

**Education, Islam and Modernity: A Case Study of
Pakistan**

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study of a small non-government organisation (NGO) in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The NGO's main aim is to modernise education in Pakistan in order to effect modernisation throughout that society. The NGO identified two main factors that inhibit the modernisation of education in particular and the modernisation of Pakistan in general: the traditional Islamic or madrasa schools and the government school system. The primary objective of this thesis is therefore an interrogation of the claims made by the NGO about both the madrasa and the government school systems being barriers to modernisation. That investigation, in turn, necessitated an analysis of the wider social, political, ideological and historical issues that both emanate from and inform the two school systems. What emerges in moving from the micro issues of the two school systems to the macro issues of the geo-political situation in Pakistan is the confrontation between the West and Islam. The direct influence of this historical conflict on the nature of the two school systems - and their own role in the confrontation - is therefore a major theme in this thesis.

Part One of the thesis explores the form and structure of the research methodology and presents the research findings. In these three chapters, the background to the study and the theoretical framework are established. The six chapters comprising Part Two are concerned with the analyses and debates that emerge from the research and which allow for the discussion of possibilities, namely: the history of Pakistan; the

situation of the class-based structure of that country; and the ideological construction of Islam.

This thesis proposes that the NGO is inevitably involved in failure. This assertion is made given that the NGO's objective of modernising what it perceives as an oppressive and static educational system is examined within the complexity of Pakistan's geo-political situation.

Prologue

This thesis is about the clash between Islam and Western modernity as that confrontation is played out in the education system of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. There is also a story to this thesis, which has necessitated this prologue.

In 1997, when I was conducting research in Karachi for this case study on education in Pakistan, there was little interest amongst academic colleagues, friends and family about such a topic. Indeed, several people advised me to study something ‘more relevant’ or ‘more conducive to what academic support you will find in New Zealand’. To me, the research was always relevant because it was personally interesting. An intrinsically interesting subject was my main criterion for choosing what I knew I must spend the next several years investigating and writing on.

I laboured away at the thesis for three years, while working in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, two locations that are very much removed from the environment of the thesis. My interest and personal commitment were maintained through an intensive email correspondence with educators in Karachi, who had become advisors and, importantly, friends and confidants. But there was always a sense of isolation, as Islam and Pakistan remained ‘foreign’ and uninviting to most people around me. I realised how little people knew about both subjects. Even literature on the area being studied was difficult to obtain. As I became more and more obsessed with the topic, I

learned to keep quiet, in order to avoid being thought ‘a bore’, for it was not a subject of interest to most people.

The thesis was largely written by September 11, 2001. I was in New Zealand on that momentous day, to meet in the morning with my supervisors at the University of Auckland, to discuss the final editing of the thesis. In the late afternoon I was scheduled to give a class on Education in Pakistan. From my experience of the past few years, I was worried that the subject might be too abstract, too remote, if not ‘irrelevant’ to the students.

People now say that the events of September 11 2001 changed the world. Personally, I think the events on that day, and in those subsequent months of the “War on Terrorism”, were but a continuation of what has been occurring between West/Islam since the mid-seventh century, when Christianity and Islam had their first encounter.

On a very personal level, as those events relate to this story and this thesis, there was a momentous change in the way people responded when they heard what my doctorate was about. On September 11, an Auckland woman said: “I thought Islam was a country until today”. On the same day, a professor at the university told me, with great conviction, “ My, you certainly have a stimulating and relevant thesis topic. People will be interested to hear what you have to say. You will have to publish.”

Suddenly, my thesis had come in from the cold. However, this presented a slight problem. After three years of writing and at near-completion, the events of

September 11 meant that my data and theorising might be suddenly ‘outdated’. How was I to incorporate such extraordinary events, as those that occurred in the attacks on New York and Washington, into my thesis? Did the events mean I would have to go back to the drawing board? I had spent years analysing Islam and its education system. Had the world changed so much from September 10, as the commentators were constantly telling us, that my thesis needed a new intellectual framework? Was I to have to start all over again and view it through this lens of reaction to the attacks on America? Suddenly, every publication had information about Islam, Islamic education, the confrontation between the West and Islam. Everything I had spent so much time and trouble accessing through international libraries, was now available in TIME and the Guardian Weekly. What had been esoteric knowledge to most people, was now uniform.

I decided that the thesis was to remain as it was: pre-September 11. Only the thesis Conclusion would reflect the events, as the draft had been submitted and it was now too late to make changes. The most important factor, other than that most pragmatic one of having essentially finished the thesis, was the realisation, from having spent three years writing it, that the events of September 11 were nothing new. Not, anyway, in the ‘big picture’ way. As an Egyptian commentator stated in the Guardian Weekly: “The events in America are terrible, but they are not unexpected”. This comment is pertinent here, for it illuminates the very base of the pre-September 11 significance of the thesis’s main supposition: for 1,500 years there has been a major rift, a clash, between the two civilisations of Islam/West. That America was attacked so spectacularly, does not diminish the historical continuance of such inter-civilisational conflict. The thesis stands, as relevant now as it was before the attacks

on America, for the same conditions applied then as they do now. It is just that now the Islamic world knows more about the West and the West knows more about the Islamic world.

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Part I

This thesis consists of two parts. Part I contains the first three chapters, which introduce the subject, the scope and the research methodology of the thesis.

Chapter One is concerned with introducing the reader to the thesis's central issue, which is the response of a small non-government organization to the situation of education in contemporary Pakistan. Who is this group? What are its members' convictions and what ideologies inform them? Chapter One also explains the narrative approach adopted, in that this thesis tells a story. The theoretical approach and major themes are also detailed in this chapter.

Chapter Two explores the form and essence of the research methodology, which is based on case study research. Chapter Three presents the empirical data collected in Karachi. Interviews, responses to questionnaires and observations are presented, in order to add context to the thesis's scope and subject. Part I is, therefore, used to set the scene and provide the theoretical and empirical foundations for the thesis.

In Part II, the main emphasis is the interrogation of the assertions made by the organization under investigation – the non-government organization known as The Karachi Project. In this regard, interpretations of the issues involved in education in Pakistan are scrutinized in order to uncover the inherently complex relationship between education, Islam and modernity.

Chapter One

Constructing a Case

Introduction

The focus of this thesis is an investigation into the Karachi Project, a small non-government organisation (NGO) seeking to modernise educational practice in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. At the same time, the thesis aims to demonstrate how two micro issues, which the NGO perceive as ‘holding back’ modern education in the Islamic Republic, are aspects of wider macro issues. The thesis maintains that an understanding of the historical, socio-cultural and ideological forces at play in Pakistan requires critical analysis in order to articulate the specific motives that the NGO perceive as being the barriers to both educational progress and modernisation in their country.

A Profile: The Karachi Project ¹

This profile introduces the Karachi Project for it is around this group of educationalists that the case study that constitutes this thesis revolves. The Karachi Project was founded in 1987 by educationalists who sought: “the amelioration of inadequate education in Pakistan”, as the Project’s director explained to me in an interview in November 1997. A deep concern for the desperate situation of education

¹ The name of the organisation has been changed to protect identities.

in Pakistan was what motivated the group's members "to act for what we feel is a very sorry situation in our country, that of terrible education which leads to lack of modernisation and progress generally." I became involved with the Karachi Project in 1997 when the New Zealand Government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) contracted me to evaluate a MFAT-funded, integrated curriculum project being trialed by the Karachi Project. While conducting the MFAT-funded evaluation I became interested in the Project and saw the potential for a doctoral thesis.

An understanding of who the Project members are is important to the story of this thesis. At the same time, due to the social and political pressures that surround and inform the lives of the people in this group, I am mindful of maintaining discretion so I shall use only generalities when describing them. As this thesis will demonstrate, there are major political, ideological and social pressures that the Karachi Project members are subjected to in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Although the members gave me ethical approval and expressed their goodwill towards my conducting research, in the knowledge that publications may arise from it, it is my desire to maintain a level of abstraction and avoidance of personal detail.

The fifteen or so core members of the Project were all middle class to wealthy people. There was only one paid member other than secretarial staff, the rest being volunteers who, amongst other activities, wrote educational materials, conducted research, and provided teacher training. As the data I gathered began to build into a loose bundle of ideas, which over time coalesced into a more focused research project, I began to see theory emerging from the social realities I was observing. Intrinsic to this, and of importance to the substance of this thesis, was the socio

economic background of the Project members. These urban, middle class, secular Karahinis asserted that a democratic base is necessary in order to build a modern state with a functioning political economy. The members asserted that without that base there was little chance of a modern state. “Like you enjoy” was an often quoted phrase by the project members in reference to what the members perceive as being the freedoms and liberties of the West which they further characterised as being secular, democratic, modern and progressive.

I was involved in long discussions with the members about all aspects of their lives. I stayed with them in their large and beautiful homes. I travelled to rural schools and other projects with them during the consultancy. I learned that their children studied in the best schools in Karachi; all of them sent their children to the United States or the United Kingdom for their university education, as indeed the members themselves had, for the most part, been sent. One day a member said as if to explain everything: “But of course we [members of the Project] are mostly Mohajir².” Mohajir are Pakistanis who fled from the area around Bombay during Partition in 1947. There are 30,000,000 Mohajir in Pakistan, the majority of whom live in Sindh Province of which Karachi is the capital. “Yes, you are right,” the same informant added:

...when you ask if we Mohajir are different [from other Pakistani minorities]. We have a strong desire for Western education, for being more modern. And we are more likely to be well off or at least doing well in Pakistan. Sometimes we are resented for that, especially by the Sindhis who were here [before Partition]. We are immigrants from India and that is important, being descendants of Indians especially Bombay-area Indians. This is very important.

² Mohajir is both singular and plural form.

Another member added:

We are Pakistanis and we are Muslims. Our parents were Indians. How many influences do we have? We seem to have made our own culture. Mohajir culture.

Wealthy, urban, Western-educated ³, secular, modern, Muslim, Mohajir; the list of what constituted the Karachi Project members was ever long and complex – and the more intriguing for that. I began to ask myself various questions: In what way does Islam inform these people's lives? How can they be secular and Muslim at the same time? Is “secular Muslim” an oxymoron?

What the Project members wanted in their education reforms, and what the New Zealand Government and other Western aid agencies had been funding them to design and implement, was a form of education that the members described as ‘progressive’ and ‘modern’. The term ‘modern’ began to grow in importance in my mind the longer I researched and analysed the Karachi Project and their agenda. When I asked the question: “What is it you really want for Pakistan?”, they replied uniformly: “modernisation”. This term was to be pivotal for the way I subsequently theorised my data. As a group of individuals the members of the Karachi Project appeared to me to have many more commonalities than differences. With this realisation there was in my mind a ‘casing’, a grouping that permitted me to generate ideas from that loose bundle of data I had been gathering on all aspects of the Project.

³ In this thesis I use the term (unless otherwise defined) for “Western education” as a reflection of how the Karachi Project members see it: secular, non-traditional (i.e progressive in that change is expected and applied), that it embraces critical discourses and analysis. Members who also noted that: “When seen against education in Pakistan, these points are very real and do separate Western education clearly from what is our experience of traditional education here and even those schools which think they are western but still do same old things...”.

Various issues emerge from this short profile of the Karachi Project including my research path from the original MFAT consultancy as it evolved into a doctoral thesis; the thesis research methodology; the Karachi Project's agenda of modernisation; and the socio-economic background of the Karachi Project members. Each issue is explored in depth as the thesis unfolds. At this early stage in the thesis, my objective is to cast an initial light on the Karachi Project, for the group is central to this work.

