COMMUNALISM AND EDUCATION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES, 1915—1947

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

ANJALI DAR

CENTRE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067, INDIA
1991

जवाहरलाल नेहरु विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI – 110067

CENTRE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "COMMUNALISM AND EDUCATION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES, 1915-1947" is submitted by Miss ANJALI DAR, in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of this University. This has not been published or submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. To the best of our knowledge this is a bonafide work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.

(PROF. CHAMPAKALAKSHMI)
CHAIRPERSON

(DR. BHAGWAN JOSH)
SUPERVISOR

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would also like to acknowledge my sense of gratitude to my family for their affection, encouragement and unfailing support. I would specially like to thank my mother, who nursed me patiently through a long illness. I thank her for believing in me.

Finally, I would like to say that any errors in the dissertation are my responsibility.

(ANJALI DAR)

INTRODUCTION

Many definitions of the word 'education' have been given. However varied they may be, underlying them all is the concept that it principally denotes an attempt on the part of the adult members of the human society to shape the development of the coming generations in accordance with its own ideals of life. We can also say that "every education teaches a philosophy; if not by dogma, then by suggestion, by implication, by atmosphere."[1] All our education, whether in school, college or at home, combines to convey a general view of life. What we learn as 'education' is maintained as 'knowledge' in later life.

The Aligarh Muslim University and the Benaras Hindu University were the outcomes of two movements, the objective of both being to impart education as their founders defined it. They saw religion as an integral part of education. The educational institutions they established

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1.   John Haldane, "Chesterton's Philosophy of Education," Philosophy, 65 (251), Jan 1990, p. 65.

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incorporated this belief. Yet, how true would it be to say that the entire movement had communal, or sectarian, overtones? For an answer to that question, we have to turn to the unfolding of the movement itself, for these two institutions were its logical consequences. This will involve a study of the scholarly work on the subject.

Professor H.K. Sharma writes[2] that Sir Syed Ahmed steered clear of any communal tinge in educational matters. Since the inception of the idea, when at his instance his son prepared the scheme of an Urdu University in 1872, "no speck of communalism was included?."[3] As proof he cites the inclusion of Sanskrit as an optional language in both the Lower and Upper Departments of the College.

The question which comes to mind here, and which is not satisfactorily answered in the book, is that : does the inclusion of any language per se automatically mean that the whole scheme was devoid of any denominational character?

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2.   H.H. Sherwani, Aligarh Movement (Aligarh : Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1969).
3.   Ibid, p 26.

David Lelyveld, in his wonderfully analytical work,[4] gives us information contrary to Sherwani's assertion. At Sir Syed Ahmed's instance, Syed Mahmud (his son) sent in an essay from Cambridge to his father in 1872. In that, he proposed the establishment of a residential college "where Muslims alone would be able to obtain an education according to their wishes."[5]

There can be no doubt that the founding of the Aligarh College involved "the identification and mobilization of a constituency."[6] The effort to win government and public approval, appeals for financial aid, the codification of a syllabus-- such acts involved decisions about what categories of people Aligarh might "serve and represent."[7]

Lelyveld tries to define the particular group that Aligarh might serve. The founders of the University were undoubtedly inspired to work for the benefit of all the Muslims of India, as Sir Syed had desired an institution that would be

4.   David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1978).
5.   Ibid, p 119.
6.   Ibid, p 103.
7.   Ibid, p 103.

peripatetic throughout the entire country. But practical limitations prevailed and the programme Aligarh's founders institutionalized "made contact with a considerably narrower group (i.e) the North Indian Muslims literate in Urdu."[8]

In his actually rich book,[9] S.K. Bhatnagar explains why religious study had to be an important part of the education movement. Any reform movement, to be effective, had to also include reform of religion. According to him, Muslim attitudes would not be changed unless "a new and dynamic spirit of enquiry was infused into religious studies."[10] Bhatnagar is of the opinion that the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College "was no doubt founded for the Muslims, but its admission rules were not sectarian."[11]

All the above books about the foundation of the Aligarh Muslim University give their own evidence to prove whether the movement was motivated by communal reasons or not. But

8.   Ibid 123.
9.   S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh (Bombay : Asia Publishing House, 1969).
10.   Ibid, p (viii).
11.   Ibid, p (xi).

admission rules, the inclusion or absence of certain subjects or languages, the definition of the group which the proposed University was to serve--all these do not automatically imply that a communal tinge was present or not. None of the above books mention who the donors to the University were, how the membership of the important administrative and executive bodies was determined and regulated etc. These are also significant questions which have remained unanswered.

Sir Syed's aim, as I have attempted to show in the following pages, was to combine secular with religious knowledge, a combination which would appeal to his `quam'. He then tried to generate, among the Muslims, reverence for Western education and enthusiasm for learning. The motivation he offered was that English education would eventually enable the Muslims of India to regain "their rightful position of power, even within the British Empire."[12] He wanted to raise a generation of Muslims who would possess such skills which would enable them to pursue career

12. Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation, p 318.

hitherto denied to their community. Above all, he wanted his students to qualify for public leadership.[13] The means for his ends, quite specifically, was the college, which later became the Aligarh Muslim University.

Sir Syed Ahmed believed that all his countrymen should help the college with "every last bit of public energy and economic capital"[14] For him, Aligarh was not merely a University, it was a political symbol too. He wanted Aligarh to serve as a great centre for a unified, national network of Muslim educational institutions.

Undoubtedly, the intentions of Sir Syed Ahmed were beyond reproach, but the enthusiasm generated by his idea assumed different proportions among the masses. In a pamphlet entitled "O Muhammadans of Aligarh, Wake Up and Know Your Duty,"[15] the Muslims of India are characterized as an "indigent

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13. Ibid, p 318.
14. Ibid, p. 303.
15. Issued by the Young Muhammadan Liberal Party. Enclosed in a letter from R. Wurn to H. Sharp, Deni-official No 1187-C, 12 Aug 1913. In S.C. Ghosh (ed.), Development of University Education, 1916-1920 (New Delhi : Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational Studies (JNU), 1977)., pp 142-144.

and inert race"[16] who were stirred into action
with the assurance that "the University would be a
remedy for all their ailments."[17] The pamphlet
informed the masses that the University would
contain no defects which are found in government
schools and Universities and proof of that was
that "the study of theology would be as compulsory
as the study of books of modern science. . . ."[18]
The pamphlet specially emphasized the role of
theology, as it would ensure that the students
turn out to be "true Muhammedans."[19]

Thus, for Sir Syed Ahmed, the Muslims of
India formed a distinct community, a former ruling
class now fallen from that position of power. They
were particularly discriminated against after
1857, which led to their becoming grievously
'backward' (as compared to the Hindus), in many
areas, educational and professional jobs being the
most visible. The non-Muslims had made apt use of
English education, using it to obtain government
jobs and status in society. Muslims had not never

16.   Ibid, p 142.
17.   Ibid, p 142.
18.   Ibid, p 142.
19.   Ibid, p 143.

reconciled themselves to studying in government schools.

Sir Syed Ahmed wanted to create new institutions outside the world of British administration. He dreamt of furthering his community's progress. He thus established an institution which would employ English-type methods to teach, yet leave enough scope and time for religious instruction also. His university was to be residential so that the life of the students could be regulated and moulded--they were to be the first of the chosen few who would make a public name for themselves, and in the process, for their college.

An early as 1911, the Maharaja of Bikaner had written to Harcourt Butler that it would have been better if all Indians had been unified in their demand for a great 'undenominational' university. But the Muslims would not agree to such a proposal now, he thought, as "they have gone too far with their scheme of a Muslim University. . . ."[20]

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20.   Maharaja of Bikaner to Harcourt Butler, 9 May 1911. In Ghosh, Development of University Education, 1916-1920, p 32.

Strangely enough, when the letter touches upon the subject of strained relations between the Hindus and Muslims, the maharaja writes that ". . . In this case, I am afraid it is unavoidable and brought about more by the Muhammadans themselves than by the Hindus."[21]

This seems to contain the earliest, and possibly the only, mention of the fact that one university would have been more appropriate than the establishment of two separate ones. Curiously, the entire blame for this is laid at the Muslim door; blame for stirring enthusiasm among the Hindus, and blame also for increasing racial feelings between the two communities. Yet, nowhere in the document is any explanation given for the above accusations.

A surprising admittance of the inadequacy of government schools and colleges is contained in a Government Despatch to the Secretary of State.[22] A

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21. Ibid, p 33.
22. Government of India Despatch No 19 of 1913, to the Secretary of State, 10 July 1913. In Ghosh, Development of University Education, 1916-1920 pp 55-60.

certain section of the bureaucracy[23] viewed these universities as "experiments which ought to be tried."[24] They admit that secular education has not produced such satisfactory results that efforts to combine it with religious education should be discouraged. The fact that there are "plain political risks in such movements"[25] cannot be ignored, but at the same time it would be impolitic to ignore the enthusiasm generated by these two proposals. Here, we should bear in mind that 'religion' is not being used in any narrow communal sense.

Krishan Kumar[26] has made a study of the Hindi litterati's search for cultural identity and expression. His study focuses on the development of Hindi journalism, Hindi literacy and education at the primary and advanced levels. This search for identity received impetus from socio-cultural movements and text book syllabi in remoulding the

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23. The signatories to the letter were: Hardinge of Penhurst, O'M Creagh, Harcourt Butler, S.A. Imam, W.H. Clark, R.H. Craddoc, W.S. Meyer, E.D. Melagan.
24. Ibid, p 57.
25. Ibid, p 57.
26. Krishna Kumar, "Quest for self-Identity : Cultural Consciousness and Education in Hindi Region, 1880-1950, " Economic and Political Weekly, xxv (23), 9 June 1990, pp 1247-1255.

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language, thereby advancing the course of Sanskritization and promotion of the Devnagri Script. Cultural identity, concludes Krishna Kumar had been moulded into a district Hindu form.

V.A. Sundaram,[27] in a book rich with facts, tries to answer the question of how the founders of the Benaras Hindu University justified the inclusion of religion. At a meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council on 22 March 1915, Madan Mohan Malviya had announced that though the institution was denominational, it was not sectarian, "It will [inculcate] . . . a broad liberation of mind and a religious spirit which will promote brotherly feeling. . . ."[28] Removing the provision for compulsory religious education (for Hindus only) would be like "cutting the heat out of the scheme. . . We wish to make up for an acknowledged deficiency in the existing system. . . ."[29] With regard to objections raised relating the provision that no non-Hindu may become a member of the court, Malviya advanced simple

27. V.A. Sundaram, Benaras Hindu University, 1905-1925 (Benaras : Tara Printing Works, 1936).
28. Ibid, p 217.
29. Ibid pp 217-218.

logic. This was because Hindus who may make
benefactions in favour of the institution should
feel "satisfied" that their charities would be
administered by men who will be "in religious
sympathy with them." Not only this, they would
make larger endowments if they felt that these
were not administered by men of different faiths
and persuasions."[30]

We can conclude from Sundaram's book that the
basis of endowment and donations to the Hindu
University was to be mainly religious, not any
overwhelming concern for education itself.
Further, it is implicit that none, or a negligible
number of Muslims, will contribute.

Mr Venis, principal of Queen's College,
Benaras, strongly criticized the proposed Hindu
University for its sectarian basis. He
characterized its establishment as 'Brahmanical
Supremacy fighting to the death with
Rationalism."[31] He further states that "probe

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30. Ibid, p 219.
31. Extract Private Letter from mr Venis, 25 Aug 1911. In
    Ghosh, Development of University Education, 1916-1920,
    p 35.

Malviya and the Bharata Mahamandalam leaders[32] sufficiently deep and this is what you will find [i.e.,Return to the Vedas will restore the political sovereignty of the Hindus]. . . A Hindu University may arise as a protest against the supposed encroachment of the Muslim Community."[33]

But it is important to note here however trivial brahmanism and `Return to Vedas' may sound to a foreigner, they are powerful mobilizing slogans by themselves.

