Hamdard Education Society. (2003). *Evaluation Report on Modernization of Madrasa Scheme (UP)*. New Delhi: HES.
The Hindu. (2002, May 19). Be vigilant while registering Madrasas, state governments told. Bangalore.
Khan, A. U., Saqib, M., and Anjum, Z. H. (2003). *Madrasa system in India: Past, present and future*. Retrieved from www.indiachinacentre.org/bazarchintan/pdfs/madrasas.pdf
Malik, J. (2008). *Islam in South Asia: A Short History*. Leiden: Brill.
Metcalf, B. D. (2002). *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Nair, P. (2009). *The state and Madrasas in India*. Working Paper 15, DFID. Retrieved from www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/PDF/Outputs/ReligionDev_RPC/WP15.pdf
National Council for Minority Educational Institutions. (2009). *The Central Madrasa Board Bill 2009*. New Delhi: NCMEI. Retrieved from http://ncmei.gov.in/writereaddata/filelinks/4ab9bf26_Output1.pdf
National Council for Education, Training and Research. (2006). *7th All India School Education Survey*. New Delhi: NCERT.
Nizami, K. A. (1996). Development of Muslim educational system in medieval India. *Islamic Culture*, 70(4), 27–54.
Robinson, F. (2000). *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Siddiqui, M. A. (1998). Developments and trends in Madrasa education. In A. W. B. Qadri, R. S. Khan and M. A. Siddiqui (Eds.), *Education and Muslims in India Since Independence* (pp. 72–87). New Delhi: Institute of Objective Studies.
Sikand, Y. (2004). Reforming the Indian Madrasas: Contemporary Muslim voices. In S. P. Limaye, R. Wirsing and M. Malik (Eds.), *Religious Radicalism and Security in South Asia* (pp. 117–143). Honululu, HI: Asia Pacific Centre for Security Studies.
Sikand, Y. (2005). *Bastions of the Believers: Madrasas and Islamic Education in India*. New Delhi: Penguin.
Sufi, G. M. D. (1941). *al Minhaj: Being the Evolution of Curriculum in the Muslim Educational Institutions of India*. New Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli.

3 Resistance to reform? Pakistani *madaris* in historical and political perspective

Christopher Candland

Introduction

Several times over the past two decades, the Pakistani government has announced that it would close any madrasah (Islamic seminary) that failed to register with the government.[1] Several thousand ***madaris*** (plural of madrasah in Arabic) have refused to do so. In 2001 and 2002, the government announced that it would create thousands of government ***madaris*** to serve as examples of how an Islamic seminary education could promote what President Pervez Musharraf termed "enlightened moderation".[2] As it turned out, the government created only three Model Dini Madaris (Model Religious Seminaries). No madrasah educator is known to have imitated the Model Dini Madaris curriculum. Why have administrators and educators of Pakistan's ***madaris*** opposed regulation? Why have administrators and educators of Pakistan's ***madaris*** ignored government incentives for curricular reform?

There has been much policy-oriented literature, especially from research centres based in the United States and Europe, arguing that madrasah education in Pakistan needs reform. And there has been much money, especially from government agencies and from non-governmental organisations in the United States and in Europe, spent on madrasah reform. The attention and funding makes it especially intriguing that government-led madrasah reforms have failed thoroughly, and help to explain some of the current resistance to government-directed reform from madrasah students and educators.

In this essay, I place government-directed madrasah reform efforts in historical and political context. Most reporting and policy-oriented writing on ***madaris*** and madrasah reform in Pakistan is ahistorical. Government efforts to make private religious institutions into instruments of government, however, have a long history in British India and in the identities of many in Pakistan today. Much of the contemporary resistance to madrasah reform by the inhabitants and supporters of madrasah education in Pakistan dates to British imperial rule. After the British suppression of the mutiny of 1857, the ***madaris*** became an important source for resistance to British cultural imperialism. Some of the resistance to government-sponsored madrasah reform dates to governance after 'independence' in August 1947. In the 1950s and 1960s, the government's nationalisation

and mismanagement of *awqaf* (trusts) and *dargah* (shrines) made madrasah educators deeply suspicious of state intrusion in the madrasah sector. I trace the present obstacle to government-led improvements in madrasah education to the deep distrust between madrasah educators and government administrators of religious education. More than 150 years of British imperial government attempts at control of the madrasah sector buttress madrasah educators' current distrust.

Most discussion of madrasah reform is also apolitical. The Pakistani government's efforts to modernise and demilitarise *madaris* seem destined to fail not only because many of the people who support and rely on madrasah education regard the government as culturally alien but also because the madrasah sector is very diverse, theologically and politically. I explain how Pakistan's governments have limited their own ability to shape private social institutions, such as private religious education. I suggest that the madrasah sector represents to its inhabitants not only a traditional religious sector that should be protected from modern secular forces, but also a public good that no government – as government relies ultimately on force and the threat of force – can possibly create. I argue that many madrasah educators see the Pakistani madrasah as an institution, encouraged by the *Qur'an* (God's recitation to the Prophet Mohammad) and *Hadith* (the Prophet's expressions), that is intended for the public good but that can only be produced privately by those with faith and not by the government. It is a kind of public good that is not made intelligible by the division of the social world into a private sphere and a public sphere. Yet this dichotomy drives the logic of the advocates of government-led madrasah reform.

We begin with a brief overview of the complex, diverse and changing madrasah sector.

