officers							
	Direction		**Inspection**		**Instruction**		**Total**	
	European	**Native**	**European**	**Native**	**European**	**Native**	**European**	**Native**
Bengal	1	. . .	8	98	52	1,126	61	1,224
Madras	1	. . .	7	49	39	282	47	331
Bombay	1	. . .	5	35	23	1,409	29	1,444
N.W.P	1	. . .	7	78	31	696	39	774
Punjab	1	. . .	7	3	24	142	32	145
Oudh	1	. . .	1	11	4	144	6	155
Central Provinces	1	. . .	3	20	9	249	13	269
British Burmah	1	. . .	. . .	. . .	4	20	5	20
Coorg	. . .	. . .	1	. . .	2	32	3	32
TOTAL	8	. . .	39	294	188	4,100	235	4,394
The Berars	1	. . .	2	6	2	388	5	394
GRAND TOTAL	9	. . .	41	300	190	4,488	240	4,788

The grand total of both European and Native collaborators at each bureaucratic level was 5,028. The total number of students within government and aided schools can be ascertained from revenue calculation: the state noted that from fees (but not from actual attendance), the total number of pupils in these provinces was 449,788.[43] The ratio of collaborators to students was roughly 89 students per collaborator; however, because the number of students actually attending schools was bound to be less than the number indicated in revenue collection, this ratio was in all likelihood much smaller.

However, what is immediately evident is that these collaborators were almost overwhelmingly native (a ratio of nearly twenty to one). It can be argued that a system of procuring students would be more effective if Europeans were responsible for enrolling native students. One must once again recall Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's *Asbāb-i-Baġāvat-i-Hind,* wherein

[42] Ibid., 317.
[43] Ibid., 312.

he stated that, "The Pargunnah Ministers and Deputy Inspectors, who went to every village and town to admonish the people to put their own sons into these schools, had in every village the name of the 'black chaplain' . . . The common people expressed the opinion that these were Christian schools and were made to convert them to Christians."[44] What Sir Syed's analysis demonstrated was that European inspectors were often viewed with suspicion and were considered to always carry with them the ulterior motive of converting children into Christians. However, it was H. Stewart Reid, the Director of Public Instruction in the NWP, who realized that "the fears of the people were allayed when Hindus and Mahomedans were placed in charge of their schools."[45] The presence of the Native collaborator acted to enroll potential students in government-aided schools by assuaging the fears of parents: a familiar face, even if tied to the state apparatus, was a simple tactic to bring children into the Raj's schools. This idea was reiterated by E.C. Bayley, who stated that, "In avowedly English schools established in Mahomedan Districts, the appointment of qualified Mahomedan English teachers might, with advantage, be encouraged."[46]

This conceptualization of Indian collaboration in the Education Department was another example of the long-arm of 1857 reaching into colonial policy. The dangerous children of a dangerous Muslim population had to be brought into the colonial schoolhouse to become properly socialized subjects of the British Empire; however, their entrance into the school was

[44] Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, *Asbāb-i-Baġāvat-i-Hind* (1858; repr., Karachi: Urdu Akeḏēmī Sindh, 1957), 123-124. Translation mine. Original text:

پرگنہ وزیڑ اور ڈپتی انسپڑ جو ہر ہر گاوں اور قسبہ میں لوگوں کو نصیحت کرتے پھرتے تھے کہ اپنے لڑکوں کو مکتبوں میں داخل کرو ہر ہر گاوں میں کالا پادری ان کا نام تھا ۔ ۔ ۔ عوام الناس یوں خیال کرتے تھے کہ یہ عیسائی مکتب ہیں اور کرشٹان بنانے کو بٹھاتے تھے ۔

[45] NAI, Nos. 12/15, Home Department, Education, December 17th, 1858.

[46] NAI, Index 298, No. 300, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871.

predicated upon a system of native collaborators who acted as a liaison between the school and the state. These interlocutors were an integral part of the apparatus for the push for and implementation of Muslim education.

Correspondence (1870-1873): The End of Muslim Hegemony

In June of 1871, the Viceroy Earl of Mayo penned a note for circulation for the Education Department. He stated that, "There is no doubt, that as regards the Mahomedan population, our present system of education is, to great extent a failure."[47] What drove him to this conclusion was that although the "differences in the relative numbers of Hindoo or Mussulman population in the different Provinces may of course, account in some measure, for the disproportion of numbers," it could not be denied that the statistics presented a "lamentable deficiency in the education of a large mass of what was, not very long ago, the most *powerful race* in India."[48] This was reiterated in a memorandum by J. O'Kinleay, who stated that it was English rule that destroyed the hegemony of the Muslims. He assumed that Muslims believed that "an English education might undermine their religion" and that "it is not lawful to learn English, or the language of any other non-Mussulman people, except for the purpose of answering letters, or of combating the religious arguments of that people."[49] E.C. Bayley agreed: "The truth is that, before the advent of the English, the Mahomedans were not merely the main political, but the main intellectual power of the state."[50] These assumptions seem strikingly similar to those put forth by W.W. Hunter in *The Indian Musalmans*, which was published just two months before the circulation of these letters. Indeed, it was Mayo who requested that Hunter write the book in May

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[47] NAI, Index 298, Note by His Excellency the Viceroy, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871.
[48] Ibid.
[49] NAI, Index 298, Memorandum by J. O'Kinealy, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871.
[50] NAI, Index 298, Note by E.C.B, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871.

of 1871; Hunter proceeded to write the book in just three weeks.[51] He wrote that it was the policies of the Raj that had dealt Muslim education its "death-blow."[52] Because of these injustices, Hunter argued, the Muslims led the rebellion against British authority in 1857.