Thus, for the promoters of the Hindu University, the duty of character-building of the country's youth was their foremost duty. Their conception of character, embedded in cultural consciousness, held little appeal to non-Hindu students. In their eyes, studying Hindu theology would not only ensure that the students get well-versed with their classical language and religion, they would also imbibe the qualities of toleration and humanitarianism. In their eyes, a University such as the one established at Benaras was the

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32. i.e, the group headed by Maharaja Rameshwar Singh of Darbhanga.

33. Extract. Private letter from Mr. Venis, p 35.

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need of the time, as it fulfilled a deficiency in education by teaching religion.

The logic behind the entire issue of giving instruction in religion (whether in AMU or BHU) was that if a true religious spirit was inculcated in the students, then they would rise above the petty divisions of caste, community and religion. It was only then, the promoters held, that they could achieve true happiness and respect for all religions.

CHAPTER 1

NATIONALISM, EDUCATION AND RELIGION

By the last decade of the 19th CN English had already become the language with which educated Indians could communicate with each other. English surpassed barriers of locality, province, dialect and vernacular. Communication between people speaking indigenous languages was now achieved with relative ease. It was also the the vehicle through which Indians came to know and study ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity of democracy and nationalism, and most important, of the exploitative character of colonialism. According to B.T. McCully, English education was primary responsible for the emergence of nationalist ideas among the educated Indians, in large part due to "an outgrowth of English education, and of resentment born of economic and social discontent."[1] So much so that European cultural penetration "contributed greatly to the genesis of Hindu cultural nationalism. . . .By its Stubborn

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1.   B.T. McCully, English Education and the origins of Indian Nationalism (Gloucester, Mass : Peter Smith, 1966)). p. 225.

refusal to accept English education, the Mohammedan community remained comparatively immune."[2] McCully concludes that, in the 1870's and 1880's, Indian nationalism was suffused with elements of a foreign culture: "National feeling did not germinate of its own acord in the soil of India; rather it was an exotic growth implanted by foreign hands and influences,"[3] But holding English education to be the main catalyst for political, as well as cultural awakening, is to promote a unilinear view of the effects of English education. Moreover it does not tell us the specificity of the kind of nationalism being referred to Education not only may have led to nationalism, it might also have been responsible for the emergence of communalism simultaneously.

It is also important to keep in mind that government shools and colleges were not the only educational institutions in operation. By the close of the 19 CN, colleges established, maintained and supported by Indian efforts had come into being. Of these, the central Hindu

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2. McCully, ibid, pp 241-242.
3. Ibid, 388.

College, established in 1898, and the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1877, were among the prominent educational institutions in the United Provinses. These two institutions grew out of a sincere need to impart and assist in `national education' and `character building' of Indian boys and girls. The central conception of their founders was the concept of `character', ie, education must be utilized for creating good Hindus or good Muslims, even good citizens. What was their ideology of education, on the basis of which they proposed to erect instituions of education?

The driving force and main inspiration behind the establishment of the Central Hindu College was Mrs Annie Besant. This college later became the core around which Madan Mohan Malviya built the Benaras Hindu University. What were the aims and ideals of its founders?

The foremost ideal of the college was to "increase the productive capacity of its citizens."[4] They wanted to render education which

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4.   B.R. Garg, Lala Lajpat Rai as an educationist (Ambala Cantt : Indian Publications Bureau 1973), p. 20.

would make a person useful to society and be able to meet the ordinary needs of whatever circumstances he found himself in. To achieve this end, the principle to be followed was to "wed the best secular education of the western type to the best religious teaching of the Eastern type."[5]

Mrs. Besant was firmly of the view that religion was, and ought to be made, an essential part of education. On the proper training of young boys and girls depended the future modelling of the country-therefore one had to avoid the "evil of the absence of religious instructions in schools and colleges."[6] The education of Indian boys should be guided by the ideals of service, study, simplicity and self-control. "These ideals embody the ideal of the ashrams of "Brahmacharya', which should be the motto of the Hindu student and should guide his daily life."[7]

Though Lala Lajpat Rai envisages the teaching of patriotism as the immediate goal of education, because "a nation cannot exist if the younger

5.   Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator (Gwalior ; Swarup Publications, n.d.), p 78.
6.   Ibid, p 10.
7.   Ibid, p 49.

generation does not learn the fundamentals of patriotism,"[8] he accords a high status also towards developing the 'total personality' of the individual student, i.e. in mind, body and spirit as well as socially. To make the student a "good citizen of a free and spirtiual commonwealth of Humanity"[9] was thus the object of starting the Central Hindu College. The curriculum, the technique, the method, plans and "elaborate paraphernalia. . . are fundamentallly to be directed to this end . . . The dogmatic must be left out of education, for it inteferes with the truth."[10]

The aim of the college was, above everything else, to improve the character of its students. The education which Mrs Besant had in mind would nurture both the intellect as well as character of the pupils and instill in them : reverence for persons as well as ideals; brotherhood and inclination towards peace and harmony; and a feeling of service towards God and all men. She

8.   B.R. Garg, Lala Lajpat Rai as an educationist,p. 71.
9.   Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator p.39.
10.   Ibid, p 40.

visualized of 'good character' as those who lived "as God-fearing, law abiding, honest and useful citizens of the country, who were taught to love their religion, school and teachers."[11]

Mrs. Besant was a pioneer in the field of women education too. She did not overlook the contribution that educated girls could make in the nationalist cause. But that contribution was, according to her, limited to the home. The Central Hindu Girls School was established in 1905, because "The province of women in India is still the home",[12] and it was imperative that girls be "trained in such a manner so that they can discharge all the duties of a housewife perfectly"[13] She felt that the kind of education imparted to girls in the western countries was not suited at all to Indian conditions : "India needs nobly trained wives and mothers . . . rather than a girl-graduates, educated for the learned professions."[14] The ideal education of Indian

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11. Ibid, p 13.
12. Speeches and Writings of Annie Besant, 3rd ed, (Madras : G.A. Nateson and company, n.d.) p 68.
13. Ibid, p 70.
14. Annie Besant, Education of Indian girls, pamphlet, published in 1904.

girls was "religions and moral education; literary education in her vernacular and a classical language; scientific knowledge of hugiene and family mediciine; domestic duties like cooking, keeping of accounts, sewing etc."[15] Religion was again envisaged as an essential ingredient of women education too. To give a lengthy quote from Mrs. Besant :

Until you remember that India has not only a YAJNAVALYA but also MAITREYI, the birth right of the daughters of India as it is of her sons; until you remember that in the old days Indian women sang parts of the Vedas to which modern Indian women may not even listen from the lips of another; until you remember the India of the past, in order to restore what was great in her and to make her future worthy of it, India cannot rise."[16]

Why did these educationists lay such stress on the teaching of religion? For them, religious teaching was the means whereby an individual

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15. Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator, p 49.
16. Ibid, p 11.

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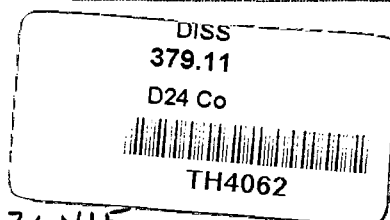
learnt of the past glory of his nation, civilization and culture. he learnt to take pride in his country's past achievements and slowly, developed a desire to free it from alien rule so that development of the nation could take place along national lines. Education, to be useful, must be "based on custom, tradition, history, physical needs and climate, . . . [and] the social and spiritual needs of each community."[17]

When could education then be truly useful? When it was "founded on a knowledge of the past of the country as well as of its present. It must be designed in accordance with the ancient traditions and national habits, and adapted to modern necessities, to meet at every point the growing needs of an ever increasing nation"[18] Thus, such educational thought was not backward-looking or revivalist. The history of the past was drawn upon to "remove the causes and destroy the influence that created the atmosphere of despondency and pessimism . . . "[19] Religious instruction would

17. Lala Lajpat Rai, speech, The People, Vol III, No 24, 12.2.26, pp 458-459.
18. Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator, p 11.
19. B.R. Garg, Lala Lajpat Rai as an educationist, p 92.

also provide the basis for a sound popular system of education which was deemed essential for "the elimination of ignorance, unhappiness, disease and misconduct."[20] Furthermore, religious instruction was also viewed as necessary to combat the Angolphile tendency that secular Enlish education was seen as spreading. For example, Annie Besant called for the establishment of Hindu boarding houses, because otherwise "Hindu boys are ruthlessly exposed to purely secular or even proselytising influences."[21] Though the utility of English was recognized, the aim was to introduce subject matter about India's history and geography and lessions about religion and moral education rather than learning an alien nation's history or geography.[22]

The educational thinkers concurred that even though Western education possessed "horrible abominations, contradictions and cruelties,"[23] it was not a thing to be despised or ignored. But one

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20. Ibid, p 92.
21. Annie Besant, "The Education of Hindu Youth", Theosophist (n. p. n.d.)
22. Ibid.
23. Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator, p 34.

thing was sure. Western scientific knowledge and method may be appropriated for use, but western learning in any form was to be avoided when it manifested its "inherent tendencies to develop a slave mentality and a slavish character in our boys. This education makes us despise our own culture and our own language."[24] The most detrimental aspect of English education was its tendency to make Indians "economically dependant on crumbs thrown from the table of a foreign government and an alien people. It destroys native pride, native self-respect and native self-confidence. It respect encourages loyality to a foreign govt and loyalty foreign ideals."[25]

Students were expected to widen their mental horizons through a wider contact with the world and its intellectual traditions and not be content with living a life of isolation, which was backward-looking and devoid of modern knowledge. Lala Lajpat Rai was an impressive and powerful pleader for the adoption of modern science and technology. "Are we going to reject the sciences

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24.   Ibid, p. 34.
25.   Ibid; p 34.

and the philosophy of the western scientists and philosophers, because the discoverers of these sciences and writers of the books on philosophy happened to be non-Indians . . ."[26] Like Annie Besant, Lajpat Rai had an abounding reverence for science, and saw no anomaly in the fact that the teaching of science was held to be supplementary to the teaching of religion, which would then help in the creation of a developed Hindu personality.

Though western education was to be valued for its method, religion was viewed as the surest foundation of character and the truest source of human happiness. Mrs. Besant's arguments for religous instruction run along three lines. Firstly, that religion is necessary as the basis of morality. Secondly, that religion is necessary for the inspiration of 'Art', and thirdly, as the foundation of original literature. The latter two she holds to be the constituents of a nation's culture. And to understand one's culture, one must know the language that literature is written in, or the inspiration behind those works of Art. For

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26. Purshaottam Nagar, <u>Lala Lajpat Rai : The man and his ideas</u> (New Delhi : Manohar Book Service, 1977), p 236.

these, knowledge of religion is essential, because, for Mrs. Besant, a nation's culture is always inspired by its religious traditions. The first condition, the teaching of morality, is also viewed as incomplete if it is not accompanied by appeals to reigion. This is because she feels that "you must base you precept, to do or not to do, on some principle recognized by those whom you address."[27]

Her conception of `Dharma' led her to proclaim that religion was the supreme basis of every form of human activity. "The last duty I want to lay stress upon is one which is essentially Hindu but has been in the modern days forgotten, namely that there is nothing, nothing in all our activities which can be separated from relgion . . . You are religious in the temple, you must be religious in the market place, you must be religious right through or else uou have no true religion. Nothing is outside religion."[28] Viewed from this angle, nothing from among the daily

27. Annie Besant, "The necessity of religious Education", lecture, Madras, 26.2.1908.
28. Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator, pp 19-20.

activities of man falls outside the pale of religion. Education too is inextricably linked to religion in this scheme of things, and especially to Dharma, as she defines `Dharma' as "the stage of evolution which my nature has reached . . . and . . . the law which will enable me to grwo further . . . ", [29] which is what the function of education is. In the plan of education which was drawn up by Mrs Besant and the founders of Benaras Hindu University, education would thus enable children `to capture the spirit of ancient culture and prevent them from being side-tracked by the gaudy paraphernania of modern civilization which at bottom is materilistic and highly competitive, godless and soul-killing."[30]