The Pakistani madrasah[3]

The Islamic educational institutions, commonly referred to as *madaris*, were designed to impart knowledge of Islam to a younger generation of future *ulama* (Islamic scholars). A graduate of a madrasah could go on to study in and graduate from a *darul uloom* or, at a higher level, a *jamia*. Such institutions correspond approximately to the stages of education in schools referred to as primary and secondary (*madaris*), college (*darul uloom*) and university (*jamia*). The age of students in *madaris* typically runs from six through sixteen years. Children below the age of 12 are typically non-residential students. Some in Pakistan refer to Islamic seminaries as *deeni madaris* to distinguish them from Western-styled government and private schools, which were introduced under British rule. *Deen* refers to faith. Thus, the Urdu word *deeni* might be translated as 'religious'. For study beyond the 10 years offered by the *madaris*, one would attend a *darul uloom* (literally, an abode of knowledge), for grades 11 and 12. The *darul uloom*, then, is at equivalent years of schooling as upper secondary schools or sixth form colleges in the British system. For study beyond the *darul uloom*, one would attend a *jamia* (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Islamic seminaries: degrees, age of student, and school equivalence

Seminaries and degrees	*Years of study*	*School equivalence*
Madrasah		
shahadah al-ibtidaiyyah	5	primary
shahadah al-mutawassitah	3	middle
shahadah al-thaniyyah al-ammah	2	matriculation (matric)
Darul uloom		
shahadah al-thaniyyah al-khassah	2	F.A.
shahadah al-aliyyah	2	B.A.
Jamia		
shahadah al-alamiyyah	2	M.A.

Note: Since 1982, the government of Pakistan has recognised the *shahadah al-alamiyyah* degree as equivalent to MA degrees in both Arabic and Islamic studies.

I do not refer to *madaris* as 'Islamic boarding schools' or 'madrasah schools' as some scholars do because *madaris* are not understood in Pakistan to be schools. In Pakistan parlance, a school (known in Urdu as an *iskool*) is an educational institution run according to 'Western' standards, with classes separated by age, examinations to determine whether one graduates to the next year's class, and government accreditation on successful completion. An *iskool* can be private or public. If one were to ask a madrasah student whether he attends a school, he might answer that he does not attend a school but rather attends a madrasah. Further, the term 'Islamic school' as a translation for madrasah is misleading because there are Islamic boarding schools – such as the Deobandi Iqra schools and the Jamaat-i-Islami Ghazali and Green Crescent Trust schools – that are not *madaris* but rather private schools using the government or the Cambridge/Oxford curriculum infused with the Islamic perspectives of the political parties that run these schools.

Madaris are an integral part of education in Pakistan. *Madaris* have reached a large sector of the Pakistani public with little government support and modest funding from the public. They have educated this neglected population, however, largely within a *maslaki* (denominational) tradition and have not inculcated moderation and tolerance. This sectarian orientation is not entirely the fault of the madrasah educators. Pakistani governments require registered *madaris* to affiliate with a *maslaki* organisation and thereby discourage non-*maslaki* education. *Madaris* are divided by *masalak* and some are militant. But this is not the product of an Islamic approach to education but of the sectarian and militaristic policies of General Zia ul Haq and his domestic and international supporters (Baxter, 1985).

The Pakistani madrasah has only recently assumed its present form. In 1977, there were a couple hundred *madaris* in Pakistan registered with the madrasah boards (Malik, 1996). By 1988, there were more than 2,800 *madaris* registered

with one of the five madrasah boards (Islamic Education Research Cell, 1988, cited in Rahman, 2004). Most *madaris* were established during the term of General Zia ul Haq as Chief Martial Law Administrator and President (from 1977 to 1988), many with encouragement and financial assistance from foreign allies. The number of *madaris* doubled every three years under Zia's rule. From 1978 to 1988, the governments of the United States, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, among others, poured hundreds of millions of US dollars and weapons into Pakistan, much of it through *madaris*, and used many madrasah students, many of them refugees from Afghanistan, to fight a proxy war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Army.[4] The US government also supplied texts to *madaris* glorifying violence in the name of Islam (Stephens and Ottaway, 2002; Puri, 2010). Since the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989, the *madaris* were transformed again. *Madaris* have become a major source of welfare for poorer children and orphans and for their parents.[5]

There are five boards (*wiqafha*) that oversee the institutions of Islamic education in their respective 'denomination' or 'school' of Islamic thought: Ahl-i-Hadith, Brelvi, Deobandi, Jamaat-ul-Islami and Shia (see Table 3.2). The Deobandi board, which administers most Pakistani *madaris*, might be characterised as conservative in that it aims to preserve and defend the *Dars-i-Nizami* curriculum developed in India by Mullah Nisam-ud-Din Sehalvi. The Brelvi board is Sufi or devotional in orientation. The Ahl-i-Hadith board is characterised as Salafi or Wahabian in orientation; many followers are attracted by the commitment to avoid corrupting innovations (*bid'ah*) in Islam through reliance on the Qur'an and *Hadith* not on legal or scholarly writings since the death of the Prophet Mohammad. The Jamaat-i-Islami board might be characterised as revivalist in that it is inspired by the project of recreating the society of the Prophet's Medina.

With the exception of the Rabta-tul-Madaris-al-Islamia, the Jamaat-i-Islami board, each board was established in the late 1950s. The Rabta-tul-Madaris-al-Islamia was established in 1983, under the patronage of President and Chief Martial Law Administrator General Zia ul Haq. The Deobandi Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia and the Shia Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Shia was established in 1959; and the Brelvi Tanzeem-ul-Madaris Ahl-i-Sunna-wal-Jamaat was established in 1960. These were the direct responses to the government's intervention in the madrasah sector.[6]

Table 3.2 Ittihad Tanzeemat Madaris Pakistan

Wafaq	*Maslak, year established*
Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Salafia	Ahl-i-Hadith, 1955
Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia	Deobandi, 1959
Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Shia	Shia, 1959
Tanzeem-ul-Madaris Ahl-i-Sunna-wal-Jamaat	Brelvi, 1960
Rabita-ul-Madaris Al-Islamia	Jamaat-i-Islami, 1983

Note: *Ittihad* refers to an alliance, assembly or union. A *tanzeem* is a discipline or an organisation; *tanzeemat* is the plural of *tanzeem*; a *wafaq* is a board; a *maslak* is a denomination.