What each argument shared in common was a belief that the Muslims had "fallen from grace." That is to say that there existed a point of view that the arrival of the British ushered in an era of challenged Muslim hegemony – Muslims were unceremoniously transformed from a ruling minority elite into a non-ruling, non-elite, minority population. The lack of education amongst the Muslim population was therefore a function of its own decline at the hands of the British. In the eyes of the Raj, if Muslims rebelled in 1857 in an attempt to restore authority of a figure-head emperor, then there existed a risk of it occurring again. The olive branch of education was not necessarily linked to that of progress or modernization. Instead, it was a tool for resocialization. As Lees stated in his report regarding the Calcutta *Madrasa*, "The best means of all of breeding discontent among any class of Her Majesty's Indian subjects is to give them a *high class* education and then turn them adrift on society to starve." His solution? "At present day a knowledge of English is the only knowledge which will procure a young man the means of living."[53]

Providing an education was to provide a means for an entry way into a nascent middle-class; an attempt at hegemony without dominance. Once again, 1857 lurked beneath educational policy – it went without question that the British had usurped the Muslims' position as the ruling class of India. To prevent this large population from trying once again to reestablish their dominance, the British utilized English education in government-aided schools as a means to

[51] Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism*, 307n.1.
[52] Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*,186.
[53] NAI, Index 258, No. 2, "Reforms necessary in present condition and management of the Calcutta and Hoogly Madrassahs," 11.

placate Muslim discontent by using education as a means for Muslims to partially restore their status within Indian society and become a part of the colonial bourgeoisie.

The Hunter Education Commission of 1882

The Education Commission of 1882, commonly known as the Hunter Commission, was convened on February 3rd, 1882 with a resolution that stated "that, while the Government acknowledged the mastery and comprehensive outline supplied by that [1854] Despatch, they deemed it of importance to review the progress made, and to enquire how far the superstructure corresponded with the original design."[54] The Commission, published in 1883 in a report of over 600 folios and 222 resolutions, discussed the state and progress of education in India nearly thirty years after the 1854 establishment of the Education Department. The Commission set out to judge the progress of education in the British Raj by drawing upon dispatches, minutes, provincial reports, and interviews from 1854 to 1882. The Commission was presided over by W.W. Hunter, who was then a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. Interestingly, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was amongst its members (he later withdrew and was replaced by his son, Syed Mahmud). This connection between the Muslim elite and the Raj will be expounded upon in the next chapter as an example of the elite as part of the Gramscian notion of the "passive revolution."

Evidence within the Commission was gleaned from 193 witnesses across India, whose testimony was deemed to be "a unique exposition of the most trustworthy opinion in India regarding the instruction of the people."[55] It is important to note that while these individuals were referenced and utilized as a source of information regarding the state of education, they were neither named nor mentioned within the body of the argument; instead, they were relegated to an

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[54] *Report of the Indian Education Commission* (Calcutta: The Superintendent of Government Printing, 1883), 2.
[55] Ibid., 5.

appendix. Unsurprisingly, these witnesses were culled from an elite Muslim population, the majority of whom were employed by the colonial state – once again, an example of the passive revolution deployed during the process of reform. The fact that a small population of elites conveyed testimonies to the Commission is especially important when considering the resolutions adopted for the Muslim population. In the chapter titled "Education of Classes Requiring Special Treatment," one must be keenly aware of the presence of these interlocutors. Though obvious, it must be repeated that while the subject of these reforms remained silent, the colonial state attempted to speak in his name in order to further its own means and accomplish its own goals.

The fundamental question taken up by the Commission is should be familiar: why have Muslims not enrolled in government institutions in large numbers? In what reads like a laundry-list summary of the causes of poor enrollment in English schools, the Commission states that, "the small proportion of Muhammadan teachers," "minor faults in the Departmental system," "well-to-do Muhammadans educating their children at home," "their hereditary love of the profession of arms," "the absence of friendly intercourse between Muhammadans and Englishmen," and finally, "the most power factors are to be found in pride of race, a memory of bye-gone superiority, religious fears, and a not unnatural attachment to the learning of Islam," are all to blame.[56] By now, the majority of these reasons should seem familiar. Seen within them is a desire to begin a state intervention to socialize the Muslim populace in the post-1857 era. While these reasons are cited without reference to the reality of the Muslim on the ground, it must be noted that the Hunter Commission represents the apogee of an ideal. Cached in this text were a condensed version of nearly twenty-five years of justification for Muslim education and a rationale for conducting a project of socializing the Muslim population of the Raj in the years

[56] Ibid., 483.

following the 1857 Rebellion.

Conclusion

When considering why the Raj decided to make an incursion into the education of the Muslim community, one must begin by looking at the policy of perfect religious neutrality. This policy, if considered as an ideological maneuver, allowed the state to divorce a religious identity from an ethnographic. In this act, Muslim identity was reduced to an entity that could be enumerated and therefore considered to have definable traits. However, this process is important in the post-1857 milieu because it put forth the idea that the colonial state did not seek to intervene in religious matters, even though it conducted reform through the ethno-social category of "Muslim." Simultaneously, one must always consider the presence of the 1857 Rebellion when analyzing the colonial push Muslim education within the British Raj. As has been shown, the ghost of 1857 loomed over the policy decisions of the colonial state. The actions of the Raj were predicated upon a fear of fanaticism and discontent of the Muslim rebels (and their children) of 1857. With this in mind, Chapter II will consider the ramifications of this push for education on Muslim identity.