If one aim of education was to revive the ancient culture of India and encourage its study, then the definition of `culture' itself assumes importance. Mrs Besant defined culture as "nothing but a mode of life in which certain ideals motivate almost unconsciously all phases of human life at all levels--transmitted to a growing

29.   Ibid, p 22.
30.   Ibid, p. 31.

generation through education."[31] For Lala Lajpat Rai, Hinduism as a principle of faith had the vitality of unifying force. Inspite of its many schools of thought, it "had the capacity to convey and sustain a consciousness of national unity."[32] Lala Lajpat Rai differed widely from those nationalists who, like Tilak, believed in first struggling for political freedom and then introducing social reform afterwards. He held that social regeneration was as important as political liberation and must proceed simultaneously. His emphasis on unity among the Hindus was aimed at "developing a sense of nationality to fight a common enemy and a common danger."[33] In their view, religions have "yielded the categorial imperative (or compelling power) necessary for the education of mankind."[34]

The ideal of 'national education' to which they aspired was a noble one. But, it has sometimes been criticized as being another name for a denominational university. When this

31.   Ibid, p. 31.
32.   Purshottam Nagar, Lala Lajpat Rai : The Man and his Ideas, p. 248.
33.   Ibid., p 250.
34.   Speeches and Writing of Annie Besant, p 47.

question was asked of Mrs Besant, she replied "Do
you want a denominational or a National
Univeristy? Will you have a system of a National
University which shall affiliate alike
denominational and undeenominational colleges? I
am in favour of denominational schools and
colleges, but a National University that unifies
them together."[35] In her scheme of national
education, every community must take up the
question of religious education within their own
community, for religion has to be an integral part
of all education. The prevailing sentiment was
that ". . . if the Hindu community accorded Hindu
religious education, if the Mussalmans gave
instruction in the faith of Islam, if the Parsis
gave instruction in the Zoroastrian religion, and
so on, leaving Christianity to be taught to the
Christains only, then the relgious education of
the country would proceed along proper and healthy
lines . . ."[36] She was satisfied to see "the two
great communities in India, the Hindus and the
Mussalmans, beginning to deal effectively with the

35. Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator,
    p 42.
36. Annie Besant, "Education as a National duty", lecture,
    Bombay, 9.3. 1903.

question of religious education"[37] by the setting up of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh and the central Hindu School at Benaras. "You have, thus, two educational isnstitutions for the two communities . . . Moreover, I hope to see, in the days to come, a Mussalman University growing out of Aligarh College and a Hindu University growing out of the Benaras College, so that these Universities may lead the national life of India. . ."[38]

National institutions thus were viewed as the signs and symbols of national individuality, and were the means to keep alive and strengthen nationality. But, no educational thinker dwelled upon the fact that if two or more universities were established, each claiming to be national and imparting national education, did this not signify two or more divergent national streams within India? Their appeals were directed towards identifying members of a particular community and the education they would impart was supposed to be for the benefit and future advance of that

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37. Annie Besant, Ibid.
38. Annie Besant, Ibid.

community only. Yet, in all these plans, they seem
to be motivated by an earnest desire to develop
education along `national' lines.

Language too occupied a significant position
in this scheme, as a language, in any nation, is
an important national institution.

It is the instrument whereby "historical
continuity, which is an indispensible condition of
national growth, is preserved. Common political
ideals and aspirations are impossible without a
common past and a shared language."[39] The
vernacular was to be made the langugae of
instruction in the national universities, as
education in an alien language was postulated as
upsetting "all rules and conventations and [it]
weakens oursleves in our social duty."[40] Much
later, speaking at a convocation at Benaras Hindu
University in 1929, Madan Mohan Malviya told the
gathering that, as Sanskrit was a fine and sublime
language and could complete with the best in the

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39.   Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian educator,
       p 61.
40.   Ibid, p. 3.

world, "in our shceme of things, Hindu theology and sanskrit learning occupied the first place."[41]

This importance accorded to Sanskrit, deemed to be symbolic of India's culture and civilization, was mirrored in the practical activities of the college. For example Malviya says that "in conferring degrees at our Convocations, scholars who have studied Theology and Sanskrit learning take precedence over all other scholars."[42] The official attitude ot educational instruction in a foreign language is very tersely summed up by Sir George Birdwood: "We are destroying their faith and their literature and their art, and the continuity of the spontaneous development of their civilization and their great historical personality; in a word, we are destroying the very soul of the nation."[43] It was this denationalizing and demoralizing tendency that such educational thinkers sought to arrest and correct, through the establishment of national

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41. Convocation Address, delivered by Madan Mohan Malviya on 14 Dec, 1929. [Benaras : Benaras Hindu University, 1929], p 2.
42. Ibid, p 3.
43. Sir George Birdwood, quoted in Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator, p. 65.

institutions. Lala Lajpat Rai was of the opinion that such universities "embodied the 'national' ideals of their founders, limited and sectarian as they were, at that time. Each professed to provide its own kind of national education. The educational facilities provided by these institutions were open to persons of all creeds, denominations and religions, but the nationalism aimed at was undisguisedly denominatioal."[44]

The content of the educational thought of the founders of the Benaras Hindu University was, as we have seen, deeply patriotic and national in intent, but was aimed at the members of a certain community.

In the discussion that follows, the educational thought of the founders of Aligarh Muslim University will be analysed.

Since the time of the establishment of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental college, Aligarh quickly became the centre around which revolved Muslim hopes and aspirations, It "soon became the visible

44. V.C. Joshi, Lala lajpat Rai : Speeches and writings (New Delhi : University Publishers, 1966) 2 vols, 350.

emblem of Muslim hopes and desires."[45] Why was it
that the community, which had stayed aloof form
government and missionary schools, which had
stubbornly refused to reap the harvests of the
educational efforts provided by the government,
now decided to support and patronize this college?
Why was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan successful in breaking
down this refusal to capitulate? For an answer to
this, before we discuss the educational thought of
the founders of the Mohammedan Anglo, Oriental
College, which subsequently became the Aligahrh
Muslim University, we must discuss the nature of
Islamic education itself.

Islamic education has its own peculiar
character, which distinguishes it very clearly
from all other kinds of educational theory or
practise. "This distinguishing feature is due to
the ambient presence and influence of the Quran on
Islamic Education."[46] The Holy Quran is, by
consensus of the entire Muslim opinion, whether in

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45. Shan Muhammed, 'Successors of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (New
     Delhi : Idarah - i Adabiyat - i Delli, 1981) p 18.'
46. Prince Muhammed al-Faisal al-Saud, "The glorious Quran
     is the foundation of Islamic Education," In S.N. Al-
     Attas, Aims and Objective of Islamic Education (Jeddah
     : Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), p 126.

the past or in the present, the immutable source
of the fundamental tenents of Islam, of its
principles, ethics and culture. The Quran is also
the abiding foundation for Islamic systems of
legislation and of social and economic
organization. It is also the basis of both moral
and general education of muslim children. This
Quranic way has the distinction of "connnecting
all disciplines of the mind with the higher
principles of the Islamic creed, morals, social
and economic policy as well as with legal
practise."[47] This is so because Islamic education,
and any system founded upon it, is based on the
notion that every discipline and branch of
knowledge which is of benefit to society and
necessary for it, should be given due attention by
the 'ummah', or Muslim community, as a whole.
Muslim educationists are of the unanimous opinion
that the purpose of education is, however, not to
cram the students minds with facts but to prepare
them for a life of purity and sincerity. This
total commitment to character-building is based on

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47.   Ibid, p 126.

the ideals of Islamic ethics, which is the highest goal of Islamic education.

From the earliest, the muslim child begins his education by knowing how to read, then to understand and to commit to memory the holy text, ie the Holy Quran, in the classical language Arabic. "All the other facts of the curricula of that Islamic education are based upon the acknowledgement of the Quaran as the core, pivot and gateway of learning."[48]

Thus, we see that the single most important factor in the education of a muslim child was the study, recitation and memorization of the Quran. This facility was not available at government schools, and even less so at missionary schools. Muslims were futhermore afraid that these latter schools set their children open to proselytising influences and were best avoided. Sir Syed Ahmed set about combating these attitudes. Convinced that education, and the right medhod of education, would be the panacea to all problems, "he applied his mind to the taks of creating conditions in

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48. Ibid, p 127.

which his community could make leeway."[49] To

extricate the "muslim mind from those outmoded

patterns of thought and behaviour"[50] into which it

had slipped, Sir Syed Ahmed proposed to lay the

foundation of a college which would combine

western and scientific knowledge along with

Islamic education. By Islamic education we mean

the basic features of the Islamic constituion as

are embodied in the Quran and Sunnah. These are

known as "the nusus-e-qatai, such as belief in

Allah, faith in the Prophet and the basic attitude

that all human activity should follow in the way

of Allah . . . Islamic education has to inculcate

these beliefs and values in Muslim youth."[51]

There is no conflict between religious and

scientific instructions in the Islamic system of

education. "Salvation and Spiritual development

does not necessarily comflict with material

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49. S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (Aligarh : Sir Syed Hall Publication, AMU, 1969) p. vi.

50. Ibid, p V.

51. Basheer El Tom, "Education and Society" In Mohammed Wasiullah Khan (ed.), Education and Society in the Muslim World (Jeddah (King Abdul Aziz University): Hodder and Stoughton, 1981), p. 83.

progress in the social and economic spheres."[52] It was not at all necessary to shun the latter in order to cherish and strive for the former. The source of divine guidance for human behaviour is revelation. Only revealed knowledge is believed to be absolutely true, which is contained and recorded in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. The derivation and interpretation of these Islamic injunctions, however, vary in each time and space context. It is binding on all Muslims to designate a few from among themselves who are firmly conversant with the teachings of Islam and those who will recruit for the study of religion and further education. Islamic education does not, as we have discussed, mean only a study of theology. "To be truly learned in the general doctrines and jurisprudence of Islam (i.e. Fiqh) is not merely to minister to the spiritual but also the social and wordly needs of the Muslim community."[53]

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52. Mohammed Wasiullah Khan (ed), Education and Society in the Muslim World, p 1.
53. Prince Muhammed at-Fasial al-Saud, "The Glorious Quaran is the foundation of Islamic Education," In S.N. Al-Attas, Aims and Objective of Islamic Education p 127.