Each board determines the curriculum of the seminaries that are registered with that board, provides examination questions, grades examinations and issues graduation certificates and diplomas. There are approximately 14,000 seminaries registered with these five boards. Probably an equal number do not register. Roughly 70 percent of those that are registered are Deobandi, 16 percent are Brelvi, 5 percent are Jamaat-i-Islami, 4 percent Ahl-i-Hadith and 3 percent Shia. The Deobandi Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia also oversees several thousand Iqra schools. The Jamaat-i-Islami Rabita-ul-Madaris Al-Islamia oversees several thousand Ghazali and Green Crescent Trust schools. The *wiqafha* of the other three *masalak* do not run private schools. The Deobandi seminaries are larger in relationship to their numbers in the population in part because a Deobandi education is designed to defend Islamic learning and the Hanafi *fiqh* and in part because Deobandi *madaris* were patronised by General Zia ul Haq during the operations against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. In the last decade of the 20th century, the fastest-growing Sunni *madaris* seemed to be those of the well-patronised Jamaat-i-Islami (Rahman, 2004). In the first two decades of the 21st century, it is alleged to be those of the Ahl-i-Hadith. The differences between these orientations will be explained briefly below.

How many Pakistani students study in a madrasah? And what percentage of total school enrollment does that represent? Madrasah enrollments estimates are contested. Estimates of madrasah enrollments range from fewer than half a million to more than two million. Because national school enrollments vary as well, estimates of the percentage of students studying in madrasah vary even more widely, from fewer than 1 percent to as much as 33 percent of the school-going population.

The range of estimates and the bases for these estimates are themselves important pieces of evidence about the role of the *madaris* in Pakistani society and about scholarship on *madaris*. The wide range of estimates indicates that those writing on the sector generally have a very weak understanding of the basic dimensions of that sector. The differing statistical bases for these estimates indicate that some commentators dismiss data that others regard as convincing.

In 2005, a World Bank–funded study estimated that there were fewer than 475,000 madrasah students and that fewer than 1 percent of the secondary school–going population attends a madrasah (Andrabi et al., 2005).[7] The attempt to ground the widely ranging estimates of madrasah enrollments in verifiable data is laudable. The assumptions used for the World Bank–funded study, however, were problematic. The report was based, in part, on a national census and national household surveys, none of which were designed to gauge madrasah enrollment. Indeed, the national census did not ask about children's schooling or madrasah attendance. It asked nothing about children's education; it asked adults about their 'field of education'. The authors take the answer 'religious education' to mean madrasah education. In their own survey, the authors found three times the proportion in their survey of three districts of students in madrasah than is estimated by the national census and the household surveys. Yet their survey was restricted to areas served by public schools and was thus unrepresentative

of Pakistan as a whole. Further, the extrapolation, that fewer than 1 percent of Pakistani primary-aged students attend *madaris*, is based on the statistic that 19 million students are enrolled in private and public schools. However, that enrollment figure is based on attendance at the first day of the school year; half of these children drop out before reaching the fifth grade. Thus, their overestimate of public school enrollment underestimates madrasah enrollment. Finally, the report conflates a madrasah education with an education in religious schools, as suggested by the title of the report. This leads to problems with interpretation of the data, as will be discussed below.

For estimates of madrasah enrollment, establishment-based surveys focused on madrasah enrollment are more useful than statistical manipulation of household surveys that are not concerned with madrasah enrollment. Pakistani police and officials in the Ministries of Education and Religious Affairs conduct establishment surveys of madrasah enrollments. These count the number of students in *madaris*, rather than estimate enrollments from household responses. By these estimates, between 1.7 and 1.9 million students in Pakistan are educated in *madaris*. The former estimate comes from the former Minister of Religious Affairs, Mahmood Ahmed Ghazi (International Crisis Group, 2002). The latter estimate comes from Pakistani police. A number of registered *madaris* supports these estimates. More than 10,000 *madaris* are registered with the government. At least that many are thought to operate without registration. A typical madrasah will educate more than 100 children. Thus, the official establishment surveys' estimate of nearly 2 million *madaris* students is not unrealistic. An estimate of fewer than 500,000 is. Such an estimate would give an average of only 25 students in each madrasah. A reasonable estimate of *madaris* enrollment, provided by Cockroft, Andersson, Milne, Omar, Ansari, Khan and Chaudhury, is that, in 2004, 3.8 percent of school-going students from ages five to nine attended a madrasah full time (Cockcroft et al., 2009).

Much of the journalist and 'think tank' reporting on South Asian *madaris* is concerned either with whether a madrasah education promotes violence or with whether a *madaris* education is adequate for employment and life in the modern world. Accordingly, that reporting suggests that the madrasah should be demilitarised and be modernised. Here we take up each recommendation in turn briefly, before turning to the main arguments related to the history of Pakistan madrasah reforms, the nature of the Pakistani state and the place of the *madaris* sector in Pakistani society.

Madaris' 'demilitarisation'

The dominant strain of writing advocating madrasah reform is published by policy-oriented centres (e.g., Haqqani, 2009). That analysis focuses on the security threats emanating from Pakistani *madaris*. The latest report of the International Crisis Group on Pakistan, for example, claims that "progress against terrorism, including countering radicalisation and recruitment, is contingent on regulating the *madaris* sector" (International Crisis Group, 2015: 11). Disparaging

reference to *'mullah'* suggests an uninformed bias. Policy-oriented researchers recommend the 'demilitarisation' of *madaris*.