Micro Issues; Macro Issues

It would be the subject of several theses to explain why the Karachi Project members feel so passionately about their 'cause' given the myriad of issues which arise in any analysis of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The two most important micro issues which emerge from discussions with the members of the Karachi Project, and which form the core of this case study, are those stated by the Karachi Project members as the most important for "the amelioration of inadequate education in Pakistan". The two micro issues are: 1) traditional madrasa⁴ Islamic educational practice and its ideological relationship to the concept of Pakistan as an Islamic State; 2) the quasi-secularised Western-modelled⁵ government schools and their culture of inequality, inefficiency and disenfranchisement. The macro issues that this thesis will discuss in relation to the micro issues are: modernity and modernisation and their antitheses – the oppositional binary between Islam and the West.

⁴ Madrasa are the traditional Islamic schools in which Quranic scriptures and principles are the main material of instruction: see Chapter Five for an in-depth discussion of the madrasa.

⁵ In this thesis I discuss 'Western cultures' as those characterised by secular democratic forms of governance and which have as a base to their culture a strong influence from Christianity.

Together, both the micro and macro issues constitute a case study of an educational project that strives, in the words of its members, “to achieve goals towards the amelioration of poor education in Pakistan a situation which holds back national progress.” The two main issues that this NGO strives to ‘ameliorate’ are inextricably linked to the wider social, historical, cultural and ideological macro issues and, together, the two interrelated sets of issues provide the richness of this case study.

The limitation of this thesis is not being able to include the multiplicity of issues that, by nature of the complexity of the subject, could also be included. In a case study there is the need to set limits because, to use the metaphor of the stone hitting the water’s surface, once the stone hits there are multiple ripples. In a case study it is necessary “to limit, to case”, (Ragin & Becker: 1992: 87). The two micro issues under investigation are those that the Project members state as being the most important ‘to ameliorate’. The Karachi Project perceives Western-styled education as the panacea for the desperate condition of Pakistani education and it is precisely this form of education that the Project is attempting to introduce to Pakistan through its NGO activities. The director of the Karachi Project defined their ideals of Western style education as:

That sort which is for critical thinking, for student inclusion in all learning activities, not the deadening rote learning of irrelevant materials which the madrasa have done for centuries and still do these days and which spills over into the way our government schools teach and what is learned in them. We [in the Karachi Project] are fully aware of new methods which you are using in the West and which are modern, up to date, which add liberation to the children for thinking and asking questions and gives them some power for a change (personal communication: 26 November, 1997).

The two micro issues, and the NGO's desire to overcome them by implementing Western education, converge at several junctures to both form and illustrate the largely oppositional binary of Western and Islamic forces in contemporary Pakistan. In many respects the binary that exists between the Christian based Western cultures and the non Western Islamic based cultures of the world is illustrated by the situation of Pakistan and its contemporary, equivocal relationship with the West. This situation includes the problematic of modernisation, which is a Western construct impacting on the social norms of what is, constitutionally, an Islamic society. This is a binary with very deep and very old roots. In this binary we see the Karachi Project responding to the issues presented on both sides of the binary.

That there is a binary here composed of complex and sensitive issues, asks the writer to elucidate his own background before embarking on such an enterprise as the one under discussion. It is important that I expose my own life in order to demonstrate my own story and how that may influence my own perceptions within the larger story of the very real Western/Islamic divide. It is to this concern that I now turn.

Locating the Story: the Personal as Background

A thesis is a story. This story builds around complex issues such as those listed above, which constitute this case study of a small NGO striving for educational change in a complex, pluralistic society under the aegis of the dominant discourse of Islam. A story emerges from somewhere and that 'where' is important for the reader to understand. Being able to locate the writer, his motivations and background, adds

to the understanding of both the process and the substance of the thesis or story. Although the writer strives for objectivity there is little that cannot be critically deconstructed from either side of any ideological spectrum, especially one as traditionally fraught as that of the oppositional binary constituted through the history of West/Islam. The provision of this personal background is to allow the reader an insight into how the writer found himself at that point where he felt both sufficiently responsible and sufficiently professional to be involved in such an in depth study of a group of educators in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, a cultural and ideological context seemingly far removed from that of his own.

In 1908 my maternal great-grandparents emigrated from Lebanon to New Zealand, “fleeing the Muslim Ottomans” with only one of their children. My grandmother was left behind in Lebanon in 1908. She followed nineteen years later, as a married woman with her husband and children, when they fled hardship caused, in part, by the continuing fissures from the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. “Fleeing the Muslim Ottomans” was my grandparents’ refrain. They had lived through the First World War and experienced the exigencies of that tumultuous period. That refrain, and others like it, invoked oppositional forces, war, and disruption, and were an integral part of my childhood. As a child I lived with my grandparents and was admonished with stories, which, in retrospect, had more in common with morality tales. My grandparents used these stories in order to form the child, to inculcate and enculturate him with the Maronite view of the world.

I had not one lentil to eat for a week when we had to run from the Turks...You don’t know what hunger is in New Zealand, but we knew hunger when we had to leave the village and hide in caves and then flee to this country we had never

even heard of The Christians were persecuted by the Muslims ...The Druze killed Bishara and ElviraWe are Phoenicians not Arabs ...

I absorbed the stories from aunts and uncles who migrated to New Zealand through the 1950's, 60's and 70's. The themes didn't change, only the names: Ottomans were replaced by Palestinians and Syrians. Sometimes ethnicity was the issue, sometimes religion, sometimes they were indivisible. It was always 'them and us'.

My relationship to mainstream New Zealand, where I was born and raised within this schizophrenic milieu of a Lebanese mother and her family and a fourth generation New Zealand father whose family lived on the same street, was constructed around such binaries. The binaries of 'East and West' between 'Muslim and Christian' between 'good and evil' between 'Lebanese and Kiwi' were well established in my mind by the age of seven, which is a pivotal age in Catholicism: "Give me the boy of seven and I give you the man". My grandparents had joined the Catholic Church as there was no Maronite establishment in provincial New Zealand in the 1930's. It was from this religious background that I broke irrevocably in favour of atheism in the mid 1970's. Along with that break went much of the baggage that comes from being inculcated in an ideology as strict as that imposed by Maronites or Catholics. I questioned all religious concepts and structures and, in that questioning, I was aided by my discovery of rationalism. I read the Rationalists and in so doing found an intellectual haven. The philosophy of the Enlightenment was as personally liberating in the mid 1970's as it was in the eighteenth century for those who were embraced by its shift from particular religious and political hegemonies: "As a broad cultural and social movement, the Enlightenment represented an attempt to free humanity from the grip of medieval religion and metaphysics" (Moghissi: 1999: 52). Certainly, in my

teenage period Moghissi's analysis was applicable to myself. As this story is meant to illustrate, there are few objectivities in the personal. It is the striving to find the clarity to present 'other' views that is important in the face of many histories.

In 1975, after finishing a bachelor's degree in history and religious studies, I moved to Latin America for several years, where I was inculcated in other epistemologies contrary to the sanctity of church and 'straight' society. For four years I lived with a Jewish man and learned about what it meant to be the son of Jews who had fled Russia in the 1920's. From 1984 to 1988 I lived in Kuwait where I taught language and literature at Kuwait University to rich Kuwaitis and poor Palestinians. I lived in the Palestinian section of the city with a Palestinian man who believed emphatically in many things, amongst which the most emphatic was his conviction that Palestine would be liberated from the Zionists and that, because of his homosexuality, he could never be a real Muslim nor ever be accepted by Allah.

Homosexuality in a strict Islamic state poses difficult questions for the homosexual, as my partner experienced. Homosexuals are the 'third sex' and under *shari'a* law are constituted as evildoers who should be punished. I state this about homosexuality, for it is important in theorising certain aspects of this case study. It can be argued that the position of the homosexual in Islamic society is not that far removed from the position of women, in that both represent a defiling sexuality, certainly one which is able to be punished (Moghissi:1999: 89). Under certain feminist analysis, the question begs: If I am made to be 'outside' mainstream society and am an 'evildoer', what is my allegiance to society as a whole? How do I perceive that society? My Islamic homosexual friends in Kuwait asked these questions. One

Palestinian homosexual joined the Iraqis against the Iranians with the sole purpose of being killed in battle to thus avoid the stigma of being a homosexual. He laughed at the bitter irony that he would become an 'Islamic martyr'. Women friends who wanted 'equality' within that society asked the same difficult and painful questions.

Edward Said had published *Orientalism* in 1978. When I read that book in Kuwait in 1985 I felt a familiar disquiet: what right do I have, as an 'outsider', to criticise this society? Under 'orientalism' my voice was by perforce being censored. I noted that many Western academics were apologetic towards everything 'indigenous'. Postmodernism allowed for that 'acceptance of the local'. Women and homosexuals were caught in this conservative bind for under 'accepting the local' were the conditions of the local. Growing fundamentalism in many parts of the 'Islamic world' enforced harsher restrictions on women and 'sexual deviants'. What views can such observers – participant observers – take on the construct that obfuscates their lives?

In a country of startling contrasts, such as Kuwait in its flush of petrodollars, I recognised for the first time what globalisation was. It was at that period that I first began to hear the word being used. TIME Magazine told us we now lived in a global village. I had to ask: Globalisation of what? The obvious answer was 'Western influence', given that the culture most obviously being globalised was (and remains) Western. Living in a non-Western culture, especially one as markedly determined to maintain an epistemological (but not material) purity as that found in Arab Gulf cultures, provides the observer with no hesitation in finding that answer. In Kuwait, my anti-American Palestinian connections confirmed this appreciation, just as my pro-Western Kuwaiti contacts did. But the questions kept emerging and I asked them,

as I observed everyday life in the streets and classrooms and cafes, and as I watched worshippers leave mosques in Mercedes: If you are so anti-Western, what place does Western technology have in your society?⁶ What epistemological configuration does ‘modernisation’ feature within such a society? Can Islam accommodate these cultural anomalies under strict (or even not so strict) *shari’a*? Are you aiding and abetting globalisation through your material (and emotional) desires? These questions are posed in this thesis in relation to both the micro and macro issues under analysis.

From the 1970’s many Islamic societies attempted with greater urgency to counter the material and cultural hegemony of globalisation. Such reaction is not a new phenomenon within Islamic societies. Under Western imperialism the ‘Islamic world’ had seen its power diminished and had itself switched from active imperialism to reaction against being imperialised. In the 1970’s this ‘resurgence’ became known as ‘fundamentalism’, a problematic term that will be discussed later, but one that, at that time, seemed to accommodate the anger I saw in the Middle East against the globalisation/imperialism from the West. I watched the civil war in Lebanon unfold from the mid-1970’s as that nation was destabilised by the old Western-Maronite/Islamic binary. And I watched the subsequent invasion of Lebanon by Israel in the mid 1980’s. My great uncle was killed by the Israeli bombs in the first Israeli attack on Beirut and my aunt blamed the Palestinians. While in Kuwait I heard firsthand accounts by Palestinians of the subjugation of Palestine in 1948 by Zionists seeking a home after the horror experienced by Jews in the Holocaust. I watched my Muslim friends and colleagues turn either to Islam or to migration to the West for answers and solutions. I looked at the binaries and searched history.

⁶ See Chapter Five for an in depth analysis of Islam and technology.

I pursued this experience of the conflict of cultures in a novella *Intifada* (1988) and two novels (Buchanan, 1996, 1998), in an attempt to explore the vagaries of lives and the way we live them in a world of such complexities. These works of fiction include issues of what it means to be Muslim or Christian. My first masters degree was in Multicultural Education, my second in Development Studies. It seemed to me as I began my research in Karachi that the confluence of these experiences had come to fruition, for here was a situation I felt compelled to investigate.