The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College was
such a dream of Sir Syed Ahmed's. He was "aware
not only of the lack of education among the
Muslims but also to their averseness to the kind
of education which would fit them for public life
. . ."[54] To his thinking, the MAO college was a
'realization of social reform and intellectual
resurgence."[55] The College later developed into
the Aligarh Muslim University, which was "intended
to be the centre of Islamic culture in India."[56]
Whether or not this was Sir Syed's motive, what is
certainly clear that Aligarh Muslim University
embodied his desire to keep the education of
Indian Muslims in their own hands, free as far as
possible from those foreign influences which had
"sapped their initiative and independence of
character."[57] He aimed to transform the thinking
of the memebrs of his community, for example-even
the study of western literature was considered to

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54. Prof. H.K. Sherwani, The Aligarh Movement (Aligarh :
    Sir Syed Hall Publication (AMU), 1969) p 25.
55. S.K. Bhatanagar, History of the Mohammedan Anglo-
    Oriental College, p viii.
56. Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator,
    p 15.
57. Ibid p 15.

be an act of 'Kufr'-infidelity.[58] With this in mind, he explained the objectives which inspired the founders of the MAO college : "to dispel those misty traditions of the past which have hindered our progress, to remove those prejudices which have hitherto exercised a baneful influence on our race, to reconcile oriental learning with western literature and science, and to inspire in the dreamy minds of the people of the East, the practical energy which belongs to those of the West."[59]

Sir Syed Ahmed looked upon the inclusion of religion into the curricula as an important part of education. He was of the view that "any reform movement to be vital and effective had to include religion in its orbit."[60] He knew that, in traditional education, everything revolved around the Holy Quran and Tradition. "In discussing any problem of life or faith, the student and the teacher must rest teir arguments finally on the

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58.   S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Mohammedan Anglo-
       Oriental College, p. 6.
59.   Ibid, p 53.
60.   Ibid, p viii.

divine source, the Quran."[61] By the same
yardstick, English education was acceptable to the
muslim community if it was acompanied by religious
instruction and, Sir Syed felt, supervision of the
day-to-day lives of the students. The rationale
for founding an educational institution for the
muslims was bound up with an analysis of the
relationship between being muslim and the nature
of political power in British India. According to
Sir Syed Ahmed, Muslims were a former ruling class
now fallen on evil days. To recover their rightful
position, they had to cultivate new areas of
knowlege and skill. In addition, they would also
develop a new awareness of consolidation as a
`qaum' or a community. As Lelyveld puts it, "Being
Muslim could not be an assumed fact of religious
and social identity; it required active
particpation in a range of new institutional
activities . . ."[62] Sir Syed's final objective,
therefore, was that Aligarh's educational
insitution should raise a generation of muslims

61. M.A. Zaki Badawi, "Traditional Islamic Education : Its
    Aims and Purposes in the Present day", IN S.N. al-
    Attas, Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education,p.
    109.
62. David Leyveld, Aligarh's First Generation (New Jersey
    : Princeton University Press, 1978), p 317.

who would possess the skills and qualities
necessary, for public leadership. "English
education at Aligarh was a political strategy to
enable Muslims to achieve, eventually, their
rightful position of power, even within the
British Empire."[63]

Sir Syed Ahmed was firmly of the view that
Muslim attitudes could not be changed "unless a
new and dynamic spirit of enquiry was infused in
religious studies . . ."[64] His conception of
religion and of an intermix of religion with
education was not narrow minded. He tried to
encompass, within the boundaries of his
insitution, Islamic ways of thinking, feeling and
acting, both individually and collectively.
According to Islamic faith, the sources of
knowledge of most worth for Muslim, are the Holy
Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. Islamic
knowlege in itself is not narrow or revivalist at
all. It spirals around the systems of beliefs and
injunctions enjoined by the Quran and the Sunnah ,
and "inclsively encompasses any and all knolwege

63.   Ibid, p 318.
64.   S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Mohaammedan Anglo-
      Oriental College, p viii.

of the sciences, arts and letters which can help Muslims realize their ideals and goals."[65] · He believed that Western society was devoid of that charismatic character which religious faith along, can give. Faith, in muslim society, is a framework which "normally pervades every single item taught, and also every kind of knowlege or action in all walks of life."[66] The only way to commence reforms was to apply the principles of 'Tawheed' (belief) as an edcuational policy, as 'Tawheed' and the morality and values which are a concommitant nature of its acceptance, are the foundations of the social edifice. This was correct education - that which inspires moral action, and at the same time, satisfies the material and mundane needs of the people.

Sir Syed thus wanted to stimulate genuine intellectual excitement over new modes of thought which he proposed to popularize. Throughout the 1860s he had, as Lelyveld puts it, devoted himself to the popularization of European rationalism,

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65.   Mohammed Wassiullah Khan (ed), Education and Society in the Muslim World, p 230
66.   Basheer El Tom, "Education and Scoeity," IN Mohammed Wasiullah Khan (ed.), Education and Society in the Muslim World, p 31.

empericism and dynamism. Islam, Sir Syed Ahmed now argued, was consistent with these intellectual attitudes and had declined by ignoring them. By creating new instituions, "Syed Ahmed hoped to discover new fields of ambition, such as industrial and commerical entreprenuership, which could be secured through education."[67] Sir Syed's aim therefore was to extricate his people from "the meshes of obscurantism and inertia and inculcate in them a scientific attitude of mind"[68] which would help them in making leeway. He struggled hard to create an awareness, among the Muslim community, of the swiftly changing patterns of life in an age of scientific and industrial developments.

Thus, 'national' education was such education that was conducted along national lines, ie controlled by the representatives of the nation, and "so controlled and conducted that it has for its objects the realization of national destiny."[69] The educational thinkers clearly

67. David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation, p 125.
68. Abdul Aleem, ex-V.C. AMU, quoted in Prof Sherwani, The Aligarh Movement.
69. Lala Lajpart Rai, speech, All India College Students Conference, Nagpur, 25.12.1920, p 28.

understood that no foreign government will initate, mantain, support or even tolerate a scheme of education which aimed at training men for political or economic freedom, as no foreign government can be expected to rule in the interest of the subject nation. That is why they desired to establish national universities, because for them freedom and education were interrelated. In the words of Mrs Besant, who, when describing the ideals of her proposed Hindu University, exclaimed : "A university must not be a golden gateway office so much as a temple where men go for . . . guidance and equipment for living. A university must have a tradition . . . And finally, a university is a place not where men are examined, but where they are educated."[70]

In the case of the Muslim University, the founders were imbued with the dream of a unified and rapidly advancing community, unified in their consent of certain age-old assumptions, and, as in the case of Hindus and Muslims alike, to which they are so much habituated from their childhood

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70.   Yudhistera Kumar,   Annie Besant as an Indian Educator, p 102.

that they are never conscious of them at all. Sir Syed Ahmed felt that Islam as a public and private religion, through the Quran, the corpus of tradition and law and through its age-old social, cultural and educational institutions, has always provided Muslim society with these assumptions. Religious guidance was, for him, not an empty slogan but the nucleus of a complete and integrated programme for education. He felt that the muslim community was "collectively dutybound to give a major part of its attention to education so that a goodly number of its members become versed in all learning", spirtual as well as temporal.[71] The Muslim university movement was his pioneering effort to create an autonomous muslim educational system on an all-India basis, centered at Aligarh.

In conclusion, I would like to state that the idea of education prevalent among Hindu and Muslim intellectual circles during this time did not develop in isolation from each other. The idea of

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71. Prince Mohammed al-Faisal al-Saud, "The Glorious Quran is the Foundation of Islamic Education," IN S.N. Al-Attas, Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education, p 131.

a specific variety of nationalism was linked to the idea of education. The students were taught "love of the nation as a whole, regardless of the various religious creeds into which it is internally divided "... To be Indians first and last and all the time...Teaching of Hindus-Muslims unity..."[72] But education by itself does not directly produce nationalism, or even communalism for that matter. These ideologies are mediated through the conceptions of a good citizen, a good family man, a good believer, a complete personality, which is rooted in one's own traditions. But, ideals, when translated into practical assumptions, lose much of their shine. Hence we see that these ideologies of education played definite roles in identifying particular individuals as members of certain communities. The goals and aims of education were formed keeping in mind the kind of communities they wanted to create, even as they dreamt of creating a national community which would embrace all sections of the Indian people irrespective of religion. This national community would be ". . . relgious

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72. B.R. Garg, Lala Lajpat Rai as an educationist, p 121.

without being sectarian; devoted without being fanatical; love their own faith without decrying or hating the faiths of their fellow-citizens; make religion a unifying and not a separative force; the builder-up, and not disintegrator, of nationality; and the fostering mother of civic virtues, the nurse and teacher of morality."[73] The ideological meaning that was poured into these standard institutional moulds presupposed a definite category of people whom it was supposed to benefit, as education arms us with the power to project meaning and also to share them. This ideology of education was not overtly communal--in the sense that students were not taught to look upon other communities as their opponents. The view was widely held among politcal leaders of the time that should each community educate its own member's, they would be automatically advancing the progress of nationalism. For them, the key to the future advancement of their community and country lay in the character of the men they proposed to form.

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73.   Yudhistera Kumar,   Annie Besant as an Indian Educator,
      p 59.

There was no recognition of the fact that this could possibly lead to a communalized vision of society. The purpose and meaning of their ideology of education was the progress and advancement of thir community-which would result in the progress and advancement of the nation.

It was due to this firm ideological commitment and belief that they poured all their energies into translating their ideas into institutions, which will be taken up in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

SECTION I

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

India, in the latter half of the 19th century, witnessed many transformations - social and religious reform movements, the emergence of patriotic feelings and of Indian nationalism, and the stirrings of educational movements.

Education was undoubtedly one of the modes through which colonialism influenced the national movement. While English education unquestionably had its positive aspects, its negative aspects cannot be ignored : the building up of an educated elite, neglect of popular education, a low rate of literacy, an emphasis on literature and neglect of technical education. Besides, "it is commonly accepted that the Muslims, less nimble than the Hindus, were less ready to seize the opportunities offered by Western education and less quick to

adapt themselves to changing conditions under British rule."[1]

By the 1870s, there was a perceptible change in official thinking. The new emerging educated Hindus were increasingly being looked upon as threats to the colonial power, and official thinking was that Muslims, properly guided, would provide the perfect counterbalance. In the words of Stratchey : "The existence side by side of these hostile creeds is one of the strong points in our political position in India."[2] Colonial officials were thus anxious to effect reform measures to improve the condition of the Indian Muslim.

It was at such a point that efforts to initiate educational reforms among Muslims originated from within the community. The foremost and most articulate and enthusiastic crusader was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, educationist of the 19th century. He desired to establish a "private

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1. Aparna Basu, The Growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898-1920, (Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1974), p.147.
2. Ibid., p.155.

British type educational institution"[3] that would make adequate room for the study of Islam, because he was aware not only of the painful lack of education among the Muslims but also of "their averseness to the kind of education which would fit them for public life..."[4].

This notion, that Muslims as a "class" were backward received ample corroboration from published British Statistics. The British based their census on religious denominations, not according to occupations or other categories. David Lelyveld suggested that it was with the publication of the census in 1872 and subsequent statistics that the feeling "we" are behind "them" began to gain currency. The assumption behind the whole exercise was that there existed a definable entity - the Muslims of India - and they were behind the non-muslims in acquiring English education.[5]

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3.   David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1978), p.102.
4.   Prof. H.K. Sherwani, The Aligarh Movement (Aligarh : Sir Syed Hall Publication (AMU), 1969), p.25.
5.   David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation, p.102.

For Sir Syed, education was the "crying need"[6] of the times. It was a means for (i) national uplift; (ii) control of trade and industry; (iii) for understanding the points of view of the rulers; and (iv) creating a consciousness of political rights. Control of trade and industry would follow automatically once the people got education in technical and scientific professions and were fit to discharge such duties. Advancement of modern knowledge was a major aim of the education policy.[7]

The combination of two particular aims is an interesting one - i.e., that education would help to understand the rulers point of view and at the same time would also help create a consciousness of political rights. Does this imply that an awareness has to be created only about the certain rights that Indians do enjoy; and at the same time, the question why they don't have certain rights would be answered by understanding

6.   Shan Muhammed, Successors of Sir S.A. Khan (New Delhi : Idrah-i-Adabiyat-i Delli, 1981), p.14.
7.   S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (Bombay : Asia Publishing House, 1969), p.18.

the rulers viewpoint ? Throughout the whole
exercise, loyalty to the British was underlined.[8]

Sir Syed did not want politics to play any
part in the Aligarh movement. He soundly reasoned
that, at this juncture, he needed the support of
the British government to construct and maintain
his institution. If the government got hostile or
suspicious, his educational efforts would end up
in smoke. It is obvious to us that without the
active help of the government, and without such
'politics of aloofness', he could not achieve his
educational objective. Moreover, the Aligarh
movement was essentially envisaged as a movement
for the uplift of the Muslims on the religious,
moral and educational plane - Sir Syed did not
want politics to enter into the picture at all.
His dissatisfaction with British - Indian schools,
whether government or missionary, gave rise to his
desire to seek "different foreign models and
introduce features of curriculum and social
environment designed to attract a new clientele
for English education."[9] He was concerned

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8.   Ibid.
9.   David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation, p.102.

primarily with dispelling the educational backwardness of his community as he perceived it, and not with politics. In fact, he was clear about this as early as 1885, when the Indian National Congress was started, and Sir Syed had stayed conspicuously aloof.

By December 1873, Sir Syed had decided that a beginning should be made not with a university nor with a college, but with a "private Muslim school system that would give sufficient place to religious practise and instruction."[10] The foundation-stone of the school was laid on 24th May 1875.[11] Slowly but steadily, Sir Syed built up a college from this modest beginning, the foundation-stone of which was laid on 8 January 1877.[12] Thus, the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College was established.