Most *madaris* do not encourage students to engage in violence, at least no more than other schools do. Those *madaris* that are recruitment grounds from militants are few and well known. Arguing that *madaris* create militancy is similar to arguing that US college fraternities create rapists. Many members of US college fraternities have been convicted of rape; and some US college fraternities do seem to promote a culture of misogyny. But, arguing that fraternities create rapists is misleading because it does not distinguish between those fraternities that do and those fraternities that do not. Moreover, to argue with evidence that *madaris* create militancy would require that we know whether some militants are attracted to *madaris* (as some rapists might be attracted to fraternities) or whether the *madaris* make their students militant. Some militants who have contact with a madrasah do so only after they have been convinced of the need to use violence to redress perceived injustices and do not study in these *madaris* but use them for the accommodations and not for the education that they provide.

The government in Pakistan cannot impose its will in the way that some politicians and policy-oriented researchers have suggested. It is not possible for the government to provide security to itself. Ministers are assassinated. It is not unusual for ministers to travel with an ambulance in their convoy lest they be attacked. One wonders how the government will impose the writ of law in tens of thousands of private religious seminaries. The war in Afghanistan greatly constrains the already limited ability of the government to penetrate into the private religious educational sector.

Madrasah 'modernisation'

Another strain of criticism of *madaris* education might be referred to as the relevancy critique. The argument is that *madaris* education is irrelevant to present ('modern') needs for employable skills and civic-mindedness.

The Pakistan madrasah is not well understood in public policy circles. The very practices that are identified as problematic in a madrasah education – slavish obedience to the dictation of a didactic teacher, unquestioning acceptance and memorisation of information, absolute and fixed conviction, discouragement of creative and critical thinking – are hallmarks of private and public schools in Pakistan. Madrasah students are taught critical thinking skills. Rather than being fortresses of medieval learning, many of them – especially Brelvi and Shia – are models for critical thought, including etymological investigation, literary criticism and reasoning by analogy. *Madaris* teach the same subjects that constituted a classical European liberal education: classical languages (in this case, Arabic and Persian), grammar, philology, and rhetoric, logic, poetry and persuasion. In *madaris*, there can be a love of learning that is difficult to find in private and public schools.

The argument that *madaris* should be 'modernised' through the teaching of "math, science, English, and modern skills" because these subjects are "value

free" reveals a lack of appreciation for the norms implicit in these subjects and how they are taught (Etzioni, 2006).[8] Those who are genuinely concerned with identifying the contribution of educational curricula to militancy might benefit from investigating why most leaders of militant organisations in Pakistan had their education in engineering and mathematics in elite public and private schools and not in ***madaris*** (Bergen and Pandey, 2006).[9]

I conducted a survey in the summer of 2005 of 218 Karachi private school, public school and madrasah students from four neighborhoods: Defence (a wealthy area), Gulshan Iqbal (a 'middle-class' area), the New Hajji camp, (a lower-income area) and Abdul Goth (an impoverished area). I administered a questionnaire, of 154 questions, in a neighborhood park on successive Sundays (school holidays). I offered a roast chicken and soda lunch with each self-completed (or attempted) questionnaire. These could take more than an hour to complete. Questions mostly related to their education and curriculum and to their definitions of injustice and views on using violence to redress current injustices. I found that, with the exception of Indian Occupied Kashmir, madrasah students (n=38) were no more likely to advocate violence to redress perceived injustices than were private and public school students.

We turn now to the core of this essay, the historical and political context of the Pakistani madrasah. If ***madaris*** are institutions designed to preserve rather than to innovate, then it would be odd to gauge the value of a madrasah education by its ability to prepare students for employment in new sectors of the economy.

Government-led madrasah reform efforts in historical perspective

The seeds of distrust between government officials and madrasah educators were sown long before Pakistani governments began to nationalise traditional Islamic institutions and even before the creation of Pakistan. The ***madaris*** of British India, and subsequently of Pakistan, were profoundly affected by the introduction of an educational system that was suited to the interests of foreign rulers. The East India Company gave no emphasis to Indian education until 1813, when the English Parliament provided the Company with a sum of £10,000 annually for native education (Ali and Babur, 2010). Lord Macaulay's Minute of 1835 promoted an instrumental role for public education. This is the same approach – make education British – that is being taken today by many advocates of madrasah reform. Macaulay recommended, and the Committee on Public Instruction implemented, an educational policy designed to "form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect" (Woodrow, 1862: 183). "Usefulness," as Zaman has explained, was the leading justification for British intervention in the educational activities of South Asia (Zaman, 2002: 66).

Contemporary Muslim identities in Pakistan are closely connected to madrasah education. One can trace the emergence of contemporary Muslim identities

in Pakistan to two distinct Muslim reactions to the suppression of the Muslim community after the Indian Mutiny in 1857, known in India as the First Indian War for Independence. Contemporary Muslim identities in South Asia are to a large degree, as Francis Robinson has explained, responses to "the horror of the Mutiny" (Robinson, 2000). In early 1857, Indians who had the weaponry and organisation to do so, initially Bengali Muslims in the service of the East India Company Army, rose up against the British. The British were very much a minority in 'British India' and relied on the manpower of Indians for police and defense forces. Several thousand British troops ruled a territory of more than 250 million people.