The Research Path

In November 1997 the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) contracted me to go to Karachi for six weeks to evaluate an integrated school curriculum designed by the Karachi Project. The Project members had spent two years writing an integrated curriculum that was being trialed in various Karachi schools in order, in the words of a Project member: “to make our curriculum modern and up to date like those in America or New Zealand”. It was this integrated curriculum that MFAT contracted me to evaluate as part of the New Zealand government’s annual aid package to Pakistan. The Karachi Project is involved with education in the primary sector of education in Pakistan. One of the Karachi Project’s major functions is, in the words of its Director, “...to provide for better educational materials and standards in the primary school system of Pakistan through such innovations as well written, relevant educational materials including an updated integrated curriculum” (personal communication: 27 November, 1997)⁷. On my first

⁷ The situation of educational provision will be the subject of Chapter Four. The following statistics show the general state of education in 1998: Children not in school: 27.9 million; Illiterate adults (15+):

meeting with the members of the Project they all agreed that their motivation for working long hours for poor wages was a driving sense that they had to help their nation modernise. They spoke of the need for “progressive education” and “for progress” generally. I began to ask questions of the Project members: What were the main issues and how did they ‘hold back progress in Pakistan’? How did these issues that held back progress relate to wider questions of education and social constructs in Pakistan? It was these questions, which grew from the Project members’ comments at that first meeting, which were to form the base of this thesis. Because the Karachi Project members see Western-style education as ‘the answer’ to their educational problems the need for reform of the existing education providers in Pakistan is imperative. The madrasa and the government schools are the two providers that the Project seeks to ‘modernise’. Why these two constructs are perceived to be unable to ‘deliver the goods’ links, upon investigation, to the variables involved in the West/Islam divide. Simply, one system is better than the other, according to the Karachi Project, and they point to the statistics to prove their case.

While the immediate objective of my MFAT contract was to evaluate the integrated curriculum based on the Terms of Reference issued to me by MFAT⁸, I began to investigate those issues that motivated the members of the Karachi Project. For example, the Karachi Project members discussed repeatedly the need to modernise the backward madrasa schools, which were based on traditional Islamic pedagogy. The other issue that the members insisted was of major importance was the generally poor quality of education in government schools. These two issues – of madrasa and public school education – became the focus of my attention.

43.5 million; Mean schooling: 1.9 years; Primary enrolment: 57%; Secondary enrolment: 22%; Higher education enrolment: 1.9 million (Hoodbhoy, 1998 – see Reference section).

⁸ The Terms of Reference cannot be presented in this thesis due to reasons of commercial sensitivity.

My investigation into these issues tied in with my MFAT obligation, which was the evaluation of the new integrated curriculum. I felt that to conduct an evaluation of a curriculum to be used with thousands of children, I needed to look at the broader social milieu in which the curriculum would be used in order to more fully appreciate who would be studying the new curriculum. The original MFAT Terms of Reference did not call for such a wide investigation. I was drawn to do so, however, in order to satisfy a professional need to provide for a more thorough evaluation, one which had investigated the social system for which the curriculum was being designed and implemented. I had also become aware that the texts and curriculum I was to evaluate were those produced in reaction to the texts and curricula used in both madrasa and government schools. As such, the Karachi Project texts pointed to both the sort of world the Karachi Group sought to produce and to the world they sought to ‘ameliorate’.

The decision to investigate the wider social issues lead to my expanding the initial curriculum evaluation into a more comprehensive ethnographic case study, amongst teachers, students, parents of students and amongst the staff of the Karachi Project. I am trained and experienced in participatory research and this was an appropriate venue for such research methods to occur. I also observed classroom situations in participating schools, and observed and investigated the actual locations of the areas where the schools were situated, in order to be better informed of the socio-economic background of such areas. I was fortunate to be able to conduct numerous workshops on curriculum design and textbook writing and general teacher training classes on ‘innovative’ teaching practices. This gave me ample opportunity to discuss issues

with participating educators. I also observed classroom practice in non-participating schools in order to gain a comparative awareness of educational provision across the broad socio-economic divides in Karachi. To this purpose I visited madrasa and government schools in all socio economic areas of the city and I spoke to pupils, parents and teachers at all locations. Several teachers invited me to stay in their homes. Such experiences aided my growing awareness that an ethnographic study was in the making.

I continued to research amongst the members of the Karachi Project and heard their stories about what made Pakistan's education so "inefficient and iniquitous and down right useless" (personal communication: 29 November, 1997). I realised that it was their story, and their interpretation of what was wrong with education that I was increasingly interested in. As I pursued my investigation I recognised that the real essence of grounded theory⁹ was being practiced: stories and observations were written down and ideas and theory began to emerge to explain them. These ideas and theories were tested on the various players in the Project and in the wider community. People began to supply me with books and articles. My visits to schools, and my lengthy discussions with parents, teachers, head teachers and education officials, confirmed much of what the Karachi Project members were telling me: there were major obstacles to the advancement, not only of education in the Islamic Republic, but to the nation's development. Not all of the responses confirmed the predilection of the Karachi Group's desire for Westernisation of education. Many people interviewed said Islam should play a greater role in education. Some newspapers supported the full-scale modernisation of education; others were concerned to point to

⁹ See Chapter Two for an in depth discussion of grounded theory.

traditional practice, a return to ‘values’ which meant Islamic education. The binary I was so interested in was coming alive around the social and educational issues to which the Karachi Group had alerted me and with which this thesis is concerned.

It was the initial curriculum evaluation project for MFAT that provided me with the opportunity to investigate issues of education in Pakistan. In conducting an evaluation for MFAT on the integrated curriculum being implemented into schools that had joined the Karachi Project reforms, I had gained access to a fascinating and complex society. While in Karachi I conducted research over and above that necessitated by the Terms of Reference for the MFAT assignment. When I returned to New Zealand I completed my report for MFAT on the curriculum evaluation. I then turned to my research data and probed for a subject for my doctoral work. I did not wish to investigate the curriculum evaluation for the thesis. This thesis does not therefore concern itself directly with the MFAT evaluation or with other issues that involve MFAT, such as New Zealand’s bilateral aid to Pakistan. Rather, what I found most fascinating was the Karachi Project’s expressed desire for a modern society, a desire which the members hoped could be aided through the application of modern education. What is central to this thesis therefore, is an interrogation of the two educational systems that the Project members state categorically as being the barriers to modernisation in their country: Quranic education, as in the madrasa schools, which are found in great numbers throughout Pakistan; government public schools, which provide quasi-Western-styled education for minimal fees.

By interrogating these two issues that the Project members had turned my attention to, I was attempting to question the substance and accuracy of the Project’s

assumptions about such schooling systems. I wanted to find out in what ways these two education systems actually acted as barriers to modernisation. Did they, in fact act as barriers? In doing this, I was looking at my data where the Project members emphatically expressed their opinions that madrasa and public schools were barriers to modernisation. I needed to find out why the members had selected these two systems for scorn. What are madrasa and what is their position in Pakistan? Similarly, what is the situation of the public school system in Pakistan? Through such an analysis I strove to interrogate the assumptions of the Karachi Project. To interrogate the data, about which I knew little or nothing, I needed to learn about madrasa and the public school systems. I needed to see what links they had with other forces in that society, to build a broad picture of interrelationships, in other words, a 'case'¹⁰. By arriving at my theory inductively, I utilised grounded theory research. As my ideas developed and turned into a doctoral thesis, I saw patterns emerging from the data. Modernisation, as it related to the epistemological distinctions between the West and Islamic culture, emerged as a major theoretical perspective. As much as I attempted to see beyond such an apparently stereotyped vision of East/West relations, I was brought back time and time again, as I read and analysed data, to the strength of there actually being a strong ideological and epistemological divide between Western and Islamic cultures. This divide was being played out in the educational systems I was studying, including that of the Karachi Project. The micro issues of the madrasa and the public school system reflected bigger issues: modernisation and modernity; the oppositional binary of West/Islam. These became the macro issues of this thesis, the theoretical underpinnings that emerged from the research findings. Numerous other issues integral to these macro

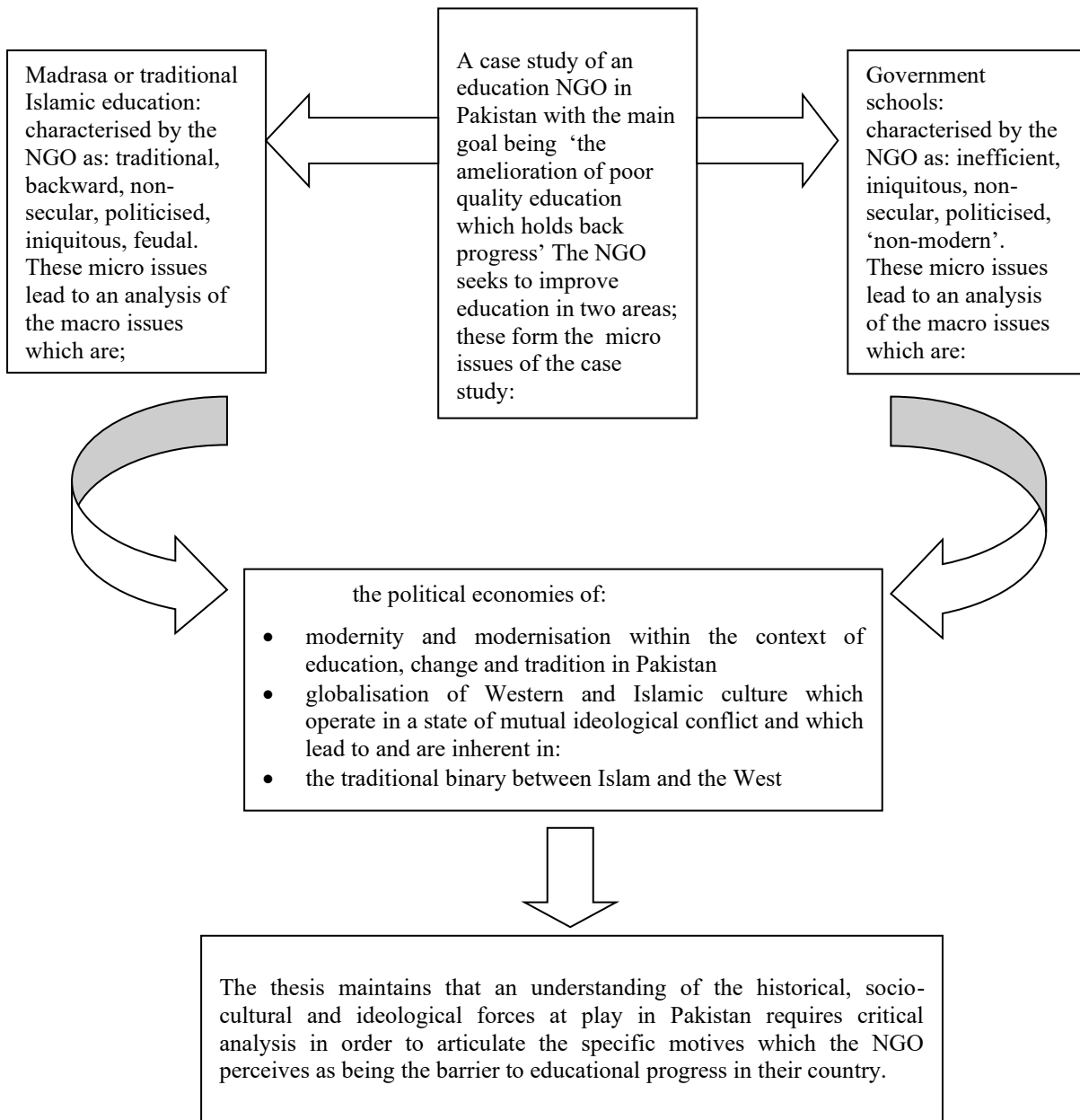
¹⁰ See Chapter Two for an in depth analysis of case study research.

issues emerged, all of which are interrelated and which join to inform the findings and build this case about how a small NGO in Pakistan seeks to achieve modernisation through its educational agenda.