But, he was still not satisfied. He realized even more urgently that "it was necessary to establish an organization which should in a way be peripatetic throughout the country and thus bring

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10. Ibid., p.119.
11. S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College, p.47.
12. Ibid., p.53.

the educational and cultural problems of the Muslims on one plane",[13] on the national level. Even in 1893, in his Urdu work 'Quam Ki Kismat Ka Faisla', he had advocated the establishment of a university at Aligarh as an extension of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, which he had founded about a decade back.[14]

Why were Indian Muslims holding aloof from English education ? Why were they not fully awailing of the educational facilities provided by the government schools ?

David Lelyveld tries to answer this question. By far the most important reason probably was that English learning was perceived by the Muslims to be competing with religious learning i.e., competing for time and maybe even for spiritual allegiance. The most important part of a young Muslim boy's education was learning the Quran and Hadis and the vast storehouse of knowledge they contained. If a Muslim boy went to a government school, he was not taught the Holy Quran and

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13.   Ibid., p.29.
14.   S.C. Ghosh (ed.), Development of University Education 1916-1920 (New Delhi : Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational Studies (JNU), 1977), p.7.

Hadis, which were, in Islamic educational ideology, sufficient for moral, religious, legal, social and economic education. Moreover, he was also not left with enough time to study them on his own. English education furthermore endowed him with no extra skills useful for such study.

These arguments were the most significant determinants of the attitude of Indian Muslims towards English education. In the thinking of most of them, English education was simply not necessary in the educational scheme of their children.

Sir Syed tried to combat such attitudes. Earlier, he had tried, through various articles and learned works, to reverse official opinion about Muslims as a community who still aspired to regain their former position as rulers of India. This official attitude had gained ground after the Revolt of 1857, and had resulted in official discrimination against Muslims. Now, when the government was beginning to take a favourable view of the community, Sir Syed had to use all his oratorial and persuasive powers to encourage the

members of his community to give up their outmoded
patterns of behaviour. He tried to encourage
intellectual activity along European ideas and
modes of thought.

He was aware not only of the lack of
education among the Muslims but also of their
averseness to the kind of education which would
fit them for public life. It was in the
popularization of "European rationalism,
empericism and dynamism that Sir Syed saw the
salvation of the Muslims of India."[15] Islam, he
held, was consistent with such intellectual values
and had declined by ignoring them. Not at all
satisfied with the British Indian Schools,
Aligarh's founders sought to introduce "features
of curriculum and social environment designed to
attract a new clientele for English education."[16]

Sir Syed was very much impressed with Oxford
and Cambridge. In his view, these were exactly the
type of educational institutions which India
needed - residential teaching universities
imparting higher education and fitting men for

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15.   David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation, p.124.
16.   Ibid., p.102.

eminent careers in later life. It was his firm conviction that "...the only thing which would raise the Muslims to the highest pinnacle of progress is High Education; and unless and until we produce men with high education, we would continue to be downtrodden."[17] Even though the institution at Aligarh was a "deliberate effort" to copy features of a particular type of British educational institute, the former "was not a simple transplant - it was an indigenous creation."[18] Sir Syed took care to see that it was suitable for Indian purposes.

The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College was, thus, Sir Syed's "realization of social reform and intellectual resurgence. [It was an]...accelaration of the transition from medieval to modern age".[19]

To carry on propoganda for fulfilling his dream of a Muslim University, he founded the 'Muhammadan Education Congress' in December 1886.

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17. S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, p.33.
18. David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation, p.102.
19. S.K. Bhatnagar, History of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, p.(viii).

It was later renamed the 'Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Educational Conference'.

But Sir Syed's dream could not be realized during his lifetime. After his death in 1898, Theodore Beck (his trusted friend and first principal of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, died 1899) brought out a tentative plan for a Muslim University as an enlargement of the existing college. The Government under Lord Curzon approved of the idea, provided the university was a mere continuation of the Aligarh College.[20] However, the Indian Universities Commission, after the enquiry, found this proposal devoid of adequate popular support and financial backing to make it viable, and the 1904 Universities Act closed down the whole question.[21]

The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Educational Conference meanwhile, was still desirous of establing a university. At its 24th session, held at Nagpur, December 1910, the Conference took the decisive step of passing a resolution that

20.   S.C. Ghosh (ed.), Development of University Education 1916-1920, p.7.
21.   Ibid., p.7.

immediate steps be taken for the establishment of a Muslim University.[22]

In May 1911, a Committee of eminent Muslims[23] met Harcourt Butler (Education Member, Viceroy's Council) at Simla. Summarising their discussion, he wrote to Sir J.P. Hewett that "the main point on which they lay most stress is that it must be a really Muhammadan University, to command the confidence and subscription of the community".[24] He further wrote that they had laid great stress "on the gift of a Charter as a matter of _Izzat_, and ... it would be well to carry them enthusiastically with us by letting them have what they want...."[25]

The movement for the establishment of a Muslim University, started by Sir Syed, had now finally found its way into government correspondence, and was being seriously considered therein.

22. S.K. Bhatnagar, _History of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College_, p.31
23. The Committee consisted of : The Raja of Mahumdabad, Nawab Mushtaq Hussain, Dr. Zia-ud-din and Aftab Ahmed.
24. Letter, Harcourt Butler to J.P., Hewett, 26 May 1911, Ghosh, _Development of University Education 1916-1920_, p.97.
25. Ibid., p.98.

Sir Hewett was shrewd enough to realize that though "theoretically, the All Muslim University proposed for Aligarh is not to be denominational... in any case, it is unlikely that many persons who are not Muhammadans will resort to it."[26]

Thus, from government correspondence, we feel the first unvoiced concern that the proposed University would be denominational in actual fact, though not in theory. At the same time, the official response is not to refuse the demands for its establishment, not on grounds of concern for educational uplift, but on explicitly political grounds. "...since the Muhammedan community is united in demanding a University and a refusal would throw it into opposition to government, it would palpably be unwise to refuse the application...."[27]

The Viceroy too thought that it would be "extremely dangerous to discourage this Muslim undertaking." It would be unwise to show active

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26. Letter, J.P. Hewett to Harcourt Butler, 3 June 1911, Ibid., p.99.
27. Ibid., p.99.

hostility to the idea "as we would have the whole of the Mussalmans of India against us".[28] Sir Harcourt Butler felt that it would be politically expedient for the government to direct and canalize the current advantage- in denominational universities, because they would invariably give religious instruction which would inevitably tend to keep alive the Hindu-Muslim feelings.[29] However, the main reason why the idea of a Muslim university at Aligarh was not opposed was that it was considered "in the highest degree impolitic [to this] alienate the Muhammedan community."[30] The question had not been referred to London.

The Indian Council was greatly divided in its views on why to refuse sanction for the establishment of a Muhammedan University. Montague felt that by this, the British government would provide evidence for those who accused it of 'divide and rule'. Raleigh felt that this proposed university would draw Muslims away from the other

28. Aparna Basu, The growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898-1920, p.163.
29. Ibid., p.163.
30. Telegram No.153, Hardinge to Crewe (Secretary of State), 10 June 1911, in Ghosh, Development of University Education 1916-1920, p.101.

five universities, thus making them overwhelmingly Hindu and centres of potential danger.[31]

An outline scheme of the proposed university was submitted to Lord Crewe.[32] In his reply,[33] the Secretary of State made two major alterations in the scheme. Firstly, he was prepared to agree to the university having the power to affiliate other institutions that "may come into existence in the Aligarh District, but beyond this"[34] he was not prepared to go. Secondly, he wanted the proposed university to be entitled 'The University of Aligarh'.[35]

This led to a big debate on the question of affiliation. The Aga Khan felt that "the matter of affiliation is all important to us not because we want to affiliate colleges but because the finances of the university depend upon the good

31. Aparna Basu, The growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898-1920, p.164.
32. Vide No.258 of 1911, To the Secretary of State Lord Crewe, Government of India, Finance Department (Accounts and Finance), Miscellaneous, 2 Nov. 1911, in Ghosh, Development of University Education 1916-1920 pp.106-113.
33. Letter, Public No.33, Lord Crewe to Governor-General of India in Council, India Office, London, 23 Feb., 1912, in Ghosh, ibid., pp.113-117.
34. Ibid., p.115.
35. Ibid., p.115.

will and sentimental interest of the local people of the provinces."[36] The Government of India too felt that refusal of powers of affiliation would "be a cause of disappointment so grave... as to raise a question of first-class political importance...."[37] On the issue of alteration in name, (the Foundation Committee) resolved that it was unable to accept a purely localized university [as they had wanted it to be the centre of an All-India movement]...and it considered it to be against the consensus of the Muslims all over India that the university should be called only the Aligarh University",[38] and various meetings were held to discuss the issue. The government's alarm is indicated by the following lines which the Viceroy wrote to the Secretary of State : "we have exercised strongest pressure through every possible channel, public and private, to check

36. Aga Khan to Butler, 11 July 1911, Butler Papers, in Aparna Basu, Aparna Basu, The growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898-1920, p.167.
37. Letter No.8 of 1912, To Lord Crewe, Government of India, Department of Education, 28 March 1912, in Ghosh, Development of University Education 1916-1920 p.118.
38. H.K. Sheswani, The Aligarh Movement, p.44.

agitation and hope that we may prevent outbreak of feeling."[39]

Finally, the nomenclature was accepted as 'Aligarh Moslem University' as a concession to local sentiments.[40]

Matters dragged on for the next almost two and a half years. The establishment of Benares Hindu University in 1915 changed the whole complexion of the problem. "A feeling dawned upon the Muslim leadership to accept whatever was conveniently forthcoming under the circumstances".[41]

An article in the Abhiyudha even advised the Muslims that "to delay the establishment of Aligarh Muslim University would harm the Muslims in general and the College in particular... the terms of Benaras Hindu University's establishment

39.   Telegram P.No.167, Viceroy (Education Department) to Secretary of State, 6 Aug.1912, in Ghosh, <u>Development of University Education 1916-1920</u> p.127.
40.   Letter, Public No.246, India Office (London) to Governor-General in Council, 29 Nov.1912, in ibid., p.135. The exact words where : "... as the title 'Aligarh Muslim University' would be welcomed by the Muhammedan community, and is in accordance with the style of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College...".
41.   S.C. Ghosh (ed.), <u>Development of University Education 1916-1920</u> p.9.

can be the blueprint for the establishment of Aligarh Muslim University."[42]

On 8 April 1917, the 'Foundation Committee of the Muslim University and the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College' finally passed a resolution expressing its readiness "to accept the best university on the lines of the Hindu University."[43]

Finally, the Aligarh Muslim University Act was passed by the Imperial Legislative Council and received the assent of the Governor-General on 14 September 1920. It came into force on 1st Dec. 1920.

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42.   Article in 'Abhiyuddha', 4 March, 1916.
43.   Letter No.239, Nawab Mohammed Ishaq Khan to E.D. Maclagan, 11 April, 1917, in Ghosh, Development of University Education 1916-1920 p.159.

SECTION II

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BENARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

The initiative for the establishment of a
Hindu University at Benaras came not from one, but
from three sources : one put forward by Mrs. Annie
Besant, another by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, and
the third by Maharaja Rameshwar Singh of
Darbhanga, President of the Bharata Mahamandalam.
The government of India had found all these
schemes far from practicable, and had encouraged
none at that time.[1]

But the movement for the establishment of an
institution which would impart religious, as well
as secular education to the Hindus of India dates
back to the 1890s, when Annie Besant took upon
herself this responsibility. [Here, we must keep
in mind that their conception of 'secular'
education may be also coloured by communalism. In
her eyes, the British education system weakened

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1.   Butler to Maharaja of Bikaner, 23 Aug.1911. In Ghosh
      (ed.), Development of University Education 1916-1920
      (New Delhi : Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational
      Studies (JNU), 1977), p.34.