While the 'mutineers' took over cities and towns, British gentlemen and ladies holed up in forts. The 'mutiny' was suppressed by early 1858.[10] 1857–58 is a pivotal period for Islamic identity and Islamic thought in South Asia. Muslims were blamed and punished for the Mutiny. The Mutiny was led largely by Muslim 'subalterns' (non-commissioned regulars) and Muslim intellectuals. When the British took control again, in May 1857, they took revenge on Delhi and Lucknow, the centres of Islamic culture and education. They killed more than 30,000 Delhi residents indiscriminately and then forced all natives out of the city. British forces expelled Muslims from several Indian cities and destroyed or occupied most Muslim places of learning and worship. For a while, they considered demolishing the entire city of Delhi. They allowed Hindus back in June 1858 and allowed Muslims back to the city the following year, in August 1859. But few of the Muslims who returned could stomach life in the new Delhi, given British practices toward traditional Islamic institutions. The repression included internment of many Muslims and incarceration of many others. It also included the destruction and occupation of many significant Muslim buildings including ***masajid*** (plural of ***masjid***, 'mosque'). The British Parliament cancelled the charter of the East India Company and placed the government of India and its Princely States under the British monarchy. A Vice-Regent ruled the Indian Empire as the British Monarch's representative in Delhi.

It was only in 1900 – 40 years later – that the population of the old city of Delhi – where most Muslims in Delhi lived – regained its pre-1857 population. The British destroyed nearly every mosque and most Muslim dwellings in the city. The mosques that were spared were turned into British military encampments. The Jama Masjid, Delhi's largest mosque, was turned into army barracks, as was the Jama Masjid in Lahore. Mirza Ghalib wrote in 1861 "Delhi is no more a city, but a camp, a cantonment" (Robinson, 2000: 148).

The "Shock of the Mutiny", as Francis Robinson has described it, the shock of the repression of the mutineers, created two Muslim responses, a 'modernist' response and a 'conservative' response.[11] Each response was largely defined by its approach to education. The modernists, notably Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, who founded the Muhammadian Anglo Oriental College, accepted that Muslims needed to embrace British education and culture. Conservatives, known as Deobandi, after their madrasah, founded in Deoband in 1866, rejected British education and culture and embraced the ***madaris*** as the proper form of education.

The British repression did not as powerfully affect a third group, the traditional (or Sufi) or Brelvi Muslims, because they were largely rural-based. Most Pakistani Muslims are associated with the Brelvi tradition.

These later two identities, Deobandi and Brelvi, are expressed in Pakistan today as specific ***maslak*** (denomination). Another important Muslim identity of Pakistan is that of the Shia, who have their own ***mazhab*** (school of thought) and thus their own ***madaris***. A fourth identity is that of the Ahl-i-Hadith, who like the Salafi and Wahabian traditions prefer direct reference to the ***Qur'an*** and ***Hadith*** rather than deference to one of the four Sunni ***mazhab***. In the early 1940s, a fifth identity organised around a political party, the Jamaat-ul-Islami, which opposed the creation of Pakistan and its management by secular Muslims, and advocates the re-establishment of the political system allegedly found in the Prophet Mohammad's Medina.

Pakistan's Muslim population is extraordinarily diverse, culturally and religiously. Characterisations of Pakistan as a 'Muslim country' give rise to the mistaken notion that Pakistan is monolithically Muslim. One of the major obstacles to government-directed madrasah reform is lack of appreciation that the ***madaris*** of each ***maslak*** uses a different curriculum and thus government-directed curriculum reform sounds to many ***madaris*** educators as an effort to homogenise ***madaris*** education. Whenever Pakistani governments have 'Islamicised' traditional institutions in Pakistan, they have promoted a Deobandi version of Islam with Wahabian overtones that is anathema to the practices and understandings of Islam of most Pakistanis. Thus, pressing for government-led madrasah reform could weaken those ***madaris*** that are least implicated in religious intolerance and to strengthen those ***madaris*** that are most hostile to religious tolerance.

Government-led madrasah reform efforts in political perspective

Many madrasah educators blame government officials for, at best, failing to understand Islamic education and, worse, trying to colonise the madrasah sector. Government attempts to regulate the madrasah sector, arguably, have made the madrasah sector more sectarian. The first attempt by the Pakistani government to regulate and modernise ***madaris*** in the late 1950s resulted in the establishment of separate madrasah boards. Under three subsequent martial law administrators, the government attempted to regulate and modernise ***madaris*** but succeeded in deepening the distrust between government officials and madrasah educators. One indication of the distrust is reflected in the ban promulgated by Pakistan's most recent military government on madrasah graduates holding ***shahadah al-thaniyyah amah***, ***shahadah al-thaniyyah khassah*** and ***shahadah al-aliyyah*** from contesting elections.

Pakistani governments have not only used Islamic terminology to attempt to gain (or not to lose further) legitimacy; Pakistani governments have also nationalised ***awqaf*** (Islamic trusts) that are the economic foundation for ***dargah*** (shrines)

and ***madaris***. Many ***madaris***, ***jamia*** and ***darul uloom*** of Islamic learning are managed as ***awqaf***. The nationalisation of ***awqaf*** allows provincial governments to capture the very significant contributions that individuals have made for the public good and the donations that pilgrims make at ***dargah***. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, president of the All India Muslim League, the party that successfully advocated for the creation of Pakistan, was able to establish his credentials among many Indian Muslims by arguing, successfully, in British court that Islamic law prevents ***awqaf*** from being nationalised by government.

The government's nationalisation and mismanagement of ***awqaf*** have confirmed madrasah educators' suspicions of state intrusion into the ***madaris*** sector (Malik, 1996). The government has also instituted a mandatory ***zakat*** tax that is distributed by the government to supporters. Why then should madrasah educators not resist the regulation of the one institution that continues to provide them with social significance and economic resources and defend Islam from what they perceive to be the extension of a colonial government?