CHAPTER II
Identity

This chapter will consider the ramifications of the colonial push for Muslim education as outlined in the first chapter. Specifically, it will consider the formation of the trope of the "uneducated Muslim." Before this identity is examined, however, ethnographic data will be taken at "face-value" in order to determine whether Muslims were or were not attending government-aided schools. Through this analysis, it becomes clear that Muslims attended colonial schools in equally dismal numbers as other ethno-religious groups. Why then, did the trope of being uneducated develop specifically within the Muslim population and not within any other? This question cannot be analyzed by an analysis that is limited to the instrumentality of the state in formulating and demarcating identities. Through this delimitation, a nexus between the colonial state and Muslim elite can be discerned. Paradoxically, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who intended to bring forth an Islamic modernization, utilized similar language as the colonial state in a drive for Muslim higher education. This process should be viewed as an example of a "passive revolution" as outlined by Antonio Gramsci and later expounded upon by Partha Chatterjee. Through this analysis, one finds the presence of a dominant discourse wherein large swaths of the Muslim populace were being spoken for.

Ethnographic Data

The Hunter Education Commission and the 1881 Census both provide numerical data that allows one to ascertain the state of education within "Hindu" and "Muslim" communities. These religious divisions are looked upon as somewhat suspect, mainly due in part that these discrete identities were based upon enumerated ethnographic data as put forth by the Raj.[1] However, the

[1] For an account of a community that blurred the line between religious, caste, and tribal boundaries, see Shail Mayaram, *Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory, and the Shaping of Muslim Identity* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997).

ethnographic data within these publications provides for a window into the information used by the Raj to create justifications for the project of Muslim education (as outlined in Chapter I). This is to say that these numbers provide an opportunity to survey the numerical landscape that was utilized by the Raj when creating colonial policy. Below is a table culled from both the Hunter Commission and the 1881 Census, juxtaposing Muslim and Hindu populations in select regions within the British Raj with information regarding the number of Muslim and Hindu men enrolled in government-aided schools (the use of men is reflective of the limited data presented within these materials):

Table 2.1: Comparison of Hindu/Muslim Attendance in Colonial Schools versus Total Population[2]

Region	***Regional Male Population***		***Regional Male Student Population***	
	Hindu	**Muslim**	**Hindu**	**Muslim**
Madras	14104951	952388	325321	25547
Bombay (British Territory and Feudatory States)	9134157	2002744	296790	41548
Bengal	22578544	10855771	779623	236643
NWP (British Territory)	19813098	3022445	183767	36826
Punjab (British territory)	3883915	5639845	56367	41844
Central Provinces (British Territory)	3700467	140611	71756	5929
Assam	1580458	673189	35131	6681
Coorg	90705	7880	3042	89
Hyderabad (Assigned Districts)	4517812	469446	31158	4604
Total	79404107	23764319	1782955	399711

From this information, it can be deduced that within these regions, only 2.3% of Hindu and 1.7% of Muslim males attended schools within the Raj. However, without a numerical

[2] Data taken from: Plowden, *The Indian Empire Census of 1881*, 3; *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, Statistical Tables: General Table No. 2d (xx)

comparison, these percentages are somewhat meaningless. In this case, one must refer back to Sir Charles Wood's 1854 Educational Despatch wherein he stated that it was the purpose of the Education Department to provide for “useful and practical knowledge, suited to every station in life [that] may be best conveyed to *the great mass of the people*, who are utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts.”[3] According to the goals set out by the Education Department, the Raj's educational apparatus was to reach out to the Indian masses. While this goal was numerically vague, the usage of the term “great mass of the people” certainly implies a significant percentage of the population. Instead, twenty-eight years after the formal establishment of the Education Department, less than 3% of Hindus and Muslims were attending government schools. Like the Muslim population, Hindus were not attending these schools in large numbers proportional to their overall population. Despite this fact, there was not an explicitly stated desire within the colonial administration to bring large swaths of the Hindu population into the school. One is left with a large corpus of archival material that stresses the fact that Muslims were not attending government schools, even while Hindus were not attending in proportionally large numbers. Why then, did the trope of the “uneducated Muslim” develop?

The Uneducated

But, what does the trope of the “uneducated Muslim” mean? That is to say, what does it mean for an institution (colonial education) to allow for the formation of a group identity? Bernard Cohn explored how the activity of conducting a census ultimately allowed for a process of objectification to occur, thereby allowing a population to (re)consider and (re)formulate their own social structure in new or different ways.[4] Objectification refers to the process whereby

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[3] Quoted in *Report of the Indian Education Commission,*, 24. Emphasis mine.