Hindu social and religious institutions and it undermined patriotism and moral courage.[2] She wanted an institutional system which combined in itself "the best secular education of the western type to the best religious teaching of the eastern type."[3] Accordingly, the Central Hindu College (classes IX to XI only) was established in 1898. Its major aim ? To teach "the student to live and think as a true Hindu..."[4] Mrs. Besant wanted a national university, under national control. She felt that education imparted in the existing schools and colleges was not suited for India's purposes, and she wished that more emphasis be placed on Indian philosophy, religion and history.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the inclusion of religious instruction in the normal syllabus of the institution was an important aspect of her educational efforts. [It was so in the plans of Madan Mohan Malviya too.] In her view, "religion must be part of all education worth the name...".[5]

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2.   Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator (Gwalior : Swarup Publications) p.75.
3.   Ibid., p.78.
4.   Ibid., p.77.
5.   Mrs. Annie Besant, "The Necessity for Religious Education", Lecture at Madras, 26 Feb., 1908.

She wanted that each community take up the question of religious education for its own members.

She was happy at the establishment of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh. She optimistically hoped that, in the years to come, a Muslim University could grow out of it, and a Hindu University could grow out of the Benaras College. These two universities could then lead the national life of India.[6]

It is worth noting that she saw no anomaly in the fact that if two universities were required to lead the "national life" of India, then it might become two ways of life as represented by those two institutions.

When the scheme of the Hindu University was conceived by Pandit Malviya, he suggested that the Central Hindu College should merge with the proposed university.[7] The Central Hindu College established by Mrs. Besant, thus, in a way, formed

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6.   Annie Besant, "Education as a National Duty", lecture at Bombay, 9 Marc. 1903.
7.   Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator , p.101.

the nucleus of what later became the Benaras Hindu University.

The movement for the establishment of a Hindu University took concrete shape when in 1905, Madan Mohan Malviya submitted a proposal to the Government of India to establish a Hindu University at Benaras in which all arts and sciences should be taught mainly through the medium of the vernacular - Hindi. But, he was unable to pursue the matter for the next nearly three years. In December 1908, he again wrote[8] to the Government of India regarding his scheme. His intention was, if sufficient funds could be collected, to "begin humbly by founding three colleges only"[9] : (1) a Vedic College for training teachers of religion; (2) an Ayurvaidic College to train Vaidyas, i.e. medical practitioners; and (3) an Industrial College or a Technological Institution to teach the practical application of science to promote industries.

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8.   Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya to J.P. Hewett, 10 Dec.,
      1908, in Ghosh, Development of University Education
      1916-1920 p.30.
9.   Ibid.

There was almost unanimous opposition by the
local government to the idea of a Hindu
University. Sir J.P. Hewett (Lieutenant-Governor
of the United Provinces) wrote that relations
between Hindus and Muslims in 1911 were much worse
than in 1902. He feared that Aligarh and Benaras
would become centres of political activity and
increase the communal tension and antagonism in
the United Provinces. A Hindu University was more
undesirable than a Muslim one, but since the
Government had agreed to one, they could not
logically refuse the other.[10]

Meanwhile, the work of the founders to lay
down a tentative scheme for the university was
progressing. The first prospectus of the Hindu
University, before being made public, was, as V.A.
Sundaram informs us,[11] placed before the "Sanatana
Dharma Mahasabha" for its approval. Held at
Allahabad from 20-29 January 1906, this Mahasabha
was presided over by Paramhansa Parivrajakacharya
Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Govardhan Math.

10. Aparna Basu, The growth of Education and Political
    Development in India, 1898-1920, (Delhi : Oxford
    University Press, 1974), p.179.
11. V.A. Sundaram, Benaras Hindu University 1905-35
    (Benaras City : Tara Printing Works, 1936), p.(i).

The prospectus that was passed was unabashedly denominational, leaving no doubt in the minds of the readers that it was intended only for Hindu students. A lengthy look at this prospectus follows, for it gives us the very important clue as to what was going on in the minds of the founders of the Hindu University.

The aims of the University were set down as [12]

> " That a Hindu University be established at Benaras...
>
> (a) to train teachers of religion for the preservation and promotion of Sanatama Dharma which is inculcated by the Shrutis, Smritis and Puranas, and which recognizes 'varna' and 'asrama'"
>
> "(c) to advance and diffuse scientific and technical knowledge through the medium of Sanskrit and the Indian vernaculars."

The establishment of a 'Vedic College' (to give instruction in Vedas, Vedangas, Smritis, Darsanas, Itihasa and Puranas) was considered very important. Admission to this college was "regulated in accordance with the rules of varnasrama dharma". Apart from this college, "all

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12.   For details, see V.A. Sundaram, Ibid.

other colleges... would be open to students of all creeds and classes".

The prospectus thus seems to lay down that all other colleges - i.e. Ayurvaidic College, Department of Chemistry, Technological Department, Agricultural College, Linguistic College etc. - would not have any admission test on the basis of class or creed. But this in itself would in no way ensure that students of different creeds would take admission. This proposal was an ambitious scheme, but undoubtedly, was also limited in scope. This is further proved by the reference to residential quarters : "earnest endeavours will be made to revive the great ancient institution of 'bramhacharya'.... Promising students... will be admitted to the asramas of bramhacharis directly after their upanayana...".[13] The first vision of the Hindu University was thus openly sectarian.

By 1911, Malviya had commenced a tour of meetings and speeches to enlist support and monetary assistance for the university. He addressed gatherings on the advantages of a Hindu

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13.   Ibid., p. (xli)

University and petitioned leading wealthy maharajas and public figures, as well as the masses, for financial support. By August 1911, Malviya had promises of 15 lakhs already.[14]

Articles[15] appeared in the 'Abhiyudha' asking for donations for the Hindu University. From these articles, it seems that there was no doubt about the religious character of the university. "Religion has been the basis of progress since time immemorial, and no future progress is imaginable without religion... Malviya is establishing the Hindu University for the progress of the Hindus [i.e. through the propagation of their religion]."[16]

The middle classes realized that there would be religious and social-economic benefits from the university. But, in their eyes, the biggest benefit of all would be that "Hindu-ness would be instilled in every nerve [of the students]. The glory of the Hindu 'jati', Hindu religion and

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14. Harcourt Butler to J.H. Duboulay, 31 Aug.1911, in Ghosh, Development of University Education 1916-1920, p.36.
15. The articles were in Hindi. I have tried to translate them as accurately as possibe.
16. Abhiyudha, 21 April 1912.

Hindu culture will be imprinted on their hearts. Then no father will have reason to say-English education has spoilt our sons."[17]

Appeals for donations were worded thus :

"The cause of our mother-tongue Hindi will also be helped... we will have more supporters of the language all over the country... This university is meant for the children of all the Hindus. Why do you hesitate in giving financial aid for the protection of your country and religion ?[18]

Thus, we see that appeals for supporting the movement for the establishment of a Hindu University were made on an openly religious basis.

The Government, as is evident from correspondence between Mr. S.H. Butler and J.H. Duboulay, Esq, wanted to proceed very cautiously as the growing Hindu-Muslim feeling was making it apprehensive and nervous. Butler wrote that all his information was to the effect that "Hindus are being kindled by the Mohammedans and Mohammedans by Hindus... Hindu-Mohammedan feeling is steadily

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17.   Ibid.
18.   Abhiyudha, 25 April 1912.

growing."[19] The Maharaja of Darbhanga too wrote to

the Government to inform them "that the Hindu

movement has now gone too far to permit of

differential treatment between the two great

communities."[20] While there was very little

enthusiasm from the government's side for a Hindu

University, they could not refuse it, because they

had accepted the Muslim demand. On 12 October

1911, the Government indicated those certain

conditions on which it would insist if a Hindu

University was established.[21] Among them were :

> (1) The Hindus should approach the
> government in a body as the Mohammedans
> did;
>
> (2) The movement should be entirely
> educational;
>
> (3) There should be the same measure of
> government supervision and opportunity
> to give advice as in the case of the
> proposed university at Aligarh.

We see that in all government correspondence

on the subject of the Hindu University,

repeatedly, the two universities are sought to be

19. Harcourt Butler to J.H. Duboulay, 31 August 1911, in Ghosh, Development of University Education 1916-1920 p.36.
20. Maharaja Rameshwar Prasad of Darbhanga to S.H. Butler, 7 September 1911, in ibid., p.39.
21. Harcourt Butler to Maharaja of Darbhanga, 12 Oct., 1911, in ibid., p.40.

put on the same footing. The government is not willing to risk being accused of favouring any one particular university over the other. If we analyse the above three conditions of the government, we find that the first and the last indicate the government's wish to place both the schemes, i.e, of the Hindu and Muslim universities on an equal footing. Does the second condition indicate the government's fear that the movement for this Hindu university is not entirely secular/educational ? That it may spill over into strident religious teaching ? So much so, that it needs to be specifically pointed out ?

The leading figures of the movement constantly compared the progress of the establishment of their university with that of the university at Aligarh. The Honourable Rai Bahadur Sunder Lal wrote to Sir Harcourt Butler (Education Member, Viceroy's Council) thanking him for "placing the proposal to found a Hindu University on the same footing as the proposed Muhammedan University."[22]

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22. Rai Bahadur Sundar Lal to Harcourt Butler, 19 Oct. 1911, In Ibid., p.41.

In 1912, a "Committee of Management of the Hindu University Society" was formed. It was to prepare a Draft Bill for the University. Its membership comprised a large number of distinguished individuals. it was presided over by Maharaja Rameshwar Singh of Darbhanga and other members included Mrs. Annie Besant, Madan Mohan Malviya, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Motilal Nehru, Bhagwan Das, Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner etc.[23] The Draft Bill was submitted to the government on 30 October 1912.[24] Finally, on 10 July 1913, after prolonged discussions, the Government of India submitted the proposals to the Honourable Marquess of Crewe, Secretary of State for India.[25] Outlining the case for both the Hindu as well as Muslim universities, it was felt that "under right guidance, they are experiments which ought to be tried. Secular education has not produced results so satisfactory that an effort to combine it with

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23. For details, see Sundaram, <u>Benaras Hindu University, 1905-1935</u>, pp.80-114.
24. For details, see Education Department, A Proceedings, July 1913, Nos.1-3.
25. No.19 of 1913, Government of India, Department of Education (Education), 10 July 1913, in Ghosh, <u>Development of University Education 1916-1920</u> pp.55-61.

religious   instruction...should be   discouraged."[26]
Nor could   the government   overlook the enthusiasm
which had ·resulted in   promises of   subscriptions
which amounted to a crore of rupees.[27]

The Secretary   of State's approval came on 24
June   1914,[28] but   final sanction   to   proceed   was
still not   granted. To. ensure the   Government   of
India about   the aims; of the Hindu University, the
Maharaja of   Darbhanga   wrote   that   it   would
endeavour to   meet the educational requirements of
the entire   Hindu population   in   the   matter   "of
providing religious   education in combination with
the   secular."[29] The. aim   of   the   Benaras   Hindu
University was   "to provide   for the   wants of the
entire   Hindu   population   in   India   on   its   own
special   lines."[30]

When government   approval   had   not   come   by
November,   1914,   the   pressure   for   the   Hindu
University became so great that the Viceroy sent a

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26.   Ibid., p.57.
27.   Ibid., p.57.
28.   Telegram, Secretary of State for India to Viceroy, 24
       June 1914, in ibid., p.63.
29.   Maharaja Bahadur Sir Rameshwar Singh to Harcourt
       Butler, 14 Nov., 1914, in ibid., p.69.
30.   Ibid., p.69.

telegram to the Secretary of State requesting that "in view of the general political situation at the present time and the political importance of removing this question from the arena of controversy",[31] the general terms recommended should be accepted.

Government approval was necessary because plans for national education could not materialize without it. Parents were unwilling to send their children to a university whose degrees would not be recognized by the government. Furthermore, subscriptions for university would not be forthcoming either.