One reads that the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1972 nationalised all educational institutions. That was certainly the language of the Chief Martial Law Administrator and Prime Minister's ordinance. But the government could only manage to take physical control over private schools. Madrasah educators were not replaced or trained, because the government did not have the kind of reach or expertise to assume day-to-day management of ***madaris***.

Madaris are the base of three of Pakistan's four main 'religious' parties.[12] Recommendations that the government incorporate the madrasah sector into the government sector are oblivious to the most elementary aspects of Pakistani politics. The madrasah sector is the foundation of three political parties, one of which is a leading opposition party, the Deobandi Jamiat-ul-Ulema-Islami of Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F). The JUI-F has been a political ally, in government and in the opposition, of the Pakistan People's Party. For the JUI-F to accept government regulation of ***madaris***, in the real-world context of governments that are not politically neutral, when the government is run by the military, as it was from 1999 to 2008 or by the Muslim League (Nawaz), as it has been since 2013, is tantamount to betraying one's electoral base. Giving the madrasah sector over to the government means abandoning the theological orientation of Brelvi and Shia ***madaris***.

The support for the creation of Pakistan came not from Jamaat-i-Islami, the political party that has had, by working with the Pakistani military, the most influence in defining the character of 'Islamicisation' in Pakistan, under the patronage of General Zia ul Haq, but from Jamiat-ul-Ulema-Islami (of both the Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) and the Sami ul Haq (JUI-S) factions) and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Pakistan (JUI-P), political parties whose social base is in the ***madaris*** sector. As Masooda Bano has suggested in her study of whether state-run ***madaris*** in Bangladesh are a suitable model for Pakistan, the state-run ***madaris*** are those patronised by the Jamaat-ul-Islami of Pakistan, the political party most determined to 'Islamicise' by force of the state rather than by the force of example, especially as popularly practiced and conceived (Bano, 2014).

Much of the discussion about madrasah reform is based on an incomplete understanding of what the madrasah sector means to its inhabitants and supporters. As a result, the analysis of why madrasah educators resist reforms is misguided. The discussion about madrasah reform tends to promote false dichotomies, between a private sphere and public sphere, between a modern orientation and a traditional orientation and between a secular and a religious world.

The presumptions inherent in the first of these dichotomies is that the public sphere – where resources are shared – must be guaranteed by authoritative, and if necessary coercive, government action and that the private sector – where resources are personal and privileged – is free from such authoritative and coercive dictation. Deploying this false dichotomy, many analysts assume that ***madaris*** are private institutions because government does not regulate them.

The students, teachers and financial supporters of ***madaris*** do not regard ***madaris*** as private institutions. ***Madaris*** are public institutions. The dichotomy of private and public sector is not compatible with the very essence of Islam, which makes mandatory upon believers a personal commitment to the public good. The persistent theme of the Qur'an and the major lesson of the *Hadith* is that a Muslim is one who cares about and takes action to support others, especially those who are poor, disabled, orphaned, seeking knowledge, travelling, inclined toward faith in God or working in the spirit of Islam (known as the ***mustaqeen***). Madrasah students are often poor, disabled or orphaned, and are seeking knowledge. Accordingly, support of ***madaris*** or of a madrasah student is a form of ***infaq*** (spending to please God) and ***zakat*** (the obligation to give a proportion of wealth or income to the ***mustaqeen***). Islamic social thought creates three spheres, wherein a part of the private sphere (that of the faithful) can create public goods. ***Madaris*** are privately provided public goods, a reality that the dichotomy between an authoritative public sphere and a voluntary private sphere cannot accommodate. The notion that the government should regulate ***madaris*** is accordingly anathema to the faithful inhabitants of the madrasah sector. In Islam, God enjoins the faithful to fulfill their obligation to serve and aid others – quite a different obligation from that which one has toward government. As Zaman (1999) has argued:

> The question here is not a separation of religion and state, or of society and state . . . but rather recognition, by the '***ulama***' themselves, of greater differentiation within society, with religion occupying a distinct, inviolable, autonomous sphere.
>
> (p. 319)

Madaris represent a kind of public good that neither government schools nor private schools can replicate. In Pakistan, the provision of government-organised public goods – public schools being the chief example – is complicated by the legacies of imperial rule under which government schools were created. At the same time, government-organised public goods are not based on the principle of voluntary contribution to the good of society. Much of the discussion about madrasah reform also tends to promote a false dichotomy between a modern orientation and a traditional orientation.

Conclusion

Government-led madrasah reforms have failed because past government involvement in private, traditional, religious institutions in Pakistan has suggested to madrasah administrators, educators and supporters that the Pakistan government exerts a corrupting influence. The government take-over of ***awqaf*** and ***dargah*** allowed the government to appropriate private resources dedicated for the public good. Government management of ***zakat*** and ***haj*** (pilgrimage) funds is alleged to involve graft and waste. The history of Pakistan government's management of private religious commitments to the public good gives madrasah administrators, educators and supporters reason to feel uneasy about government regulation of madrasah education.