[4] Bernard Cohn, “The Census, Social Structure and Objectification in South Asia,” in *An Anthropologist Among*

individuals are abstracted into a *thing* or *entity*. It is only within this abstraction wherein one is able to dwell upon the self in order to analyze it. This process should seem familiar – it was deployed in the ethnographic consideration of "Muslim" as an abstract group as seen within the doctrine of perfect religious neutrality. One has arrived at a point of near reciprocal objectification: it first occurred between the colonial state and subject when demarcating ethnographic groups. However, it was only after this process where the subject was presented with an objectified notion of the self and could begin to meditate upon his own identity. To speak of this process in such reductive terms would seem to ease the tension inherent within it. The creation of the trope of the uneducated Muslim should not be seen as a collective effort by a large group of Muslims. Instead, as will be shown, the process of identity creation in this instance was initially limited to the state's incursions into the Muslim community, but was later taken up by the Muslim elite in the passive revolution of Islamic modernization. Before this can begin, however, it is apt to reconsider the archive in an attempt to locate explicit references to the uneducated Muslim.[5]

Although it has been shown that the push for education can be traced back to the years immediately following the 1857 Rebellion, the idea of the uneducated Muslim began to gain traction in the 1870s. In 1871, the Viceroy Earl of Mayo stated that within the Muslim population there was a "*lamentable deficiency in the education* of a large mass of what was, not very long ago, the most powerful race in India."[6] In a previous letter, E.C. Bayley stated that, "The truth is that, before the advent of the English, the Mahomedans were not merely the main political, but the main intellectual power of the state;" an unsubtle implication that Muslims no longer held

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the Historians.

5 Instances wherein the colonial state lamented the state of education within the Muslim population of India were presented more fully in the previous chapter.

6 NAI Index 298, Note by His Excellency the Viceroy, Home Department, Education, August 19, 1871.

this title.

These sentiments would be repeated by W.W. Hunter in *The Indian Musulmans*. He wrote that, "our system of public instruction . . . is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to the requirements, and hateful to the religion, of the Musalmans."[7] Hunter argued that the entire system of instruction, including government-aided (and religiously neutral) schools, colleges, and universities conducted in both English and vernacular languages, were entirely unfit for the Muslim community. Commenting on the progress of the development of education in India, he wrote that:

> During the first seventy-five years of our Rule we continued to make use of this [Pre-British] system as a means for producing officers to carry out our administration. But meanwhile we had introduced a scheme of Public Instruction of our own; and as soon as it trained up a generation of men on the new plan, we flung aside the old Muhammadan system, and the Musalman youth found every avenue of public life closed in their faces.
> *Had the Musalmans been wise, they would have perceived the change, and accepted their fate*.[8]

The conclusion here is clear: not only were Muslims not entering colonial schools, but they were doubly unwise in the fact that they did not perceive the changes in the system of education of the East India Company and the Raj. To repeat, the uneducated Muslim has thus far been located in a subject who did not or could not conform to the educational apparatus as created by the state. The state of being uneducated was also linked to a perceived staunch disavowal of the means of education as laid out by the Raj.

This point of view was reiterated in the Hunter Education Commission. The Commission stated that "'the endeavour to impart a high order of English education' to the Muhammadan community had completely failed."[9] In explaining this failure, it was stated that "the most

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[7] Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, 177.
[8] Ibid., 178-179. Emphasis mine.
[9] *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 483.

powerful factors are to be found in pride of race, a memory of bygone superiority, religious fears, and a not unnatural attachment to the learning of Islam."[10] While the Commission does note that "there had been a tendency to exaggerate the backwardness of the Muhammadans," it nevertheless reaches the conclusion that, "we here accept the fact that at all events in many parts of the country, the Musalmans have fallen behind the rest of the population."[11]

What is termed the "uneducated Muslim" in this thesis is a reference to a perception of the Muslim subject as one that has both fallen behind in terms of entering the educational apparatus, as well as one that is at a distinct structural disadvantage. This disadvantage was derived from a combination of religion and politics. This is to say that the Muslims' affinity for religious education existed as one barrier to entry, while political languidness acted as the other. As the "former rulers of India," Muslims had established modes of education that utilized their own religious and cultural customs to educate and train students for state-sponsored employment. The rise of British hegemony in the subcontinent displaced these forms of education. Due to a cultural torpidity, Muslims neither perceived nor reacted to the change. Thus, the uneducated Muslim was not simply uneducated: he was structurally incapable of attending government-aided schools.

But, how did this cultural identity emerge and disseminate? Sanjay Seth, who identified this trope as the "backwards, but proud Muslim,"[12] locates this process within a relationship between the governmentalized state and the colonial subject.[13] The argument is built upon the idea of governmentality from Michel Foucault wherein the primary administrative function of the state is not to use its power to destroy life, but to invest in it, thereby guaranteeing the life of

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., 483, 505.
[12] The difference here between tropes is merely semantic and refers to a somewhat similar process as outlined above.
[13] Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India* (Durham: Duke UP, 2007), 120.

its subjects.[14] Through governmentality, the paradox of the modern state may be reconciled: an enlarged bureaucracy can come alongside an increased investment in individual liberties because the state uses its increased size to guarantee its subjects life and liberty. Using this idea, Seth concluded that the colonial state differed from the modern state in that the former promised the *possibility* of these liberties, but because this iteration of governance was based upon the dominance of the colonizer (who controlled the state apparatus) over the colonized, the actualization of these liberties would almost always be indefinitely deferred.[15]

Colonial education fit into this idea of an "almost there" bureaucratic patronage. The Education Department was established in order to bring forth moral and educational development as an individual right to the "great masses of the people." In short, education was designed for the betterment of the colonized. However, the state could locate backwardness in those who did not engage in this reciprocal idea: backwardness was derived from those who did not take part in the educational process. Being uneducated or backwards can therefore be seen as an identity that emerged from the perspective of the state. This is to say that being Muslim and being backward "embodied a particular perspective from which this *fact could be brought into being as a fact* and seen as such. The perspective was that of the governmentalized state, which governs a population."[16] The notion that identity formation can be traced back to the colonial state apparatus is convincing, especially in light of the fact that Muslim education seemed to be a process that was instituted by the colonial state.