The interconnectedness of the issues is best illustrated through the presentation of a Venn Diagramme¹¹. These diagrammes are an essential tool of grounded theory which is one of the research approaches employed in this thesis. The Venn Diagramme presented on the following page also illustrates how my research path progressed from issue to issue into a case about the Karachi Project.

¹¹ For an in depth discussion on Grounded Theory and Venn Diagrammes, see Chapter Two: pp. 70-75

Education, Islam and Modernity: A Case Study of Pakistan



Theoretical and Conceptual Underpinnings: Constructing the Thesis

The significance of Islam

A major theme to emerge throughout this thesis is the relationship of Islam to the issues of education, modernisation and the West/Islam binary. Indeed, there are few points of reference to issues in this thesis that at some point do not engage Islam. I mention this here for it may appear that the autobiographical details provided earlier centre exclusively on my experience with religion and the Middle East. I have drawn these connections as an introduction to this thesis because religion is important in this work. Making my experience in the Middle East evident is not to embrace an essentialist notion of Islam by implying that the situation of Islam and society in Pakistan is the same as to that of an Arab nation such as Kuwait. The political economy of both regions is very different. However, similarities can be drawn. Talbot (1998: 33) states:

Since 1971, Pakistan has increasingly resembled a Middle Eastern rather than a South East Asian society. Mosques have mushroomed and numerous attempts have been made to bring legal and economic practices in conformity with Islam.

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic and is a nation based largely on the expression of religion¹². The ethnic, linguistic and cultural pluralities that constitute Pakistan have one major feature that *attempts* to bind them: Islam. Islam can be fragmented to fit the needs of the diverse groups which ascribe to it. Like Gramsci's conception of Catholicism, Islam has many parts that emerge from the core of that religion but which conform to the individual needs of the pluralities it encompasses¹³. This thesis

¹² Chapter Four "The History of Pakistan" discusses this issue.

¹³ See the discussion on Gramsci and pluralism under "Ideology" in this chapter.

posits that, to some degree, Islam is a defining factor in most aspects of Pakistani life, including education. The main reason for the creation of Pakistan in 1947 was for a Muslim state with an Islamic outlook. It is around this issue of the importance of Islam and the non-secular nature of Pakistan that the themes of this thesis must take cognisance.

The importance of Islam in Pakistan cannot be ignored while theorising education and social change in that country. Duncan (1990: 60) explains the role of religion in Pakistan with reference to the seven million refugees who fled India at Partition in 1948 and how that exodus helps explain the role of religion in the Islamic Republic: “They brought the features, languages, food of the places they came from; but the identity they clung to was their religion”. The Pakistani Constitution is based on what Talbot (1998: 97) calls “the inseparable division of religion and society”. Sayyid (1997: 14) confirms that in Pakistan Islam has been influenced by Islamic fundamentalist movements and that as such it [Islam] increasingly cannot be “separated from other types of social relations such as politics”. Geertz views Islam as “a universal, in theory standardised and essentially unchangeable and usually well integrated system of ritual and beliefs...not merely as a religion but a complete and comprehensive way of life” (quoted in Sayyid:1997: 76). Sayyid (1997: 4) also posits the question as to whether any religion can be separated from social, cultural, economic, political, ideological constructs that, in fact, constitute what is meant by a religion. This is especially pertinent in a situation where a particular religion is stated as being the foundation of a nation’s constitution, such as in the case of Pakistan. This thesis conceptualises state and society in Pakistan through the perspective that Islam plays a pivotal role in shaping social constructs including education. The

Karachi Project members noted: “We must be careful not to modernise too quickly or the mullahs will take note and stop us”. This position illustrates, at the most basic level of the case study, that religion is pervasive. This fact relates to the situation of the Karachi Project, which seeks to secularise education and finds its major barrier to modernity to be the presence of a religion which is linked inextricably to political discourse and its application. The theoretical framework in which this situation exists and how it relates to the issues in this thesis becomes evident in a discussion on modernity and modernisation. The issue of modernity and modernisation is central to this thesis. It forms one of the major components of the Islam/West binary.

Modernity and modernisation

The Enlightenment project eventually led to the separation of church and state in much of the Western world and resulted in ‘modernity’ (Schuurman: 1993: 12). The secularisation of education was an outcome of this eventuality. The conflict between secular and non-secular education in Pakistan is an important aspect of this case study in relation to the Karachi Project’s educational agenda. This thesis posits that modernisation has had an impact on Pakistan through its globalising economic forces. However, modernisation is to be differentiated from modernity. “Modernisation in the Middle East, as in other parts of the ‘Third World’ has meant only economic growth, capital accumulation and industrialisation under the auspices of multinational corporations, led by an authoritarian elite and serving the interests of a privileged minority” (Moghissi: 1999: 54). Historically, there has been an absence of an equally strong emphasis on modernity in Pakistan. The result of this is that the broader economic, social, ideological, cultural, and political elements of modernity (civil society, women’s rights, the right of secular discourse, religious pluralism,

government accountability), which generally characterise Western societies, have not had a chance to take hold in Pakistan and thus influence education. This thesis posits that the government schools – which are modelled on Western lines – are in such a state of weakness, as a result of the weak state of modernity. The theoretical implication of this situation is of prime importance in this thesis for the Karachi Project members are, in effect, attempting to introduce elements of modernity to Pakistan in order to ameliorate what they consider to be ‘backward’ and therefore in the way of ‘progress’. The social and political reality for the majority of Pakistan’s population that remains 80% rural is largely feudal. As such, this thesis will argue that the Karachi Project is an agent of change in a largely feudal society¹⁴. In this light, the Project’s agenda will be theorised through the links between theories on modernisation and the binary of Islam/West.

The binary of Islam/West

I was mindful, as I sought a theoretical framework for the interconnected micro and macro issues investigated in this thesis, of the binary that has existed for 1,500 years between Western and Islamic cultures. The question of how to theorise this binary as a ‘separate entity’ became problematic. The literature on the history of these two cultures’ relations with each other is fraught with the notion of oppositional forces or components. As Sayyid (1997) noted in the above discussion: religion is all pervasive in the socio-cultural components it incorporates. Modernity versus non-modernity; Western feminism and concepts of sexuality and Islamic concepts; representational art and non-representational art; Islamic banking systems and

¹⁴ See Chapter for a discussion on feudalism.

Western banking systems¹⁵: the list of differences grew with my reading in this area. It became increasingly obvious that in order to theorise this binary, I needed to do so by theorising the separate components that compose the binary. However, it became clear that the binary brings the components of the thesis together, in that the West/Islam divide provides the conflict around which this story is based. The dialectics of this binary serve to form the entire thesis for, by perforce of the subject matter, only issues which are oppositional are included in this discussion.

But the concept of the binary needed to be resolved further, for, once the components had been compartmentalised and theorised, there remained the problematic of how to accommodate for the theoretical approach of this overarching theme of the binarism itself? Was there a theoretical way forward to account for the binary? It became apparent that, in each of the separate components, the issue of modernity/non-modernity arose as a major theme. One way forward, therefore, in theorising the binary itself, was to view the binary as an ‘enveloping’ force, the main theme of which is the conflict between modernity and non-modernity. This approach emerges from the very heart of the epistemological differences between Islam (since the European Enlightenment) and Western cultures.

This thesis can therefore be seen to have taken education as a component, a single constitutive part of the whole that constitutes societies’ structures. However, having said that education has been isolated, the question is therefore asked: How can education be isolated, given its links, its intrinsic immersion in all other aspects of the social system? This discussion takes as axiomatic that education is both a complex

¹⁵ See Izzud-Din Pal (1999) *Pakistan, Islam and Economics* Oxford University Press, Karachi, for an in depth study on how Western and Islamic economic systems are contradictory and distinctive.

and ambiguous social phenomenon with links to all aspects of society. The discussion also accepts that we can locate aspects of this complex and ambiguous structure into signifiers that reflect realities such as “madrasa schools” and “public schools”. These structures are thus “cased”¹⁶ and are open to investigation as entities within the larger system that is termed “education”. The discussion will note that there are “little Islams”¹⁷ (Sayyid:1997: 33). These “little Islams” emerge from the nodal of Islam. Similarly, education can be compartmentalised into “little educations”.

How education informs the nature of what constitutes the Islam/West oppositional binary emerged from the inductive analysis of the data collected for this thesis. Simply, the evidence demonstrates that madrasa do not conform to Western education either pedagogically or epistemologically. There is, of course, no reason to assume that they would (or should) conform, given that madrasa have evolved independently and in line with Islamic cultural mores over 1,500 years¹⁸. Similarly, the theory emerging from the data collected about the public school system demonstrates that feudalism¹⁹ informs these school systems and accounts, in part, for their failure. These issues in madrasa and public schools point to those issues that lie within the realm of modernity and modernisation. Modernity and modernisation are largely absent in Pakistan. As this thesis will demonstrate, there is powerful opposition from state ideological and repressive agencies against modernity and hence modernisation. There are forces in some areas of society in Islamic cultures that observably act against the incorporation of Western social structures and ideologies into what are

¹⁶ See Chapter Two for an in depth discussion on “casing” in social science research.

¹⁷ See Chapter Four on how “little Islams” account for and describe the diversity of the concept of Islam and reduce that concept from being a “monolithic” entity to one which more aptly describes its diversities.

¹⁸ See Chapter Five “Madrasa Education” for an in depth study of madrasa history.

¹⁹ For a discussion on feudalism and its definitions, see Chapter Seven.

identified as Islamic systems. The Taliban in Afghanistan attest to this. I heard constantly in Karachi that there were strong Taliban sentiments in Pakistan, and that these ‘sentiments’ constitute a powerful ideological force in education. The madrasa are not so much influenced by this anti-modernity but are initiators of it. If, in Pakistan, traditionalism and anti-modernity are oppositional to modernity and modernisation, and this thesis posits that they are, then there is, within the education systems under investigation in this study, evidence to demonstrate that education not only shows how the oppositional binary exists and is nurtured by ideological forces, but how it aids and maintains that ideology.

Much has been written in the literature on West/Islam that is referred to as “Orientalism”. Edward Said (1985) asserts that the West bifurcates itself from Islamic cultures in order to strengthen its own place in the world as superior: modern versus non-modern; rational versus irrational. According to Said, this oppositional bifurcation is a construction by Westerners and their supporters in “the Orient” to legitimise Western colonialism in Muslim areas. From this supposition emerges the term ‘Orientalism’. Specifically, Said argued that orientalism provides accounts of Islam (and the Orient) that are organised around themes and, most importantly, that there is an “absolute and systemic difference between the west and the Orient” (Sayyid: 1997: 32).

I argue in this thesis that the data collected in Karachi, from those educational institutions under analysis, point to there being a distinct difference between what constitutes educational provision in the West and in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The modernised, secular Muslims who work with the Karachi project may be seen to

be agents of Western globalisation, a subject to be discussed in depth in this thesis. What is of importance in this discussion on the oppositional binary is that the interrogation of the data supplied by the Karachi Project directs this researcher to state that there is an observable “absolute and systemic difference” between Islamic and Western approaches to education, and thus, to the wider society which education both informs and is informed by. That these forms are oppositional should come as no surprise given the history of colonialism and expansion by both Islamic and Western forces throughout their shared history.