Madrasah educators are keenly aware of the need for improvement of their curriculum, teaching and facilities. Madrasah educators have themselves worked to improve the relevance of a madrasah education. In Punjab, for example, some madrasah educators are working with a provincial job training and placement programme and with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency to improve job prospects and drinking water for students. In Karachi, the Jamia-tur Rashid has introduced banking, business, computing, journalism and teacher training (Muhammad et al., 2012).[13] But government officials and madrasah educators mean different things by 'reform'. When government officials, and many policy-oriented academics, refer to reform, they have in mind bureaucratic administration of the madrasah sector. When madrasah educators speak of reform, they have in mind an improvement of the curriculum and facilities so as to strengthen Muslim society. As Masooda Bano has pointed out, citing Barbara Metcalf's work, "the birth of the Deoband tradition . . . was itself an attempt at reform triggered by the changed political-economic situation in which the Muslims found themselves during the colonial period" (Bano, 2014: 917).[14]

Not all madrasah educators accept that the social world can be divided between private and public spheres, as some advocates of madrasah reform assume. Of course, the so-called Islamists have made the argument that for Muslims there is no distinction between private and public spheres. The argument advanced here is different. The ***Qur'an*** and ***Hadith*** encourage people to create public goods privately. To the inhabitants of the madrasah sector, a madrasah is a privately created public good. As such, anyone who has the appropriate motivation and wants to study in a madrasah will be accommodated. And, as such, governments cannot regulate ***madaris***, for governments are authoritative, and Muslims commitments to the madrasah sector, financial and intellectual, must be inspired, not dictated. Further, those 'private' institutions that the Pakistan government has managed to regulate or nationalise – such as the ***awqaf*** and ***dargah*** – have been made into vehicles for the private appropriation of public resources and turned toward a single rendition of Islam – a narrow Deobandi rendition with

Wahabian overtones – that does not suit the pluralistic reality of Islam as practiced in Pakistan.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to Qibla Ayaz, Mukhlis Abu Bakar, Niaz Muhammad, Aamer Raza and two anonymous reviewers for insightful comments and essential corrections on earlier drafts.

Notes

1 The most recent declaration that unregistered *madaris* would be closed was part of the government's National Action Program, which was a response to the attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar in December 2014.
2 The Model Dini Madrasah in Islamabad was for girls. The Model Dini Madaris in Karachi and Sukkur are for boys. For a critique of Pervez Musharraf's approach to 'enlightened moderation', see Sethi (2004).
3 This section is a revised version of a portion of my chapter "Pakistan's recent experience in reforming Islamic education" in Malik (2007) (ed.), *Madrasas in South Asia: Teaching Terror?* Abingdon: Routledge.
4 Covert US funding and weapons were supplied to anti-government militants in Afghanistan before the December 1979 entry of Soviet forces into Afghanistan. See Gates (1996) and Brzezinski (1998).
5 As in neighboring countries, in Pakistan the term 'orphan' is used for children who have a deceased father. In American and European usage, an orphan has lost both parents.
6 See Malik (1996: 123–125).
7 This is a report published under the same title in *Comparative Education Review*, Special Issue on Islam and Education: Myths and Truths, 50(3), (August 2006), 446–477.
8 Etzioni (2006) argues for the promotion of moderate religious education rather than secularism. "Teaching only math, science, English, and other normative-neutral subjects does not provide the needed education for weaving or restoring a social fabric," he writes. One may accept the claim that math, science and English do not provide the basis for social cohesion without accepting that these subjects are "normatively neutral" (p. 16).
9 Bergen and Pandey (2006), in their "examination of the 79 terrorists responsible for five of the worst anti-Western terrorist attacks in recent memory" (pp. 117–118), found that more than half attended college or university, while only 11 percent attended a madrasah.
10 For an evaluation of the political leanings and rhetorical construction of extant Urdu writing, mostly pro-British, penned during the Mutiny and soon thereafter, see Rahman (2009).
11 Jalal (1998) suggests that "instead of perpetuating the contradiction implicit in the 'modernists – traditionalist' opposition, a recognition of its inherent ambiguities [might] be a more useful way to approach the contending strands of thought" (p. 78). Jalal takes issue with the heuristic categories of 'modernist' and 'traditionalist' largely because there is in such a dichotomy insufficient appreciation of entangled threads of thought. Jalal is right that individual's thoughts are not elucidated well by affixing such labels. And, the same can be said of the 'modernist – conservative' opposition used here. But categories such as 'modernist', 'traditionalist' and 'conservative', when intended to indicate a broad conceptual distinction, rather than to account for the complexity of an individual's thoughts or of that of an entire school of thought, do have some value.
12 In Pakistan, political parties that claim Islamic credentials are referred to in the press as "religious parties".
13 Niaz Muhammad was the first principal of the government's Model Dini Madrasah in Karachi and Sukkur (Muhammad et al., 2012).
14 Bano (2014) refers to Metcalf (1978).

References

Ali, S., and Babur, M. (2010). Educational governance in Pakistan: A historical perspective. In J. Kakhi and Q. Safdar (Eds.), *Educational Leadership in Pakistan: Ideals and Realities* (pp. 6–7). Karachi: Oxford University Press.

Andrabi, T., Das, J., Khwaja, A. I., and Zajonc, T. (2005). *Religious school enrollment in Pakistan: A look at the data.* Policy Research Working Paper Series, No. 3521, Washington, DC.

Bano, M. (2014). Madrasa reforms and Islamic modernism in Bangladesh. *Modern Asian Studies*, 48(4), 911–939.

Baxter, C. (1985). *Zia's Pakistan: Politics and Stability in a Frontline State.* Boulder, CO: Westview.

Bergen, P., and Pandey, S. (2006). The Madrassa scapegoat. *The Washington Quarterly*, 29, 117–125.

Brzezinski, Z. (1998, January 15–21). Les Révélations d'un Ancien Conseilleur de Carter: 'Oui, la CIA est Entrée en Afghanistan avant les Russes. . . '. *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 76.

Cockcroft, A., Andersson, N., Milne, D., Omer, K., Ansari, N., Khan, A., and Chaudhry, U. U. (2009). Challenging the myths about Madaris in Pakistan: A national household survey of enrolment and reasons for choosing religious schools. *International Journal of Education*, 29, 342–349.