Harcourt Butler, as Education Member, confessed (on the occasion of introducing the Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council, on 22 March 1915) that the government was taking grave risks, "risks graver than any government ought to face".[32]

The government felt, as is clear from correspondence between government officials, that

31.   Telegram No.862-P., Viceroy to Secretary of State, 30
       Nov., 1914, in ibid., p.74.
32.   Ibid., see fn.24,p.22.

sanctioning the Benaras Hindu University on denominational lines was a 'risk'. In what sense does the government mean 'risk' ? Was this feeling induced by the openly pro-Hindu attitude of the promoters, and the constant comparing, in a competitive way, to the proposed Muslim University at Aligarh ? Nevertheless, the Benaras Hindu University Act was finally passed on 1st October 1915. It came into operation on 1st April 1916.

CONCLUSION

The movements for the establishment of both a Muslim and Hindu University were inspired by noble sentiments. They sought to create character as the "only foundation strong enough to bear the weight of a national civilization".[1] The founders of both the Universities sought to inculcate the qualities of "loyalty, patriotism, physical courage, self-respect; civic qualities inclusive of self-control, self-sacrifice, order and discipline, love and respect...".[2] Their ideal was a personality that would "do well in college and school, in examination,... in town and home. Let their character stand well in the public eye...."[3] Run on 'national' lines, these universities were created not in opposition to, but standing apart from, the existing system of government collegiate education.

Government policy had all along stressed the backwardness of Muslims qua Muslims, thus in the

1.   Yudhistera Kumar, Annie Besant as an Indian Educator (Gwalior, Swarup Publications,   ), p.78.
2.   Ibid., p.78.
3.   Ibid., p.85.

process emphasizing their separativeness from
Hindus. No doubt Muslims were backward in higher
education in some provinces, and it was in their
interests, and of the country as a whole, to
encourage educational efforts. The point that is
arguable is the covert aim of the colonial
government. Institutions such as the Aligarh
Muslim University and Benaras Hindu University
generated a consciousness for a separate and
independent identity for Muslims and Hindus. [It
must be added here that, in the background of the
Hindi-Urdu controversy, by the end of the 19th
century, these two language had already come to be
identified with particular communities, i.e.,
Hindi with resurgent Hindu nationalism and Urdu
"as the instrument for preservation of Muslim
self-identity."[4]] Government correspondence is
replete with examples which prove that the
official sanction for these two universities was
motivated by political reasons. For instance, even
in the case of affiliation, the "political

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4.   Krishna Kumar, "Quest for self-identity : Cultural
      Consciousness and Education in Hindi Region, 1880-
      1950", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.XXV, No.23,
      June 9, 1990, p.1247.

necessity"[5] of such a step was stressed. The
"political importance of permitting the Mussalmans
to have a university,... on the lines of the
Benaras Hindu University..."[6] was reiterated. The
decision to thus sanction the two universities was
purely political on the part of the colonial
government.

The founding of these Universities entailed a
definite conception of the community which they
would serve. The efforts to win government, and
more important, public approval, appeals for
financial aid - all this involved a certain
conception of the people whom they were supposed
to represent and benefit. The founders of both the
universities had complete confidence that these
existed a community whose interests and future
must be protected through the means of these two
universities.

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5.   Telegram P., No.122, Hardinge to Crewe, 24 June, 1912,
      in Ghosh Development of University Education 1916-1920
      (New Delhi : Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational
      Studies (JNU), 1977), p.122.
6.   Kunwar Maharaj Singh (Secretary to Government of
      United Provinces, Education Department) to Secretary
      to Government of India, in ibid., p.180.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION, COMMUNAL IDEOLOGY & POLITICS

Any discussion concerning communal ideology and politics must first incorporate a discussion on religion to be relevant. Religion is the sine qua non of communal ideology and is used to garb it. It is when the religious is generalized in everyday life and activities that it comes to be equated with a particular identity. It is this identification that leads to a community's self-definition and to the demarcation of its own parameters. Often, such activity within a community leads also to the emergence of sharp distinctions between it and other communities. Such activity may not be communal, but so long as it is based on a foundation of religion, it has the potential to be used for communal propaganda and ideology.

It may not be wrong to say that religion itself has two sides - one side is secular and the other is non-secular and can be easily communalised. The former is the realm of individual faith, which is highly personal. The

latter is that aspect of religion which concerns us as social beings, which is the public manifestation of our ideas, set of values and beliefs, sense of culture and socialization process. Religion in this context, in Geertz's useful terminology, is a 'cultural system'. It is more than a mere ideology; it can be called a system of symbols, ideas and institutions which "synthesized a people's ethos, the tone, character and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood, and their world view; the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order."[1]

Most cultural conceptions are stored in the subconscious mind. And religion is a part of culture. The effectiveness of using religious symbolism is greater for its being subconscious, for "shared experiences of faith have a taken-for-granted quality."[2] Meaning is created by moral

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1.   Clifford Geertz, quoted in Sandra B. Freitag, "Sacred Symbol as Mobilizing Ideology : The North Indian Search for a 'Hindu' Community", Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol.22, 1980, p.600.
2.   Satish Saberwal, "Elements of Communalism", Main Stream, 21 and 22 May, 1981, p.4.

experience, i.e. people _feel_ "brothers-in-faith" as they accept the implicit symbolic order.

Nationalism too is a cultural artefact of a particular kind. Once it is created, it becomes "modular...[i.e.] capable of being transplanted with varying degrees of self-consciousness to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations."[3]

How is nationalism created ? In the educational thought of Mrs. Annie Besant, Madan Mohan Malviya and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, education was the key to arousing patriotic and nationalist feelings. When students were taught about the past glory, the unique civilization and greatness of their country and its achievements in history and religion etc., they would feel proud to be Indians. They would then be motivated by the desire to restore their country to its past position in the world. Religious education was the only foundation strong enough to inculcate nationalist sentiments. It alone taught "man to

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3. Benedict Anderson, _Imagined Communities_, (London : Verso Editions & NLB, 1983), p.14.

feel his unity with his fellows;... unless the
isolation brought about by antagonistic self-
interest can be destroyed by religion, nationality
will forever remain a dream."[4] One of the ideals
of their plan was to make their students realize
that, whatever their religion, they were the
builders of modern India.

These thinkers did not analyse that the
teaching of religion through education could
result in, besides nationalism, communalism too.
There was no recognition of the fact that their
vision could lead to a communal pattern of
thinking. Later in the nationalist movement, Sir
Aurobindo was also to identify the nation with the
religions ideal of 'Mother' - 'Matri bhoomi' :
"The two ideals were "inseparably linked because
only through religion could the masses understand
the nation and give it their loyalty and energy."[5]
(It can be pointed out here that such an ideal

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4. Besant Spirit Series, Annie Besant : Builder of New
   India (Madras : Theosophical Publishing House, 1942),
   p.376.
5. Charles Heimsath, Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social
   Reform (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1964),
   p.313.

could scarcely appeal to Muslims, as it clearly proclaimed a Hindu nation.)

Tilak was another nationalist leader who used religion as a means of mass mobilization. He believed that 'Ganapati' festival and figures like Shivaji were part of our national heritage, and that people were neglecting this aspect of their culture. Moreover, these were powerful concepts to mobilize people who were otherwise apathetic to political appeals. But they also served to alienate that section of the people who could not relate to the symbolism Tilak infused into those concepts.

There has never been agreement on a clear cut, yet all-embracing definition of nationalism. Heimsath defines it as "the desire of Indians to identify themselves with large groups with which they had something in common. The larger community might be based on a commonly held status in society, a common cultural and linguistic heritage, similar religious views or customs, as

well as shared ideals for social reform or
aspirations for political advancement."[6]

Any definition of nationalism must be based
on a given definition of 'nation', and would thus
vary with varying concepts of 'nation'. This can
form the core of an entire discussion by itself,
which will not be relevant here. But, without
delving too deep into the topic, it can be pointed
out that for certain educationalist thinkers and
nationalist leaders nationalism meant an all-India
force which would rise above regional and communal
loyalties - (example, Annie Besant, Sir Syed Ahmad
Khan, Dayanand Saraswati, etc.), while for some
others it signified "a latent force among Indians
who recognized their common heritage as a single
religions community,"[7] and also the
"differentiation of the interest of the particular
community from other communities."[8]

What finally emerges is that, in the late
19th and early 20th centuries, religion was
inseparably linked to the idea of nationalism, as

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6.   Ibid., p.131.
7.   Ibid., p.139.
8.   Bankim Chandra, quoted in Ibid., p.138.

well as education. It was with this motivation in mind that the Aligarh Muslim University and Benaras Hindu University were founded.

Over a period of time, however, these two centres of education started developing into centres of politics also. Education increased the number of potential applicants for jobs. Professor Bipan Chandra locates the spur to communalism in the 19th century competition for jobs, in the colonial universe of small opportunities in a potentially expanding social scale. In such a situation, if claims to one's community's backwardness could confer additional leverage, these were eagerly brought into play.[9] Then, religious symbols may be and were used merely because of their mobilization potential. The symbolic order of one religion set sit apart from another. This "lays the basis for communal identity."[10] By projecting a sacred symbol into the lives of people, and exploiting sentiment regarding a fundamental religious symbol, a

9.   For details, see Bipan Chandra, Communalism in Modern India.
10.   Satish Saberwal, "Elements of Communalism", Mainstream, 21 and 28 May, 1981, p.3.

"strong sense of community is generated."[11] When the communal issue is raised, it clouds every other issue - political, social, economic and even religions itself.[12]

One powerful factor helping in the creating of a 'community identity' was the print medium. The development of the print medium as a means of communication now made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways. Education had empowered men not only familiarity with a script, but also the power to project meanings and now, it was possible to share ideas through printing. "Fellow readers were now connected through print; they formed in their secular, particular, visible, invisibility the embryo of a nationally imagined community."[13]

It is generally believed that the intelligentsia were central to the rise of

11. Anand A. Yang, "Sacred Symbol and Sacred Space in Rural India : Community Mobilization in the Anti-Cow Killing Riot of 1893", Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol.22, 1980, p.579.
12. W.C. Smith, Modern Islam in India : A Social Analysis (London : Victor Gollaniz, 1946).
13. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, p.47.

nationalism in colonial territories, and its vanguard role is derived from its literacy and bilingualism - which meant "access to modern western culture in the broadest sense, and in particular, to the models of nationalism, nation-ness and nation-state produced elsewhere in the course of the 19th century."[14] In short, it allowed the intellectuals and thinkers to <u>say</u> to their fellow-speakers, as also to the people who read them, that 'we' can be like 'them'.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, the Arya Samaj played a significant role in deepening this consciousness of community through the propagation of Hindi as a Pan-Indian language. The idea of using Hindi as the medium for the propagation of religious and social reform was first given to Dayanand Saraswati by Keshab Chandra Sen, the Brahmo Samaj leader, during their meeting in 1872 in Calcutta. "The tendency towards revivalism was inherent among many writers and propagators of Hindi in the 19th century."[15] This

14. Ibid., p.107.
15. Krishna Kumar, "Quest for Self-Identity : Cultural Consciousness and Education in the Hindi Region, 1880-1950", Economic and Political Weekly, No.23, 9 June, 1990, p.1251.

was fed by the Urdu-Hindi divide, as the two languages increasingly became associated with Islam and Hinduism respectively. Associates of the "Nagari Pracharini Sabha" (i.e. Conference for the Propagation of Devanagari Script) voiced the perspective of Hindi supporters, and the 'Anjuman Tarrakkiye Urdu' represented the supporters of Urdu.[16] Lala Lajpat Rai noted in his autobiography that the most powerful influence on his character was that of the Urdu-Hindi divide. "This conflict taught me the first lesson of Hindu communality."[17]

Thus, language too could be, and was being used, to invoke religious symbols and configurations which were associated with particular religions or communities. This assumes importance with regard to education. In the educational thought of the early educationists, religion had occupied a significant position and was not seen as counterpoised to the study of science and technology at all. But by the early decades of the 20th century, religious instruction

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16. Ibid., p.1250.
17. Lala Lajpat Rai, quoted in Ibid., p.1253.

in education was being used as a vehicle of cultural separatism. Education had become the victim of religious and cultural schisms, and now hardly fulfilled the secularizing role ascribed to it.