The power of the state to formulate identities cannot be denied. This fact was seen in the previous chapter wherein it was shown that ethnographic practices found in educational reports

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[14] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 137.
[15] Seth, *Subject Lessons*, 122.
[16] Ibid., 124. Emphasis mine.

and the census served to locate, demarcate, and ultimately create identities. Through this process an individual who held a multiplicity of identities (for example: Bengali, male, member of the subordinate classes), but also practiced Islam could be reductively abstracted into the ethno-religious identity of "Muslim" through a process of enumeration. However, while state power is one method to locate the creation and propagation of the uneducated Muslim, one cannot simply reduce the dissemination of this identity as coming forth from the hands of the state. Equally important was the Muslim elite, who utilized the same language as the colonial state in its call for Muslim education. The presence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's equally ardent appeal for Muslim education problematizes the notion of colonial governmentality as the only site for identity dissemination.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan & the Passive Revolution of Modernization

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was at the forefront of a section of the Muslim elite who argued in tandem with the colonial government for an increase in Muslim education. As the secretary for the Select Committee for Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among Muhammadans of India, he published the findings and conclusions of his organization in 1872. The report contained both the opinions of the organization, as well as findings extracted from essays submitted to a contest that asked participants to opine on the state of education in Muslim communities. The report noted that, "the fact of the proportion of Muhammadans reading in Government Colleges and Schools being less than that of Hindoos is indisputable."[17] When describing the rationale behind this phenomenon, the committee noted that the majority of essayists remarked that fear of losing one's religion was one reason for not attending: "the students of Government Institutions learn to look on their religion with discredit . . . Syed Ahmed

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[17] Syed Ahmed Khan Bahadur, C.S.I., *Translation of the Report of the Members of the Select Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among Muhammadans of India* (Benares: Medical Hall Press, 1872), 4.

Khan Bahadur remarked on this point that, he had never met a man who knew English and who had still full respect for all the religious beliefs."[18] The report further located causes of poor attendance in: corruption of morals in the schools, the British serving as the administrators of education, mixing of noble and poor children in the classroom, the medium of the English language, the overall poverty of Muslims, and a want of religious education.[19] They finally concluded that the Muslim community should "look forward to, and inaugurate an educational system for future generations" which could take in account the fact that Muslims compose "a very large community" with "different classes composing that community." The Committee attempted to advise the establishment of a system of education that could account for "the various wants and requirements of those different classes of the people."[20]

Sir Syed would use many of the recommendations laid out by the Select Committee when establishing the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College Fund Committee. Indeed, this new committee stated in its constitution that, "the object of the Committee shall be to collect funds towards the establishment of a college, particularly one for the education of the Muhammadans as suggested by the Central Committee for the Better Diffusion of Education Among Muhammadans of India."[21]

When writing a letter to Sir William Muir on the proposed establishment of the MAOC, he wrote that his goals in establishing the college were to:

> Set to work to gather together the means whereby the obstacles which beset our people might be done away and *an end might be brought to their barbarism and aversion from the acquirement of the modern sciences and useful languages*, by which a man rises from the nadir of worthlessness to the zenith of knowledge.[22]

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[18] Ibid., 8-9.

[19] This may seem strikingly similar to the rationale put forth by the Hunter Education Commission. Indeed, the two shared a connection: Syed Mahmood, a son of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a member of the Education Commission's committee.

[20] Khan, *Translation of the Report*, 53.

[21] NAI Index 10-17, No 2396A, Home Department, Education, July 1, 1872.

[22] "Address to the Hon'ble Sir William Muir (October 27, 1876)," in *The Aligarh Movement: Basic Documents:*

These sentiments would be repeated in a letter to the Viceroy Edward Robert Lytton, wherein he wrote that, "the social conditions of our community – the traditions of the past, to which time has lent a charm, no less vague than prejudicial – the religious feelings inculcated with our earliest infancy – have been, and still are, obstacles to a thorough appreciation of English education."[23] In a letter to Sir John Strachey, finance minister within the Governor-General's Council, Sir Syed expressed the opinion that:

> You, Sir, are aware that of all the races inhabiting the continent of India, and doing homage to the British Throne, there is none which has remained so far behind the age as the Musalman subjects of the Empress of India. They have withstood the influence of the age with an apathy calculated to bring in its train the worst evils of social and political degradation.[24]

Sir Syed used this critical language to gather momentum for his drive towards a modernization of the Muslim community in order to recreate a politically influential Muslim elite.[25] This idea of modernization operated within an intellectual paradigm that at its core sought to reconcile the theological underpinnings of Islam with those of the modern sciences in order to educate a younger generation whom he hoped would populate this nascent elite community. In order to accomplish this, his quest hinged upon loyalism to the British Crown in that the government would take on a paternalistic role within the Muslim community in order to further modern education.[26] His ideal, which later came into fruition with the establishment of the MAOC in 1875, was to use the Raj in order to found a college that would cater to the needs of a nascent educated elite; this college would be modeled off of Cambridge University and would blend the ideas of liberalization, humanism, the sciences, and pragmatic politics with a

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1864-1898, vol. 3, ed. Shan Muhammad (Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1978), 691. Emphasis mine.

[23] "Address to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Edward Robbert Lytton (January 11, 1877)," in ibid., 696.

[24] "Letter to the Hon'ble Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I, C.I.E (December 11, 1880)," in *Correspondence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his Contemporaries*, ed. Salim al-Din Quraishi (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1998), 56.

[25] As stated in the introduction, Sir Syed represented a desire within the Muslim elite to return an access to power and privilege to the greater Muslim population.