Etzioni, A. (2006, Spring). Religion and the state why moderate religious teaching should be promoted. *Harvard International Review*, 14–17.

Gates, R. (1996). *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Haqqani, H. (2009, November 10). Islam's medieval outposts. *Foreign Policy*, 13–20.

International Crisis Group. (2002). *Pakistan: Madrassas, Extremism and the Military.* Islamabad: International Crisis Group.

International Crisis Group. (2015). *Revisiting Counter-Terrorism Strategies in Pakistan: Opportunities and Pitfalls.* Brussels: International Crisis Group.

Islamic Education Research Cell. (1988). *Deeni Madaris ke Jama Report.* Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan. Islamabad: Printing Corporation of Pakistan Press.

Jalal, A. (1998). *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850.* London: Routledge.

Malik, J. (1996). *Colonialization of Islam: Dissolution of Traditional Institutions in Pakistan.* Lahore: Vanguard.

Metcalf, B. (1978). The Madrasa at Deoband: A model for religious education in India. *Modern Asian Studies*, 12(1), 111–134.

Muhammad, N., Omer, F., Imran, Akbar, W., and Karim, W. (2012). Madaris of Pakistan and challenges of modern world. *Gomal University Journal of Research*, 28(2), 39–51.

Puri, N. R. (2010). The Pakistani Madrassah and terrorism: Made and unmade conclusions from the literature. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 4(4), 51–72.

Rahman, T. (2004). *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.

Rahman, T. (2009). The events of 1857 in contemporary writings in Urdu. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 32(2), 212–229.

Robinson, F. (2000). The Muslims of upper India and the shock of the mutiny. In F. Robinson (Ed.), *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (pp. 138–155). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Sethi, N. (2004). Fate of 'Enlightened Moderation'. *Friday Times*, 1.

Stephens, J., and Ottaway, D. (2002, March 23). The ABCs of Jihad in Afghanistan: Violent Soviet-era textbooks complicate Afghan education efforts. *The Washington Post*, A01.

Woodrow, H. (1862). *Macaulay's Minutes on Education in India*. Calcutta: C. B. Lewis.

Zaman, M. Q. (1999). Religious education and the rhetoric of reform: The Madrasa in British India and Pakistan. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 41(2), 294–323.

Zaman, M. Q. (2002). *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

4 Modernising madrasah education

The Singapore 'national' and the global

S. Gopinathan

Introduction

If we are to understand better the unique role of madrasah education in Singapore, it is necessary to understand both the historical and wider Singaporean context within which this unique educational provision is embedded. Calls to modernise curriculum and pedagogy in madrasahs are to some extent echoes of proposals at the national level. As we shall see below, Singapore's education roots are principally from Britain and China. Britain was the colonial power, and Chinese schools that served the majority community drew their textbooks, teachers and ideals from China. But what has evolved is a distinctly Singapore model. In a similar fashion, Singapore's madrasahs combine both non-national and national features, and, with curricular modernisation, are evolving into something unique and special.

This chapter seeks to place efforts to modernise madrasah education within the wider context of education reform in Singapore from 1987. The key focus of these reforms is to ensure that schooling experiences and outcomes are appropriate to 21st-century knowledge economy contexts. Given that the twin goals of education policy have been social cohesion and economic development via schooling, it is inevitable that there would be a necessity for schooling in the madrasahs to be modernised as well.

The current strength of the Singapore system is due in large part to key policies implemented post-1965. An understanding of developments during this period will enable us to become aware not only of how thoughtful and courageous some of the policies were, but also that well-intentioned policies often have unintended consequences and leave a legacy of issues that will have to be confronted later on.

There are two key features of the past that are significant. The first is that the colonial inheritance in education was of a segmented (by medium-of-instruction) system with English and Chinese medium schools being dominant. While Malay and Tamil medium schools existed, they were relatively small. Across all aspects, such as funding, government supervision, curriculum and assessment, teacher preparation and service conditions, etc., difference rather than similarity was the norm. Further and more significantly, the non-English educated felt discriminated against, with education providing limited access to higher education and jobs.

Routledge Critical Studies in Asian Education
Series Editors: S. Gopinathan, Wing On Lee and Jason Eng Thye Tan

For the whole list please visit: www.routledge.com/Routledge-Critical-Studies-in-Asian-Education/book-series/RCSAE

Languages in the Malaysian Education System
Monolingual strands in multilingual settings
Edited by Asmah Haji Omar

Policy Discourses in Malaysian Education
A nation in the making
Edited by Suseela Malakolunthu and Nagappan C. Rengasamy

Making Sense of Education in Post-Handover Hong Kong
Achievements and challenges
Edited by Thomas Kwan-Choi Tse and Michael H. Lee

English Education at the Tertiary Level in Asia
From Policy to Practice
Edited by Eun Sung Park and Bernard Spolsky

English-Medium Instruction in Chinese Universities
Perspectives, Discourse and Evaluation
Edited by Jing Zhao and L. Quentin Dixon

Rethinking Madrasah Education in a Globalised World
Edited by Mukhlis Abu Bakar

Policies and politics in Malaysian education
Education reforms, nationalism and neoliberalism
Edited by Cynthia Joseph

The Sustainability of Higher Education in an Era of Post-Massification
Edited by Deane E. Neubauer, Ka Ho Mok and Jin Jiang

Emigration, Employability and Higher Education in the Philippines
Yasmin Y. Ortiga

Rethinking Madrasah Education in a Globalised World

Edited by Mukhlis Abu Bakar

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

The HEAD Foundation

First published 2018
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-138-73923-9 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-18423-4 (ebk)

Typeset in Galliard
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

Contents