This thesis will look in depth at historical processes in order to demonstrate that there is an oppositional binary and that this binary has been constructed throughout 1,500 years of Islam/West contact. This thesis contends that Edward Said is correct, in that the West has constructed an intellectual edifice that is Orientalism. Orientalism, as it has been constructed for ideological reasons, is a pejorative view of the Islamic world²⁰. What Said has failed to demonstrate is that there is a strong converse form of epistemological antagonism that could be constituted as Occidentalism. As the information in my biographical details demonstrated, the view of the West by some Muslims is as demarcated by stereotypes, archetypes and realities as the view of many Westerners is towards Islam. The oppositional binary is two-way, a fact demonstrated by the ideological battle being fought in Pakistani’s various education systems. The oppositional binary referred to in this thesis therefore seeks to demonstrate that ‘absolute and systemic differences’ exist between Western culture and Islamic culture and that such mutual antagonism has characterised relations between the two cultural entities since they met in the eight century.

²⁰ See Said (1981) “Covering the Media: How the Media And the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World”.

Modernist and postmodernist approaches

Most of the literature that discusses the issues involved in this case study: modernisation, globalisation and cultural relativity, position themselves within the modernist or postmodernist debate.

The modernist/postmodernist debate cannot be ignored, for it informs the literature on the subjects under discussion. From the data collected about the Karachi Project I have attempted to approach a theoretical position inductively. Because my data, and the interrogation of that data, centred on the Karachi Project, I began to approach a response to the modernist/postmodernist theories from what I observed in Pakistan and the Karachi Project's place within that society. The Project members live within a strong ideological framework that includes many aspects about which they are highly critical. The members of the Karachi Project are middle class teachers who do not perceive the majority of Pakistanis as having benefited from modernity – or modernisation – because, in the Project's estimation, both modernity and modernisation are largely absent in Pakistan. The benefits these 'processes' might have brought to the middle class members of the Project are maintained, they note, with much difficulty. Modernity, for the small secularised, Western-educated population of Pakistan, is almost an anachronism, certainly tenuous. As such, how can the majority of Pakistan's population, most of whom live in a feudal to semi-feudal situation under the aegis of Islam, be theorised through a postmodern perspective? In the absence of modernism, it is problematic to theorise using postmodernism. In the absence of modernity and modernisation in Pakistan lies further evidence of the oppositional binary. The West is modern and Pakistan, as with

the Islamic world in general, is not. The debate about the validity of postmodernism can be more appreciably fought within the confines of Western culture. There is much evidence that the postmodern condition is evidenced within what constitutes Western culture, but appreciably less evidence that even aspects of a postmodern condition exist in Islamic culture. The binary could therefore be extended to encompass postmodernism as a condition within Western society that is absent in Islamic societies. Certainly the critical discourse that allows for an intellectual and epistemological position such as postmodernism in the West points to the concept of critical discourse. As this thesis will demonstrate, the barriers to a critical discourse in Pakistan constitute another level in the construction of the oppositional binary.

Moghissi (1999: 55) takes this position when discussing issues of feminism and sexuality across the “heterogeneity of Islamic cultures”. She notes that postmodernism has allowed for insights into the weaknesses of modernity and modernisation but she is adamant that “postmodernism remains a privilege for those who have enjoyed the benefits of modernity”. Moghissi sees modernity as a process of “a broad totality including political, and cultural and economic dimensions... which include and eventually lead to ...social justice, political democracy, secularism...” (Moghissi:1999: 67). She states that these criteria have not found strong roots in the Middle East. I posit that neither have they found roots in Pakistan and advocate that this is why the Karachi Project wishes to see such reforms occur in order to bring about ‘modernity’. Moghissi states that in the Middle East “we witness a grotesque modernisation without modernity, a lopsided change” (ibid: 67), a situation with which the Karachi Project would concur.

Schuurman (1993) corroborates Moghissi's perspective and adds definition to the theoretical approach I take in this thesis on the modernist/postmodernist debate that is so central to contemporary analyses of globalisation, modernisation and associated issues.

What characterises these [South] countries is an aborted modernity project where the Enlightenment ideals are much farther out of sight than they ever were in the North. It would be counterproductive and politically conservative to interpret the failure of modernity in the South as a postmodern condition (Schuurman: 1993: 191).

As such, in this thesis the predominant discourse within the postmodern/modernist debate is that utilised by modernists such as Moghissi and Schurrman (1993). This position allows for an overall framework that is not dismissive of modernity and its project.

Ideology; hegemony; state apparatuses

Central to the themes and topics that constitute this case study, are the relationships between ideology, hegemony, counter hegemony and state repressive and ideological apparatuses. This configuration strengthens the understanding of the major issues discussed in this thesis as they relate to the Karachi Project: the construction of Pakistan as an Islamic Republic; the vicissitudes of both the traditional madrasa schools and the state schooling systems; the West/Islam oppositional binary. An overview of the concepts of ideology, hegemony, counter hegemony and state apparatuses of control is provided here in order to further situate the thesis' theoretical framework. Each concept is discussed in greater detail elsewhere in the thesis within the context of the situation each helps to clarify theoretically.

1. Ideology

Hussain, asserting that Islam was the predominant ideology in the construction of Pakistan in 1947, defines ideology as: “a cluster of somewhat interrelated ideas” (Hussain:1966: xxi). However, this definition of ideology de-emphasizes the aspect of power that the Marxist tradition emphasises – the aspect to which this thesis adheres in its approach to the conceptualisation of ideology. Lye’s definition of ideology places primary importance on the role of power relationships in ideology: “...how cultures are structured in ways that enable the group holding power to have maximum control...” (Lye:1997: 1). The social order has its imperative in power relationships for: “...ultimately that social order ‘relies’ on the ability of one person or group to coerce another person or group, and that the basis of Law, however rationalized, is the authorized use of force” (ibid: 1).

Larrian (1979, quoted in Coxon: 1988: 10) defines ideology as: “The contradictory character of social reality which is brought about by restricted productive forces and the division of labour”. Coxon utilises the essence of Larrian’s definition to formulate a broader approach to dominant group positioning by according a greater significance to cultural ideas and values in the concept of ideology. Coxon (1988: 10) states that:

Ideology works to present the interests of the dominant class as the common interests of all members of society thereby legitimising the whole social structure and becoming indispensable for its reproduction. The concealment of contradictions in the interests of the dominant class so that the current order of things is presented as natural and in the best interests of all is, then, the function of ideology.

Within this apt definition of ideology are the kernels of the associated concepts of hegemony and reproduction theory, which provide a theoretical framework that explains the social relations in Pakistan and how they relate to education.

2. Hegemony

Marxist thinkers began to question the concept of Marx's economically deterministic theory of ideology in an attempt to explain why the proletariat in Western capitalist societies did not emerge as a revolutionary force as they had in the Soviet Union. In this quest the Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was formative in moving the Marxist tradition from a purely economically determinist position. He offered a more humanist position in the explanation of class domination and subordination. In this Gramsci was pivotal in re-conceptualising how subordinate groups in society are co-opted to the interests of the dominant groups. This led to his formulation of the idea of hegemony, which is based on the premise that a major imperative of the dominant groups in society is to secure the consent of the dominated groups to the dominant classes' ideas and beliefs. Important in this conceptualisation of class domination, was Gramsci's theory of how and why the subordinated classes were able to be co-opted. In this approach, Gramsci was criticizing Marxist theories that focused primarily on the implementation of repressive mechanisms to achieve subordination in the capitalist state. "Gramsci's notion of hegemony is quite similar to Althusser's participation model, where even the oppressed classes happily accede to their oppression" (Strinati: 1995: 98).²¹

²¹ Althusser and Gramsci differ on their interpretation of counter hegemony: see discussion on counter hegemony in this section.

Gramsci argued that the domination of ideas in the major institutions of capitalist society, including the Roman Catholic Church, the legal system, the education system, the mass communications media etc., promoted the acceptance of ideas and beliefs which benefited the ruling class...As a result, the problem of cultural hegemony was crucial to understanding the survival of capitalism (Jary and Jary: 1995: 279)

The dominant class maintains the legitimacy of its ideology – and thus its power – by presenting its ideas as common to all members of society in a way referred to by Coxon (1988: 10) as: “...natural and in the best interests of all”. This deception hides social contradictions and maintains the status of the dominant classes. In this way the belief systems inculcated into the consciousness of the dominated classes both deceive and conceal the realities of the social contradictions so that they are perceived as being “natural”. The role of common sense as an aspect of hegemony was conceptualised by Gramsci. Lye (1997: 6) describes this as a process whereby inequalities are: “Understood as being “common sense”, a cultural universe where the dominant ideology is practiced and spread.” Within that dominant ideology there is the need for the accommodation of pluralism; the dominant discourse cannot rule ideologically without making for such an accommodation, a situation that Gramsci sees as the ‘stabilising’ of a diverse society by allowances to those diverse concepts, but within the net of the dominant ideology. Gramsci asserts that: “A given socio-historical moment is never homogenous: on the contrary, it is rich in contradictions” (quoted in Lawrence and Wishart:1985: 85). A measure of the success of the dominant powers is related to how they incorporate and accommodate for pluralism within their domain. The inherent contradictions found across such diversity in any given ‘socio-historical moment’, are potentially dangerous to the dominant power. Common sense, that manufacturing of ‘the natural’, is a hegemony’s most potent weapon to control the heterogeneity which is “rich in contradictions”.

Gramsci, in equating the legitimating ideology of the Roman Catholic Church with common sense (McMaster:1999: 1), provides insight into how dominant groups control the diversity of various populations within a given society. This is of pertinence to the situation in Pakistan, where Islam is the prevailing ideology and, thus, must both account for and accommodate the diversity of (amongst others) class, race, sectarian and linguistic distinctions. Gramsci theorised power, control and religion through the example of the Catholic Church; I propose that because of similarities between Islam and Catholicism (universalist, monotheistic, shared histories) there is ample room for comparisons in how common sense equates with ideology and social control within the context of these two religions. Comparison is particularly valid when Gramsci states that:

Like common sense, Catholicism is fragmentary in that it is split up into a number of different and contradictory religions: one for the petit bourgeoisie and town people, one for women, one for the peasants and one for intellectuals (quoted in McMaster: 1999: 1).

How the dominant classes in Pakistan maintain (or fail to maintain) such fragmentation, through ideology and hegemony, is a question that is addressed in this case study of education, situated within a pluralist society dominated by an ideology forever forced to accommodate to changing socio-historic moments.

Of importance to the thesis therefore is the notion of struggle by the diverse groups within the hegemony of the dominant ideology: The Karachi Project, which is secular and modernist in outlook, contests the common sense of the dominant discourse and therefore that discourse's very reason for being. If "Common sense is not something

rigid and immobile, but is constantly transforming itself” (Gramsci, quoted in Hall: 1982: 73), then to what extent is that dominant discourse able to be flexible? At what point does it rely on its state apparatuses to terminate or distill the counter hegemony? Fiske (1992: 291) elaborates this position:

Consent must be constantly won and rewon, for people’s material and social experience constantly reminds them of the disadvantages of subordination and thus poses a threat to the dominant class...hegemony posits a constant contradiction between ideology and the social experience of the subordinate that makes this interface into an inevitable site of ideological struggle.

Important in this discussion is the notion that hegemony and coercion are interwoven. This is a recurrent theme in theorising how Islamic ideology (its ideas and assumptions) is incorporated into its hegemony (the elaboration of ideas into the consciousness of the population). “No hard and fast line can be drawn between the mechanisms of hegemony and the mechanism of coercion...in any given society, hegemony and coercion are interwoven” (Gitlin: 1979: 67). How education, religion and social mores connect and how the dominant group or their alliances maintain (or lose) control is investigated in this thesis.