The creation of the only 'Hindu' university in the Hindi heartland now became laden with its own symbolic significance, as did the establishment of the Muslim University. Both were "modern institutions with a religio-cultural agenda"[18] and were successful community projects. To have been educated at Benaras became a distinctive new status, that of a "modern Indian cultural consciousness which no other university could supposedly give."[19] The University at Aligarh too generated a strong feeling of solidarity among its students and a sense of oneness. At the same time this "generated a consciousness for a separate and independant status for the Muslims."[20] It implies that the

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18.   Ibid., p.1248.
19.   Ibid., p.1248.
20.   Aparna Basu, The growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898-1920, (Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1974), p.173.

feeling of unity stressed their separateness from Hindus.

To conclude the above discussion, we can say that solidarity was now being fostered by association with fundamental symbols, which in turn encouraged a sense of group identity amongst both the Hindu and Muslim communities. This had two simultaneous consequences. Firstly, among the Hindus, a sense of separation developed vis-a-vis Muslims, and vice-versa. Secondly, among both the communities, a sense of separativeness developed vis-a-vis the British. It would not be amiss to say that, in this process of self-definition, not only were parameters drawn around certain communities, but boundaries were also redrawn in relation to other groups or communities. By the 20th century, these community identities had taken on a reality which would be expressed in a newly developed vocabulary or idiom, drawing heavily on religious symbols. But this also meant that this idiom should be so expressed that it could accommodate a wide variety beliefs and practices. Thus, in this process, it became disassociated from its original significance. "Once that divorce

was complete, it became possible, in the 1920's and 1930's, to infuse a political meaning into the new real communal identity."[21]

The colonial government too did not hesitate in fostering such divisions. David Page, in his book Prelude to Partition, [22] suggests that by introducing electoral institutions in India, the British Raj sought not to absorb those on the outside trying to get in, but attempted "to extend and improve the existing system of control by a new method."[23] By introducing elections at the provincial level, the colonial government encouraged competition among local, and national leaders for office. This often took the form of communal campaigns to gain advantage over one's opponents as the Raj had introduced an "important manipulative device, i.e., the distribution of seats between different interests in the council."[24] Thus, as Page analyses, "The

21. Sandra B. Treitag, "Sacred Symbol as Mobilizing Ideology : The North-Indian Search for a 'Hindu' Community", Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol.22, 1980, p.597.
22. David Page, Prelude to Partition : The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932, (Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1982).
23. Ibid., p.12.
24. Ibid., p.32.

distribution of seats ensured, therefore, that the government was in a position to extract the maximum advantage from its enormous powers of patronage. Implicit in the whole structure... was the maxim that cooperation with the government was a pre-condition for constitutional success."[25]

While it is correct that the colonial government did emphasize and exploit schisms in Indian polity and society, to hold this attitude of the government as solely responsible for future developments on the political front would be giving an unbalanced view. One cannot ignore the potency of the contradictions inherent in Indian society and polity, and neither can the central contradiction between Indian nationalism and British imperialism be overlooked. However, by the 1930's, relations between the communities were thoroughly polarized.[26]

The decade of 1930s saw a steady increase in communal polarization. Internal competition and contradictions, government attitudes and policies - all served to accentuate existing differences.

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25. Ibid., p.35.
26. Ibid., p.130.

This became clear when, in 1948, the Ministry of Education proposed to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act (1920) and the Benaras Hindu University Act (1915).[27] Firstly, "The purpose of the amending Act or Acts would be to seek to remove the words 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' from the names of the Universities...."[28] Secondly, the Government of India also proposed to make the following amendments :[29]

> (1) Sub-Section (2) of Section 9 of Benaras Hindu University Act (1915), which read : "No person not being a Hindu shall become, or be appointed a member of any court other than the First Court, unless he has been a member of the First Court."

> (2) Proviso to sub-section (1) of Section 23, of Aligarh Muslim University Act (1920), which read : "...provided that no person other than a Muslim shall be a member thereof."

The Minister of Education, Tara Chand, wrote[30] to the respective Vice-Chancellors of the two Universities. 'In view of the objective of the

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27. File Number F.83-30/48 G.3, Ministry of Education, Government of India.
28. Letter from Humayun Kabir (Ministry of Education) to Ministry of Law, 10th July 1948, Ibid., p.1.
29. Correspondence, (Ministry of Education), Government of India, Ibid., p.1.
30. Tara Chand, Minister of Education to Vice-Chancellors of AMU and BHU, Correspondence, 9 July 1948, File No.F.83-30/48, G3,p.3.

Indian Union to be a secular democratic state, he thought it desirable that, without interfering in the personal convictions of any individual, the two universities should avoid being designated by communal qualifications.[31]

There were protests and murmurs of dissent in both Aligarh and Benaras. In Benaras, Hindus in general, and Hindu Sabha workers in particular, were reported to "vehemently criticize and condemn the decision of the government to change the name of the Hindu University, Benaras, and not daring to change the nomenclature of the Muslim University in Aligarh..."[32] The Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, "who was agreeable to a change of name"[33], wished for sentimental reasons that it was not. Furthermore, he felt that "the proposed changes would not be acceptable to Aligarh if they did not apply to Benaras also."[34]

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31.   Ibid.
32.   Extract from Central Intelligence Officers, Intelligences Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, 5 Aug. 1948, Ibid., p.13.
33.   Ashfaque Hussain to Secretary, Ministry of Education, File No.F.83-30/48 G.3, Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1 July 1950, p.22.
34.   Ibid., p.22.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor of BHU also wrote[35] to
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (who was the Minister for
Education) urging him "respectfully and earnestly
[that] the proposed bill may kindly be dropped."[36]

Opposition against this step of the
Government of India did not subside. The communal
legacy of the foregoing decades could not be over-
ridden so easily. As late as 1951, Tara Chand
commented that "unless the bills ar regarded as
non-controversial, there can hardly be any chance
of their reaching the Statute Book."[37] Finally,
the outcry against any change in name was too much
to ignore for the government. In a communique to
the cabinet, the Ministry of Education submitted
that "while it is not necessary to change the name
of the universities, the disqualifications imposed
by the Universities Act on non-Hindus and non-
Muslims being members of the court should be
removed."[38]

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35. Pt.Govind Malviya to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
    (Education Minister), 9 August 1948, Ibid., p.29.
36. Ibid.
37. Tara Chand to Ajit Prasad Jain (Minister for
    Rehabilitation), 4 June 1951, File No.F.27-1/51 G.III,
    Ministry of Education, p.86.
38. Note for the Cabinet, Ibid., p.9.

In conclusion, one can say that it is important that the distinction between 'religious education' and 'education about religions' be made clearly. While the former can be defined as being largely concerned with the teaching of the tenets and practices of a particular religious group, generally in the form in which it interprets or recognizes them; The latter can be defined as a study of religions and religious thought from a broad point of view. When Maulana Abul Kalam Azad opined that "in India, we cannot have an intellectual mould without religion",[39] he was referring to the latter category. But, unfortunately, religious propaganda to whip up communal frenzy has become a common occurrence in today's political scene. The Universities at Aligarh and Benaras are not immune to this, and have witnessed communal violence in recent years. But communal violence per se implies that communal ideology has been at work in those places for a long time. The two universities are not communal, but the circumstances of their conception,

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39. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Proceedings of Central Board of Education, 14th Meeting, 13-15 January 1948, in Biswas and Agrawal, Development of Education in India (New Delhi : Concept Publishing Company, 1986), p.78.

establishment and subsequent growth make them
vulnerable to communal tactics, and their
potential communalization.

CONCLUSION

Communal ideas are propagated not only consciously, but also unconsciously through the use of certain symbols, certain interpretations of historical events, or even events of day to day life. It is not as a 'doctrine' but as 'culture' that potentially communal ideas are disseminated. And they become such an integral part of the mentality of some sections of society that they hardly notice them. They become the seemingly natural responses to certain situations.

Education, in addition to socializing at home or outside and other factors, plays an important part in shaping such responses. Education shapes our values and concepts, as well as our perceptions of what men ought to be.

Such a conception and concern about the future citizens of India motivated the founders of the AMU and BHU. Benedict Anderson argues that "nationalism... today commands profound emotional

legitimacy."[1] It is possible, according to him, to now "think the nation".[2]

By extending that logic, we can state that it is also possible to think of a 'community', whether of fellow-citizens, co-religionists or others.

Both Aligarh Muslim University and Benaras Hindu University were founded on this assumption of 'community'. Their founders had complete confidence in the fact that there existed a community - 'backward' Muslims in Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's thought; and, Hindus, who needed to study their religion, in Mrs.Besant's and Madan Mohan Malviya's thought. Nevertheless, a community whose interests must be protected.

The scheme of residential, tightly regulated teaching universities "created a self-contained coherent universe of experience."[3] Moreover, the creation of Hindu and Muslim universities generated a "territorially-specific imagined

1. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities (London : Verso Editions and NLB, 1983), p.13.
2. Ibid., p.28.
3. Ibid., p.111.

reality",[4] as well as their own kind of cohesion, solidarity and unity. This could serve as the foundation on which political elements were to enter, in later years.

Language is a very significant component in the imagining of the community. Its "most important attribute is its capacity for generating imagined communities."[5] In India, the official nationalism of the British Government aimed at creating a class of natives which was Indian in race and blood, and British in everything else. This was sought to be achieved through education with English as the medium of instruction, and the importance of an English-type education in securing government jobs.

It will be pertinent to analyse that the promoters of the two universities were using language in a similar vein. By the promotion of Arabic and Urdu in Aligarh, and that of Sanskrit and Hindi in Benaras, their founders were probably trying to actuate loyalty to a community of people speaking the same language.

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4.   Ibid., p.111.
5.   Ibid., p.122.

The University at Aligarh was founded on the
assumption that it would be a tangible
construction of the aspirations of its founders.
The building, the campus, the idea itself came to
be equated with Muslim progress. It was inevitable
that in the years to come it would be identified
with Muslim political aspirations too. In the
subsequent years, it created its own solidarity,
its own unifying ideology. Yet, it rose over and
above itself to include all Muslim brethren. The
rationale for Aligarh was bound up with the
relationship between being Muslim and acquiring
power in British India. To recover their rightful
position (which they once occupied as rulers) they
would have to cultivate new knowledge and new
skills. Their sense of powerlessness would then
vanish, as education was a means of acquiring a
sense of power under colonial rule. Equally
importantly, through this university, they would
also develop "a new level of consolidation as a
'quam'."[6]

6.   David Lelyveld, Aligarh's First Generation (New Jersey
      : Princeton University Press, 1978), p.317.

The University at Benaras was founded on the assumption that the education of Hindu students had so far been deficient in religious teaching.

The Benaras Hindu University was the culmination of the aspirations of its founders and promoters to nourish and educate the Hindu youth of India. The mould they sought to create was that of the good citizen, a devout man, a good public character. The university became the symbol of a collective Hindu effort to reorganize education from a new approach. The idea, in the years to come, became associated with a vibrant Hindu resurgence and search for self-identity, which was increasingly being couched in religious terms.

We can therefore conclude that the establishment of AMU and BHU was a function of time, place and circumstance. In their social objectives and programme of instruction, they reflected the experiences, the hopes, fears and aspirations of their founders at that particular point in history.

Finally, it would be wrong, at that point of time, to ascribe communal motives to the founders

of the two universities. There is no doubt that both the institutions were established for particular communities and their founders did justify this action too. But, this is no reason to say that they were sectarian. They were 'national' - though in a very limited sense. They were individual attempts at national education as their founders saw it.

Over the years, they have come to be identified with a 'community'. Such a projection itself is erroneous, but it is an attempt to pinpoint identity; and the projection continues nevertheless. This is what makes the two universities not communal, but rather 'communal potential' in the long term. Their founders were only generating a logic. Its consequences were not known to them.

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