[26] Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan: 1857-1964* (London: Oxford UP, 1967), 32-33.

theological education founded upon both *Sunni* and *Shi'a* principles (hence the term "Anglo-Oriental" with the title of the college).[27] Lurking underneath his critiques of the Indian Muslim community was a strong desire for modernization and change. However, it must be considered whether a process of modernization had an ability to disseminate an identity.

Antonio Gramsci's theory on passive revolutions provides a framework to understand this process. In his "Notes on Italian History," Gramsci compared the period of the Italian Risorgimento (the unification of the Italian peninsula) against the French political upheavals of the 18th and 19th centuries wherein the bourgeois rose to power (1789, 1831, and 1848). While both situations led to a rise of a national(ist) bourgeoisie, the French and Italian revolutions differed in that whereas the French utilized large-scale political uprising, the Italians achieved unification through small changes – a passive revolution. Within the scope of this comparison, Gramsci concluded that a passive revolution was deployed by the bourgeoisie precisely when it was impossible to conduct a large scale upheaval. Instead, revolution was carried out in "small doses, legally, in a reformist manner." Through this method of deployment, the bourgeoisie could "preserve the political and economic position of the old feudal classes, to avoid agrarian reform, and especially, to avoid the popular masses going through a period of political experience such as occurred in France in the years of Jacobinism, in 1831, and in 1848."[28]

Partha Chatterjee expounded on the notion of passive revolution within an anticolonial nationalist setting. In this reformulation, he concluded that the anticolonial nationalist sought to form an independent nation-state, which in turn was predicated upon the formation of a national movement with support from other dominant classes, as well as the support of the subordinate classes. This, he concluded, was a "reorganization of the political order." However, this process

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[27] Ibid., 37.

[28] Antonio Gramsci, "Notes on Italian History," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 119.

was a moderated one:

> It does not attempt to break up or transform in any radical way the institutional structures of 'rational' authority set up in the period of colonial rule, whether in the domain of administration and law or in the realm of economic institutions *or in the structure of education*, scientific research and cultural organization . . . it also does not undertake a full-scale assault on all pre-capitalist dominant classes."[29]

Anticolonial nationalist movements relied on the notion of passive revolution: as a bourgeois movement, it sought to establish a position of power, but it did not accomplish this through a process of violent political upheaval. Instead, it relied on a principle of small changes in the preexisting political system. Chatterjee expands this principle to Sir Syed himself, noting that, "Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who launched a movement in the late 19th century to popularize education among Indian Muslims, was not a 'reactionary' because without this education, Muslims would have remained backward."[30] Reactionary here refers to the idea that Sir Syed was not a communal leader obstructing the political process; instead he sought to modernize (bring forward) Muslims in order to create a politically viable bourgeoisie.[31]

The connection between Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the colonial state should now be evidently clear. The process of Islamic modernization through education can now be seen as a form of passive revolution. Sir Syed did not seek to institute a political process whereby politics as usual would be overthrown. Instead, he utilized a reformist technique: by advocating for the state to take a position of paternalism within the current political system, a Muslim bourgeoisie could be created. However, this does not yet address the issue of the language utilized within this quest for modernization. Why did Sir Syed continue to use language similar to the colonial state

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[29] Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1986), 49. Emphasis mine.

[30] Ibid., 143.

[31] Although Chatterjee uses the term backward to utilize the terminology of modernization, it remains so that the language of backwardness is firmly located within his argumentation. This is to point out that the trope of being uneducated is historically persistent.

when describing the state of education amongst Muslims? To put it simply, the language of the passive revolution was not in itself revolutionary: it played by the rules set out in front of it. But once again, the concept of the passive revolution is not enough in itself to fully account for the presence of this trope. The full picture must be considered: that of the state and the elite, coming together in forming a dominant discourse.

Dominant Discourse

It may be fruitful to discuss the concept of discourse before a discussion on the dominant discourse of "uneducated-ness" can begin. Discourse in this sense is derived from the works of Foucault. For him, discourse is that which makes a speech act meaningful; the relational aspect between speech and meaning(s) is what comprises a basic notion of discourse.[32] Meaning here is expansive: it does not only relate to what is being signified, but can also refer to the position of the speech act (i.e., where and when the speech act may be produced to provide meaning).

However, what is inherent in the production and formulation of any discourse is an intimate connection between knowledge and power. That is to say that knowledge is produced through power and the exercising of any form of power is connected to the production of knowledge.[33] Though this logic may seem circular, it relies on a key principle of exclusion. Knowledge is created through and from positions of power. Because it comes from a position of power, the formulation of discourse is exclusionary in what may be spoken, where it may be spoken, and how it may be spoken. The creation of knowledge is linked to a position of power wherein all exercises of power are based upon making use of knowledge, which can then be

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[32] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).

[33] Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972 – 1977,* ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colon Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 93.

reformulated through power.[34]

A dominant discourse is a discourse that is intimately connected to the field of power; through this power, it becomes the *only* relation towards meaning. An example of a dominant discourse can be located in the production of a discourse on sexuality wherein the dominant discourse was that of heterosexual, conjugal, reproductive pair.[35]

To return to the trope of the uneducated Muslim, one can locate the creation of a dominant discourse of being uneducated. It was a nexus of power between the state and Muslim elite that was involved in the creation and dissemination of the trope of the uneducated Muslim. It cannot be denied that this trope began with the state: it started with the demarcation of subjects into discrete identities through ethnographic practices (the use of perfect religious neutrality to see Muslim as an entity). Through the process, the subject then became modified (uneducated). The entirety of this was linked to governmentality: the state was then able to determine the fact that the subject was uneducated because he did not partake of the (however transient) liberties bestowed upon him by the colonial state.