3. Counter hegemony

Counter hegemony is a concept crucial to an understanding of the complexities of Pakistan and the relation between education, pluralism, change and Islam in that nation. Central to Gramsci’s theory of counter hegemony was his allowance for change through resistance by hegemonised groups.

Gramsci stressed the role of human agency in historical change, contending that this could best be developed through a critical pedagogy. According to Gramsci, it

was the new discourse needed to prevail over that of the opposing group in order for counter hegemony to occur.

Disciplined and rigorous study and instruction in the whole intellectual tradition in order to develop the power to think analytically and critically is not only the focus of Gramsci's educational theory, but also a crucial aspect of the political struggle against state power (Coxon: 1988: 32).

Gramsci's conception of counter hegemony posits that meaningful and lasting change cannot necessarily manifest itself through the spontaneous and violent uprising of a class against their oppressors as determined by Marx. Rather, Gramsci argued that subordinated groups needed to counter their oppression through a well-articulated philosophy in order to inculcate the culture of the oppositional group and so hegemonise that group.

... the counterposing of an alternative hegemony is not just a matter of presenting a competing set of ideas, but the development of a hegemonic order equally as coherent and rigorous as the existing hegemony (Coxon: 1988: 31).

The middle class Karachi Project appears to be an attempt to fulfill this expectation. In this lies one of the reasons for their failure, for their reforms are counter hegemonic to the dominant feudal-industrial class who maintain control through the continued ignorance of the masses. Shada Islam (2000: 2) asserts that the growth of the Pakistani middle class: "represents a sea change in our society. The tide of history is sweeping away the feudals". Islam's proposition of a fundamental social change occurring through the emergence of a strong middle class is one to be questioned. The middle class in Pakistan is co-opted by the industrialist/feudal class. In this role the dominant class allows the space for that middle class – still numerically weak in Pakistan – to advance its agenda, but only to a degree permissible to both the

ideological controls of Shia²² Islam and those of the feudal-industrial-military classes. These combined ideological and repressive state apparatuses maintain control over modernity and modernisation.

Gramsci also promoted the idea that dominant groups mitigate counter hegemony by incorporating the ideas of the dominated groups into their own. As such, the dominant groups in Pakistan have incorporated certain aspects of modernisation. But these have been strictly limited and serve that dominant class's interests. Modern education, for example, has been restricted to the middle and upper classes and has been rigidly controlled amongst the majority poor. "Modernisation is resisted by the dominant classes.... The landed classes want to maintain the status quo because change will not go in their favour" (Islam:2000: 2). Gramsci's theory of how struggles against class contradictions are accommodated by the dominant groups provides insight into the educational aspirations of the Karachi Project. In this, Gramsci's theorising facilitates an understanding of how hegemony "acts as a factor in stabilizing an existing power structure" (Jary & Jary:1995: 279), rather than allowing it to metamorphosise into a counter hegemony. As stated, the dominant ideological and economic powers in Pakistan allow for the Westernisation of education to certain degrees and only in certain levels of society, notably within the middle and dominating social classes to which the Karachi Project belong²³. This situation depends of course on what period of Pakistan's short history is being discussed, for the heat of the controlling ideology of Islam fluctuates. The dominant group's ideology has inculcated into the hegemony of Islam the desire for intellectual stasis and purity as an aspect of common sense. This combination of hegemony and

²² Shia Islam is the dominant sect in Pakistan.

²³ Most of the Project's members are middle to upper middle class people.

ideology supports the continued domination of a conservative Islam that eschews modernity (Sayyid:1997: 44). Critical pedagogy is therefore a problem to the dominant ideology. But given the stated philosophical agenda of the Karachi Project, the system of education which they seek to introduce to Pakistan over and above that of both the madrasa and the state public education system, conforms to Gramsci's notion of critical pedagogy.

There is a problematic issue in Gramsci's belief that critical education can act as a counter-hegemonic force against an entrenched ideological construct when its hegemony has saturated the consciousness of the population, a situation I equate with Islamic discourse. Gramsci's vision for counter-hegemonic change (i.e. fundamental change) is idealised and unrealistic when seen against the realities of either a fully actualised repressive state apparatus – or any system without the rudiments of modernity that is intent on preserving its dominant discourse. Althusser's assertion that the dominant groups will not tolerate significant change in their discourse (i.e. counter hegemony as opposed to "hegemony as a factor in stabilising an existing power structure"²⁴), becomes pertinent in understanding how a repressive state apparatus attempts to remain in control. This assertion is made in light of the evidence of how the state ideology of Islam, and its shifting ideological power blocks (from arch conservative through to some accommodation of Westernisation), maintain their hegemony over the population of Pakistan. At all times there is the threat of military intervention. This state-repressive apparatus has been used throughout the history of Pakistan to enforce the interests of the dominant class, as will be

²⁴ See Jary and Jary, (1995: 279) for a full discussion of this concept.

demonstrated in this thesis. Only two democratically elected governments have served out their terms since 1947.

4. State apparatuses: mechanisms of control

In considering how a social system controls and maintains its ideology and hegemony, this thesis utilises aspects of the neo-Marxist discourse most associated with Antonio Gramsci and Luis Althusser. The maintenance of a social system is dependent largely upon the ability of the dominant classes to maintain their ideology through hegemony and state repressive apparatuses that are used to maintain control when counter hegemonic forces threaten dominant class interests. In Pakistan, dominant class interests incorporate the feudal/industrial/military/religious elite and Islam, which the dominant classes utilise to maintain ideological control over the masses. The study in this thesis of both the madrasa school system and the government school system demonstrates how education has become an ideological battlefield in Pakistan. This thesis will demonstrate that social control through the reproduction of state ideology and control in the classroom is being maintained in favour of the dominant classes.

While Gramsci and Althusser share many of the same ideas about how ideology and hegemony function, Althusser is considered more pessimistic when it comes to the possibility of fundamental change occurring within societies (Lye: 1997: 5). This pessimism is not due solely to Althusser's contention that we can never escape from ideology. By this Althusser signifies that we are ideologically ahistoric and therefore forever 'caught up' in an ideology through which we can never experience reality, other than through that constituted by the false reality in which we exist (McMaster:

1999: 5). Rather, and of more importance to this discussion, Althusser maintained that profound social and ideological change is difficult because of the way state ideological and repressive apparatuses maintain control. It is through the state repressive apparatuses (police, army, prisons) and the state ideological apparatuses (church, education, media) of a social system, that Althusser promotes a case of particular relevance to this discussion about Pakistan and Islamic societies on the question of how counter hegemony is minimised.

In general, such societies have countered modernity²⁵ because they are based on a discourse that has as its core the infallibility of its ideology. This ideology is based on the Quran, a text imbued with the mores of a social system 1,500 years old. The near absence of modernity in most contemporary Islamic societies is linked in part to the power of the hegemony that supports that ideology. It is in the perceived interests of Muslims to negate modernity, as modernity runs counter to the principles of the Quran. Islam in Arabic means “submission”. Submission to the dominant ideology through the enforcement of that ideology, using state ideological and repressive apparatuses, is how the dominant ideology has been able to successfully both maintain its position and to reproduce itself²⁶ – largely in its own ideologically idealised image – for over 1,500 years. An appreciation of how the highly successful ideology of the Quran functions – differently in different times and places – in tandem with the state apparatuses, is essential to an understanding of the continued dominance of the ideology of Islam. The Islamic scholar Sayyid (1997: 43) notes

²⁵ See Moghissi: 1999; Mernissi: 1992; Hoodbhoy: 1998; Sheyagan: 1997 for discussions on the ideological aspects of the Quran and the absence of modernity in Islamic societies.

²⁶ There are multiple Islamic sects: every Islamic sect takes as axiomatic the infallibility of the Quran. This is an homogeneity which extends across and overrides the pluralism of class, ethnicity and languages which in themselves more suitably accommodate for the sectarian distinctions rather than an interpretation of Islamic epistemology. See Sayyid (1997) for a discussion on this situation.

how the repressive and ideological state apparatuses maintain control of the dominant ideology.

The inter-discursive character of Islam raises the question of what prevents its dissolution: why does it have, not only a specific relevance within a certain context, but also continues to carry some distinctive qualities – for example, its relation to the Quran, to Muslims, etc? Theoretically, there is nothing to prevent Islam from dissolving into its constituent discourses. Islam is saved from dissolution by political action. That is, in the absence of an intrinsic link between signifier and signified, there is a need for that link to be established by a political act and maintained by political actions (Sayyid: 1997: 43).

The Muslim writer Moghissi (1999) cautions us to remember that the situation of modernity (human rights²⁷, democratic representation²⁸, gender equity, civil society, secularism) is largely absent from Islamic societies. As noted, this is largely the situation in Pakistan ²⁹ and a situation that the Karachi Project – the protagonists in this case study and those who drive its story – seek to rectify through their educational reforms. What is the reality of Sayyid's words for the people in the Karachi Project? At this point in the discussion, which focuses on repressive state apparatuses, there is the need to see how these individuals perceive the apparatuses that attempt to repress them. The following quotes from various members of the Project illustrate how state control functions. They illustrate also how confined the possibility of counter hegemony is and how that confinement is perpetuated:

We are always aware that our reforms are meeting with resistance from the authorities. And not just from them. Remember the head teacher at the girl's school? She hates us. She is so conservative. She says we are reforming to change the minds of the girls from Islam and from their social place ...We are

²⁷ The issue of human rights is a problematic issue. Here the intention is to note that in many Islamic societies liberal Muslims denounce the lack of such rights in their own societies. This thesis takes their standpoint to justify the statement that there is a lack of human rights in many Islamic societies including Pakistan. For insight into the attitudes of liberal Muslims and human rights see Moghissi: 1999; Mernissi: 1998; Sheyegan: 1997.

²⁸ "No Arab state is democratic" Mernissi: 1999: 21.

²⁹ Hoodbhoy (1998) the Pakistani educationalist writes about the oppression of the Pakistani state and how this oppression is the dominant classes' agenda to maintain power.

always aware that the mullahs are maybe going to hear about us....We [Pakistan] are so close to Afghanistan and to the Taliban. Remember that Pakistan's government supports them with aid and arms. Why do that if they are not in sympathy with Taliban ideals, which will come here? Karachi will not be exempt no matter how modern it is...We are afraid....We are always looking over our shoulders....Sometimes officials say to us 'You are on the right foot; then sometimes they say: 'You are spoiling our cultures'.... Benazir? Benazir Bhutto? She put on a veil the minute she got elected. Don't forget that she is from the feudal class after all. Her being a woman is nothing. First she is a feudal. Second she supports what they [feudals] want and that is just the status quo of religion and land....Do you not know what fear is? I am always afraid that X³⁰ will say something about us to the mullahs if we say too much about secular education...Yes, we have had some good input from schools but they are the middle class schools. The authorities will allow some of that in wealthier schools....Wait until you see how girls are treated in the countryside by the feudals. Then we will see how we can never have an effect. We will be butchered by them if we try and change their systems...We may be middle class and some of them [Karachi Project members] may be well off but we are still pushing against a system which is always watching...

State apparatuses control people through their minds and their bodies. Foucault asserts that this is the production of the "docile body" (Foucault: 1979: 43), which maintains order and control in social systems by making the individual weak, able to be manipulated, in fact, hegemonised. Fear – or an understanding of it – can also be reduced to a weakness through the state apparatus of education, by objectifying it, stripping it of its real elements; through writing which strips itself from the lived experience such as the writer's fear of the accusation of essentialising another culture; through the fear of being silenced.

The members of the Karachi Group are subject to the state's apparatuses that induce fear through their control. Althusser's conceptualisation of how the state maintains control of the individual and the alliances of individuals who group to form counter hegemony is important in this thesis for the Karachi Project can be seen to be counter hegemonic within the dominant structure which is controlled by the dominant

³⁰ X was a member of the Karachi Project who had begun to reject the secular reforms proposed by the Project and had 'returned' to Islamic principles. X belonged to a powerful religious family.

discourse of Islam. Critics of Althusser who accuse him of being “over pessimistic” about the possibility of change must recognise the heightened state of reaction to counter hegemony in a state such as Pakistan which called itself “land of the pure” in reference to its Islamic ideals. In a liberal democracy the state must use repressive means very carefully and sparingly so as not to lose its legitimacy of being a ‘free’ society”. Certainly the liberal state is liberal only to a certain point before it must control counter hegemony³¹. On the continuum from ‘liberal democracy’ to ‘repressive state’ variations of state abuse of repressive state apparatuses occur. A Project member placed Pakistan on this continuum in the Islamic world: “Bahrain, the UAE³², once upon a time Egypt.... These are more liberal Islamic places ... Pakistan is way down on the list nowadays...”. Given this situation, Althusser’s supposed pessimism about the role of both state ideological and repressive apparatuses is more a reflection of reality in a largely undemocratic social system such as that in Pakistan.

Summary

For the purposes of setting the theoretical approaches of this thesis, I find that I have been guided by the voices of the Pakistanis around whom this case study revolves. In many respects, their approaches are similar to those that I hold about the values intrinsic to civil society. Postmodernism claims such goals as its own but is unable to adequately account for their absence in a predominantly theocratic society under the conditions of pre-modernity. This is especially so within the contemporary context of Islamic fundamentalism where conservatism is supported by postmodernist

³¹ An example of the fear the capitalist state has of counter hegemony is through the police and army reaction to protesters at major economic summits.

³² UAE: United Arab Emirates

claims in its honour of ‘local conditions’. The goals of the Karachi Project cannot be easily met under the ‘local conditions’ so favoured in postmodernist discourse. Under the prevailing ‘local conditions’ in Pakistan, theocracy and militarism counter the calls for ‘other voices’ – a condition which the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis link largely to modernity. Within this framework this thesis seeks to demonstrate how a small NGO in Karachi is both conditioned by, and seeks to condition, the broad social spectra of the political economy of Pakistan.

Thesis Outline

Chapter One introduces the thesis: aim, scope, theoretical position/framework. Chapter Two explores the form and essence of a case study, ethnographic research and grounded theory. As such, this chapter seeks at length to illuminate the research methodology involved in this thesis. I present the research data in Chapter Three. By positioning the research at the beginning of the thesis I reflect the nature of the research methodology. The grounded theory method allows for the theory to emerge from the research. As such, the theory follows the presentation of the data, and allows the story to unfold from the voices that contribute the data from which the theory emerges. The history of Pakistan is the subject of Chapter Four. This chapter will outline the political and social history with particular reference to competing colonial forces. Pakistan’s ethnic pluralism will be emphasised in relation to the dominant discourse of Islam and its relation to continuing social forces that inhibit the goals of the Karachi Project.

The micro issue of madrasa education is the subject of Chapter Five. Madrasa education represents to the Karachi Project a traditional and static form of education

that ‘holds back progress’. The chapter will investigate the historical roots of madrasa education and its role in Islamic societies (all Islamic societies have madrasa education). By linking this role to the epistemological core of Islam, it becomes evident that the static nature of Islamic education is a reflection of Islamic epistemology, which is, in turn, a relationship fostered by Islamic fundamentalism. Islam is based on the infallibility of the Quran thus, in a non-secular state, change based on Western precepts is problematic. The problematic of essentialism amongst various Islamic states and approaches to hermeneutics within them will be explored. With this in mind, the theorising centres on madrasa education as being a reproductionist system in which stasis is valued for its epistemological purity (Talbani: 1996) and for its support for the continuation of those elite groups who control the dominant power positions in Islamic societies.

Chapter Six presents the second micro issue, which is an investigation into the provision (or lack of) of quality education in government schools in Pakistan. The perceived failure of these schools will be theorised, by linking themes explored in Chapter Four to how ‘modern’ education is weakened by these forces. This chapter will posit that, in the presence of a barely observable modernity, Western-modeled schools, which rely on modernity to function, are that in name only.

Chapter Seven focuses on the lateral issue which arose from the investigations in previous chapters. The focus here is the way a class based society – one which is based primarily on the dominance of a feudal and industrialist minority class – manipulates the majority of the population who remain feudal or working class. The work of Poulantzas (1978) is significant in theorising this chapter. This chapter

argues that the state repressive and ideological apparatuses are in the control of this minority class. As such, educational reforms that endanger the privileged position of this class are treated, at best, with skepticism, but, more commonly through various means of repression.

Chapter Eight returns to the subject of Islam. Islam has been a major theme throughout the thesis and in this chapter it is viewed through the variant lens of how Islamic thinking is constructed. That Islam is inherently anti-modern does not detract from its own inherent values and the legitimacy of those values. Islam is the belief system for a billion people and, as such, its legitimacy as an epistemology is acknowledged. What is questioned is the inability to fuse the two beliefs: modernity and Islam. What is focused on is the outcome of the lopsided eventuality when Islam is fused with modernity. What are the implications for democracy, for modernity itself, and for the Karachi Project's goals for modernisation?

The final chapter will bring together the themes of the thesis within the framework of oppositional binaries: a discussion on the problematic of binaries will be included through employing the ideas of such theorists as Derrida, Edward Said et al. Further, the thesis posits that modernisation cannot occur meaningfully without modernity and that the Karachi Project's agenda of widespread educational reform is doomed to fail in any but middle class urban schools, such as those in downtown Karachi where Mohajirs³³ dominate. The failure is linked to the themes inherent in the oppositional binary which, despite globalisation of the Western project through technology etc., cannot succeed. In fact, with the rise of Islamism, which is the counter to the

³³ Mohajirs are the immigrants and their descendants from India who fled to Pakistan at Partition. They are characterised as being more liberal and bourgeois than the general population. They are the main ethnic group in the Karachi Project..

globalisation of the Western agenda, the oppositional binary in many Islamic states, including Pakistan, is only exacerbated and intensified. The strength of the Islamic agenda is analysed and the subsequent failure of the Karachi Project is clarified through an analysis of the continuing strength of Islam and Islamism. This discussion is set within the historical overview of the two civilisations. As such what is proposed is that a ‘clash of civilisations’ has been the case since the two civilisations met 1,500 years ago.

Chapter Two

The Research: A Grounded Theoretical Model

Introduction

For personal and professional reasons, I wished to avoid close association with the consultancy in my thesis. I therefore made the conscious decision that the subject of the thesis would not focus on the evaluation, or on issues directly – or obviously – related to it, such as the role of bi-lateral New Zealand aid in the Islamic Republic. In other words, I wished to disassociate the New Zealand connection from the thesis. At the same time, I began to use the term ‘case study’ as I investigated, amongst other issues, the social, gender, economic, educational, religious, political and ideological issues involved in the initial curriculum evaluation for the Karachi Project. What soon became apparent was that the integrated curriculum could not stand in isolation from those multifaceted issues that contributed to the social construction of the society in which the curriculum was written and for whose members it was intended. It seemed that what I was observing was a case study of something. I also recognised that I would write a doctoral thesis from my data.

How the evolution from a MFAT evaluation to a doctoral level case study occurred is of importance in this chapter. This discussion will therefore begin with how my data collection and my re-conceptualisation of the MFAT evaluation changed due to

personal and professional considerations. I will also discuss how the methodological metamorphosis occurred in which the evaluation turned to an ethnographic research approach incorporated in a case study. Finally, the utilisation of grounded theory as the methodology will be outlined and analysed. The interconnectedness of ethnography, case study and grounded theory as they work together to build a thesis is a major theme.

Changing Foci: From Evaluation to Case Study

While in Karachi my ideas and approaches were still somewhat inchoate and unfocussed as they pertained to a doctoral thesis. I was still bound to the MFAT requirement of conducting an evaluation, albeit an expanded one. In writing of the evolution of my research approach and how it eventually metamorphosed into a thesis, I cannot lose sight of the initial evaluation and how that evolved into a case study of something quite different. In this section the role of the evaluation and how that shaped my research path is therefore of continuing importance.

By constantly questioning the data and the limited scope of the MFAT Terms of Reference (TOR) I came closer to an understanding of where I wished to take the research in Karachi and for what purposes. I therefore expanded the MFAT criteria to include a wider investigation than was perhaps thought necessary by MFAT. This expanded research led me into an ethnographic view of the situation. I justified this through the belief that a narrower evaluation would have been a poorer evaluation for having not investigated the wider issues that must inform, or be informed by, a curriculum. Such questions as: “What will the students achieve from this

curriculum? How will parents respond to this curriculum? Is this curriculum relevant to the socio-economic make-up of those using it? How is ideology reflected in this curriculum? Who constructs that ideology and for whom? Such questions are pivotal in coming to an understanding of what, I believe, a curriculum evaluation is supposed to do. This broadening of scope by the asking such questions, is the entry into ethnographic research and is vital in a curriculum evaluation. Aiding this process was the utilisation of grounded theory, which necessitated the interrogation of the data in order to tease out the theory. As the theory began to emerge I found that indeed a case study – a layer of issues bounded within a focused subject – was being formulated.

However, my strong position on curriculum evaluation arises from my personal involvement in the Karachi Project evaluation. The lack of criteria in the TOR for an in-depth analysis of the social context of the curriculum bothered me. Partly, this feeling arose in reaction to my initial observations of the curriculum. I noted that the curriculum was overwhelmingly entrenched in Western values and ideas. There were no references to Pakistan, Islam or other ‘local’ conditions or subjects. The majority of images were of Western children. The readings were primarily about the USA and England. It was, in the words of the Director: “To make our children see the modern world” (personal communication: 20 November, 1997). The evaluation criteria did not sufficiently attempt to locate the ideological and social construction of that curriculum. I found this fact to be of considerable significance when bilateral aid money is involved between two cultures as disparate as New Zealand and Pakistan.

This narrowness in focus towards the evaluation in the MFAT Terms of Reference can be viewed in two ways. The first position regarding the terms reflects a lack of awareness on MFAT's behalf of the wider political and social constructions within a curriculum. This is a technicist, problem solving approach to educational issues or problems, a situation which Coxon (1996: 241) asserts is: "...a major target of critical theorists who decry the way such thinking separates matters of fact from matters of value, and theory from practice."³⁴ I was led to the conclusion that this was a technicist approach in the TOR by other work I had done for MFAT. This lack of insight, which results in officials omitting criteria from terms of reference that would establish greater insight into aid and development practice, involves an assumption of the neutrality of a technicist approach, and omits the critical aspects of an investigation³⁵.

From this position, the educationalist must note Eisner's (1984: 76) warning that: "There is no neutrality in a curriculum." The idea of a null curriculum, one that defies a wide investigation into its origins and content and purpose, is perhaps a hidden agenda, one that, with purposeful paradox, carries the ideology of the instituting culture. The second position allows for a less blinkered approach regarding the social and ideological effects of education, that is, there is a deliberate agenda to promote the dissemination of one's culture through education systems in other cultures. As such, the question can be asked: Does the New Zealand Government have an agenda of inculcating Western values into the education systems of non-Western cultures?

³⁴ Coxon's definition of critical theory is employed in this discussion: "Critical theory maintains that all theorising should be embedded in practice and all practice informed by theory...The aim of the critical theorist approach is to reveal the social constructedness and historical character of knowledge. It is overtly political" (Coxon: 1996: 241).