Simultaneously, there existed the implementation of the passive revolution of Islamic modernization. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's passive revolution was predicated upon a patronage of the state to create a system of modern education: it used the language as articulated by the state within the archive to put forth the idea that Muslims were uneducated in order to create a niche within the colonial state. This is to say that in order to convince the state to patronize Sir Syed’s plan for higher education (thus leading to the creation of a Muslim bourgeoisie), he utilized the trope of the uneducated Muslim to position himself as the leader of this revolution. As previously stated, this trope began with the state, but then was propagated through the language of the elite.

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[34] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977).

[35] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*.

What is seen were two simultaneous processes: the colonial state spoke for the Muslim, while the Muslim elite used the language of the state in order to also speak for the Muslim. This, in turn, satisfies a precondition for a moment of subalternity for the Muslim population.

Dominant discourses can consign groups to the fringe and in the process create moments of subalternity for these groups.[36] The production of the trope of the uneducated Muslim was created by positions of power in the colonial state and the Muslim elite. Herein lies the ability for this trope to be disseminated: it did not rely on the ability for the Muslim to speak for him or herself. Instead, it was a process of being *spoken for*. The trope can remain persistent as it is not those who are spoken for who speak for themselves. Instead, it is the record of knowledge that speaks: the historical record confined Muslims to the trope of being uneducated. The state and elite spoke and were recorded in the archive, allowing for the conceptualization of the uneducated Muslim to disseminate.

Confining the trope of the uneducated Muslim to the theoretical space of a dominant discourse should not serve to lessen the paramountcy of its existence. It must be recalled that, according to the 1881 census, there were 50,121,585 Muslims residing in the British Raj. Only a handful of these were amongst the Muslim elite and the rest were consigned to a position of speechlessness; they were the uneducated Muslims.

Conclusion

This chapter has reexamined the archival material presented in the preceding chapter regarding the rise of Muslim education. In the process of this reexamination, it has been discovered that Muslims were often relegated to a trope of being uneducated. Uneducated in this instance refers to a prevailing notion that Muslims did not attend government-aided schools due

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[36] For an example of this process, see Partha Chatterjee and Pradeep Jeganathan, ed., *Subaltern Studies XI: Community, Gender and Violence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

to a religious and cultural rationale. However, it was not only the state that put forward these ideas. In the process of Islamic modernization, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was at the forefront of a passive revolution and as such used similar language to reform education within Muslim communities. The combination of state and elite disseminating the same trope resulted in the formation of a dominant discourse of the uneducated Muslim, thereby consigning a large population to a moment of subalternity in which they were spoken for. Because the archive is a space that prizes the utterances of the state and the elite over the masses, the large majority of non-elite Muslims could thus be consigned to being the uneducated Muslim.

CONCLUSION
The Cycle of History

Hegel says somewhere that all great historic
facts and personages recur twice. He forgot
to add: "Once as tragedy, and again as farce."
Karl Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*[1]

On March 9th, 2005, the office of the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh requested that a High Level Committee be formed to investigate "relevant issues relating to the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community."[2] On November 30th, 2006, the report was completed and made available. Officially titled the *Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India: A Report,* the tract has been referred to in common parlance as the *Sachar Report* after its chairperson, the former Chief Justice of the High Court, Rajinder Sachar. The 425 page report analyzed the greater Muslim community of India in terms of population size, health, education, employment, bank credit, access to social and physical infrastructure, poverty, standards of living, government employment, and affirmative action. The report concluded with recommendations and suggestions by the committee on how the state could address these inequalities within the Muslim population as a whole.

Of particular interest to the scope of this thesis is chapter four of the report. Titled "Educational Conditions of Muslims," the chapter opens with what should be familiar language at this point: "Muslims are at a double disadvantage with low quality education; their deprivation increases manifold as the level of education rises. In some instance the relative share for Muslims is lower than even the SCs [Scheduled Castes] who are victims of a long standing caste

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1 Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, trans. Daniel de Leon (1897; repr., Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1913), 13.

2 Prime Minister's High Level Committee, *Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India: A Report* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2006), iii. Herein referred to as the *Sachar Report*.

system."[3] Recall the Hunter Education Commission, which surmised that, "'the endeavor to impart a high order of English Education' to the Muhammadan community had completely failed . . . The Muhammadans were not even then competing on equal terms with the Hindus for employment under Government."[4]

This is not to conclude that the two reports should be seen as equals; the similarity in language does however suggest the longevity of the process of the state in making an incursion into a minority group and asking fundamental questions regarding assimilation. In both the colonial and post-colonial setting, there exists an interpellative aspect to the formation of these commissions: the state utilizes these bodies to make subjects out of those consigned to the fringes of civil society. This relational aspect between subject and state is static in that the same fundamental questions were asked in both 1883 and 2006: why are Muslims not utilizing the educational apparatus and what can be done to alleviate this situation? This is not to say that the underlying desire to ask these questions has remained static – this, for now, remains a problematic yet to be dealt with. Hegel famously remarked that "the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk."[5] The analysis of history can only be conducted after the passage of time; the 153 years that have passed since the conclusion of the 1857 Rebellion have allowed for the distance required in the study of history. When compared to the mere six years since the publication of the *Sachar Report*, one may find himself in the mid-day sun, with Minerva's owl nowhere to be found. However, this should not act as an impediment to ask certain questions; namely, to see how the cycle of history continues to the present.

Take for example the conclusions that the *Sachar Report* reaches near the end of the chapter. It is stated that:

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[3] Ibid., 50.
[4] *Report of the Indian Education Commission,* 483.
[5] G.W.F Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), 13.

> With regard to school education, the condition of Muslims is one of grave concern. The data clearly indicates that while the overall levels of education in India, measured through various indicators, is still below universal acceptable standards, the educational status of the Muslim community in particular is a matter of great concern . . . For example, both the Mean Years of Schooling (MYS) and attendance levels of Muslims are low in absolute terms and in contracts to all SRCs [Socio-religious Communities] except in some cases SCs/STs [Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes]. In fact, in several context [*sic*], SCs/STs are found to have overtaken Muslims.[6]

These deductions are similar to those drawn by colonial-era Education commissions. First and foremost, the report noted that levels of Muslim education are low – a fact of enrollment that seems to have remained unchanged since the 19th century. Secondly, this conclusion was drawn in part from a comparison to the educational level of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. A similar juxtaposition was made in the Hunter Education Commission wherein the section on “Aboriginal Tribes” immediately followed the recommendations laid out for Muslim education. What is seen here is a historically continuous comparison and grouping of minority populations. This is to say that the structural disadvantages of one ethno-religious or ethno-social group are almost always seen in comparison with another.

However, most interesting is the Report's attempt to “dispel certain misconceptions and stereotypes with respect to education of Muslims.”[7] The Report notes that:

> Muslim parents are not averse to modern or mainstream education and to sending their children to the affordable Government schools. They do not necessarily prefer to send children to Madarsas [sic]. Regular school education that is available to any other child in India is preferred by Muslims also . . . The access to government schools for Muslim children is limited.[8]

The attempt to dispel this “stereotype” was only undertaken after “recent trends in enrollments and other education attainments and Committee's interactions with the Muslim

[6] *Sachar Report*, 84.
[7] Ibid., 85.
[8] Ibid.

Community are adequate."[9] This attempt to change popular opinion occurred *130 years after* the trope of the uneducated Muslim gained currency. It has taken nearly a century and a half for the state to *make an attempt* to reexamine the uneducated Muslim. By the mere fact that there is even an attempt to discuss this topic highlights an underlying reality that this trope has become widespread in cultural usage. It has acted as the boomerang of history: what the colonial state began made its way through the socio-political landscape of India and has arrived back in the hands of the (post-)colonial state. However, even though the state is attempting to reconsider the status of the uneducated Muslim in this instance, this fact should be tempered by the reality of later policy decisions. In 2008, the Government of India launched the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madarasa (SPQEM). This policy initiative made it clear that it "commits itself to provide all possible means for the uplift of the educationally backwards minorities."[10] However, in light of the *Sachar Report,* the next sentence is particularly informative: "The children of the educationally backward Muslim minorities attend Maktabs/Madrassas/Darul-Ulooms with very little participation in the national mainstream education system."[11] It is the objective of the SPQEM to "encourage traditional institutions like Madarasas and Maktabs by giving financial assistance to introduce science, mathematics, social studies, Hindi and English in their curriculum so that academic proficiency for classes I-XII is attainable for children studying in these institutions."[12]

It took 130 years for the state to reconsider the status of the uneducated Muslim. Within two years of the publication of the *Sachar Report*, educational policy was again being formulated

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education, "Central Sponcered [*sic*] Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madarasa (SPQEM)" (Government of India: 2008), 1.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 2.

through the same assumptions that have formulated this concept since its inception in the 1870s. However, it must be noted that while the colonial state viewed the project of resocializing Muslims as a function of their inherent fanaticism, the post-colonial state sees a *threat* of fanaticism if Muslims attend *madrasas*. Nevertheless, in both scenarios the state seems to be asserting its power to prevent a rise of fanatic Muslims.

This thesis began with an exploration of that trope in asking why there existed a push for Muslim education. It was found that colonial educational policies, characterized by a paranoia of governance stemming from the 1857 Rebellion as well as ethnographic incursions into the populace served to divide subjects into predefined categories, was at the center of such decisions. However, it was the second part of this thesis – the exploration of the origins of the development of the uneducated Muslim – that seems to be most persistent. This trope, developed through processes of ethnography, governmentality, and the passive revolution of Islamic modernization began to take hold in the 1870s. Its proliferation seems to have never stopped.

Although Marx wrote that history repeats itself both as tragedy and farce, history has not been given a chance to repeat in this instance. Instead, what is seen is a single cycle of history that has grown more problematic with the passage of time. Beginning with ethnographic practices and a call for modernization, it has since expanded into the quotidian world of stereotypes. Like its colonial antecedent, it once again is the driving force behind state policy. But, it cannot be said that this cycle has ended or paused even for the briefest of moments to allow it to be captured and repeated once again as farce. Indeed, this is history as both tragedy and as farce. It exists as tragedy in that in everyday life – both in the present and in the past – the uneducated Muslim is not simply a trope that exists in quotation marks: it is a lived reality of a minority population. It is farcical in that, even in the post-colonial epoch, one does not see the

structures and language of the Raj erased by an era of self-determination. Though one can argue that the torpidity of state institutions carry within them an inerasable largesse of colonialism, it should never be forgotten that the cycles of history, once started, continue to the present. Muslim education is not simply a “moment” of colonial history; instead, it is – one of many – examples of the persistence of history itself.

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