³⁵ The 2001 Report on the New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance (NZODA) highlighted this deficiency and recommended major changes in approaches to such evaluations.

This is not a question for this thesis to investigate. I chose not to involve this question as an issue in this thesis for reasons discussed below. However, where it is relevant in this discussion is in how the evaluation I undertook for MFAT appeared neutered by its limited scope. By extending that evaluation into a broader ethnographic research method, I extended the parameters both in the TOR and, by extension, the evaluation methodology. I was mindful throughout both the evaluation stage, and the subsequent deeper stage when the thesis came into focus, of the concept expressed in Coxon's premise:

Because questions of moral value, particularly those to do with curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation are at the heart of all education problems, they should not be seen only in instrumental terms (Coxon: 1996: 242).

The MFAT evaluation was completed and accepted by MFAT despite the official in charge of the project stating she "didn't want a thesis". I noted in the report that there were contradictions and anomalies regarding the social, political and ideological situation in relation to the curriculum and its audience. There was no further discussion between MFAT and myself on the expanded nature of the criteria or any other issue pertaining to this subject. Further MFAT funding for the Karachi Project ensued.

I chose not to write my thesis on the evaluation for a number of personal reasons. The first of these was that, having spent considerable time involved with the evaluation of the integrated curriculum, I recognised I was not sufficiently interested in curriculum studies. My second Masters thesis had been an evaluation of school texts in Papua New Guinea. I was not keen to repeat that formula for a doctorate. I was also mindful that I did considerable work for MFAT and that I did not want to

break contractual obligations to not publish material which was directly associated with their projects without prior approval. With this in mind, I did not wish to involve myself in bureaucratic entanglements over a subject to which I was not sufficiently devoted. To be sure, there were any number of issues that could have emerged from the evaluation that could have been of interest, such as New Zealand's bi-lateral aid programme and its implications for education. However, as I searched for a subject I realised I was not intrinsically interested in a subject about New Zealand. I realised that a doctoral thesis is a long and arduous one and that to be utterly involved in such over a period of years it needed to be one that was inherently interesting to me, and as such I wanted 'the exotic'. I wanted a voyage of discovery on my terms. Being of Lebanese descent and having lived in the Middle East, drew me to look more deeply at religion, politics and ideology and how 'Eastern' influences guided education and, possibly, my own way of thinking. My decision to expand the parameters of the original TOR to incorporate a wider view of the issues surrounding the integrated curriculum had alerted me to many fascinating aspects of Pakistani society. The comments made by the Project members, in our many discussions about education, Islam, modernisation and development, drew me inexorably towards that configuration for a doctoral thesis.

Of importance also, in moving from the evaluation to the much wider topic, which was to be based increasingly on an historical analysis of social and political influences in Pakistan as they related to education, was the distinction between problem solving and critical theory. The former is much more related to the evaluation and did not interest me. What in my mind was richer, and which allowed for a deeper historic and analytical approach, was the utilisation of critical theory. This realisation helped steer

me towards an ethnographic investigation, for that approach, in turn, is an appropriate one in which to incorporate the dimensions of critical theory.

The expansion of the research methodology had also interested me and raised a number of questions that also aided my decision to follow the Islam, education, modernisation lead: How do ideas stem from data? What am I learning from the Project members as they speak to me about their society? Are my theories *my* theories or those of others who have influenced me? How are my theories, which I see emerging in these long discussions with the members, culturally bound up in my own personal background? I had read sufficiently about grounded theory to know I wished to incorporate this methodology – how, in fact, I was inescapably a part of that qualitative approach to investigating phenomena. Together, the thesis subject and the thesis research methodology were slowly but surely evolving towards a case of something about Islam and education. In this situation, the configuration of subject matter and research methodology were being reflexively intertwined.

A combination of existential and methodological issues influenced my final subject choice; where the two merge and separate is difficult to pinpoint but together they formed the final outcome. In having progressed into the broader, ethnographic case study, I had begun to see the possible theoretical explanations emerge from the data, and they were exciting for it drew my imagination into the two worlds, which, as both a writer of fiction and non-fiction, I enjoy being involved in. The question posed for me was: What is real and what is imagined? Where does data sit with reality and where does it flounder in conspiracy theory or propaganda or preconceived notions? I tested theories that were emerging from the data with the members of the Karachi

Project and saw where the two considerations about reality and non-reality converged and then separated. This emerging theory influenced the final subject of this thesis as it evolved from the MFAT evaluation into the much different and expanded issue of education, Islam and modernity.

The final doctoral topic owes its origins, therefore, to the MFAT evaluation, but what eventuated is far removed from the original analysis of the integrated curriculum. The thesis is a case study of an NGO whose members state that education in their country holds back modernisation. They state that there are two major educational barriers to modernisation: the madrasa schools and the government schools. This case study is therefore bounded or ‘cased’ by the institutions and the processes that are incorporated into an investigation based on the Karachi Projects’ views. I investigated these views and interrogated the data in order to validate what the Karachi Project members asserted about education and modernisation in Pakistan. By identifying those institutions, the NGO included, I had accepted Ragin’s (1992: 8) definition of a case study, which was based on the categorisation of objects that “are empirically real and bounded”.

Critical Theoretical Approaches

It is of importance to add to this discussion the distinctions between problem solving theory and critical theoretical approaches, for the latter, which I adopted, is linked closely with the overall thesis research configuration. Coxon (1996) argues that the utilisation of critical theory is of the utmost importance when analysing educational issues – in her case those specifically of policy – and their relation to the

historical context in which such issues are manifest. Coxon's analysis of critical theory, and its application to educational policy, is pertinent in this discussion. It is linked not only to my reaction to the MFAT TOR and the socially neutered evaluation it required, but to how that evaluation turned into an ethnographic study, which permitted a wider and more critical approach to the investigation.

The MFAT TOR was more reminiscent of the technicist approach discussed above. This 'problem solving' approach discussed by Coxon (1996: 240), which she in turn frames within a neo-liberal efficiency approach to educational problems, was one reason why I wished to steer not only the evaluation from such technicism but to widen the scope of my thesis with the critical theory approach. The technicist problem solving theory of how education can be improved was one which I avoided because it:

...presupposes that the problems involved will be technical ones requiring technical or administrative solutions, thus obscuring the socio-cultural and political implications of policy decisions. Instead they [Peters and Marshall] argue the process should be a 'critical' mode of analysis' which highlights the importance of the social context: it should be critical in intent, so that sources of inequality are exposed and ethical in nature, so that the persons affected by policy decisions are treated as ends in themselves (cited in Coxon: 1996: 241).

The evaluation had been expanded through aspects of critical theory. As the subject of the thesis evolved, and the form of a case study emerged with its 'cased' and bounded parameters, the utility of the critical theory approach was fully incorporated into the process. Coxon (1996), writing of her involvement in education in Samoa and the relation of problem solving through the use of a critical approach rather than a technicist one, holds validity for how I approached my subject. Once I had isolated that I wished to interrogate the Karachi Project's contentions about

education and where it was itself placed as an NGO involved in education in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, I had entered that arena which Coxon (1996: 246) describes as one where no global blueprints can be applied. Rather, what Coxon asserts is that educational issues and problems are viewed through:

...a critical approach which focuses on the context in which problems are sited, and interprets them to the extent to which they derive from the past – according to the socio-historic conditions in which they exist.

This process, Coxon emphasises, justifies: “the emphasis on problems.” The ‘problems’ in my emerging case study were those that the Project members had identified. In other words, the ‘problems’ were the data that needed to be interrogated in order to verify and validate the contentious claims by the Karachi Project about education in Pakistan.

Marshall and Peters (cited in Coxon: *ibid*) provide further insight into the association of what constitutes a ‘problem’. It is important to note that definition here, as it relates to locating the problem of education and modernisation in Pakistan and thus places it within an historical and social context and not within a globalised technicist prescription of what might be considered the barriers to modernisation in a so called developing society:

The dialectical process of citing the problem in its context and in regard to strategic action permits a “reading”...of the problem (the part), and in relating back to its context (the whole) and forward to its solution (the new whole) the problem itself will undergo changes in its definition (Marshall and Peters: cited in Coxon: *ibid*)

The “reading of the problem” to me is the utilisation of grounded theory, for the problem is being assessed from the empirical data in that reflexive process described by Marshall and Peters. There is also the condition that the theory constantly merges and changes so that there is flexibility as the research process continues. This is a factor that the research theorists Glaser and Strauss (1968) attest to as being a major characteristic of grounded theory. In this instance, critical theory and grounded theory are seen to co-exist. These are all issues that will be discussed at length in the following sections but at this juncture it is imperative to note that a critical approach asserts the need for a problem – an issue – to be set within a context which is “...both historical and political ” (Coxon: 1996: 247).

The emphasis on critical theory – as opposed to the technicist problem solving approach – was suited to the wider parameters allowed for through the ethnographic methodology in which critical theory is inculcated, a situation which will be discussed in the following section. Similarly, by allowing for the ‘bottom up’ approach of grounded theory where those data being analysed provide the clues to where the problems are located, there are fewer chances that a ‘top down’ approach to the research was adopted with an ensuing technicist, template-like analysis. The reflexive nature of the research process emphasised by Marshall and Peters was therefore a major component of my research approach for this thesis. In combination, ethnography and grounded theory provided the methodology for the purposes of building the case study.

The Methodology of Ethnographic Research

At the beginning of my research in Karachi, I was mindful of ethnographic research. I had studied an ethnographic case study by Beatrice Avalos (1986) on Latin America, in which she investigated the reasons for school attrition amongst children of the poor in Bolivia, Chile and Peru. In her expansive, ethnographic study she employed critical theory to analyse the inequities of Andean society and thus provided an in-depth political analysis of why school attrition occurred amongst the poor. I felt an affinity with her approach to research, for it encapsulated critical, qualitative research and focused on the bottom up process where the voices of those on the ground were heard and analysed for meaning. In doing this, Avalos utilised grounded theory with the political discourse of critical analysis so that her overall research approach was deep in qualitative methodology. I had also worked with Professor Avalos³⁶ in Papua New Guinea and had learned from her the depth and possibilities of ethnographic research methods and how to approach the analysis of data through critical grounded theory. Her inculcation of critical theory to tease out the inherent inequalities of social systems lent validity to her approach. It was that approach which I wished to follow in my study of why education in Pakistan appeared to inhibit modernity and modernisation. In analysing how my research progressed, I recognise that it was Avalos' influence that has been seminal in the way I approached my research in Karachi and in the subsequent reading of the data once I returned to New Zealand. It is because of this strong influence that I focus on her work at some length in this section.

³⁶ Professor Avalos was the Dean of Education at UPNG from 1987-1993, which coincided with my time there.

Avalos states that she chose an ethnographic approach for her study in Latin America because of its

closeness to the phenomenological conception of how knowledge is constructed... Its emphasis on the description and understanding of processes involved in social events seemed to provide the only sensible means of approaching the complexities of school life....(Avalos: 1986: 23)

Establishing that ethnographic research, which is inevitably linked to anthropological methodology, is 'eclectic' and 'holistic' (ibid: 23) is not to imbue it with the pejorative of being a methodological catchall. She also emphasised the strength of the critical theory in determining how inequalities are structured through entrenched power bases and how these need to be analysed in order to see how education is structurally located to 'reproduce' such inequalities. As such, educational case studies, which view education as belonging to a wider environment than, say, to one discreet component such as a curriculum evaluation or a classroom innovation will, by epistemological necessity, include aspects of other methodologies to build a broader picture of what goes on in a given situation. This eclectic and holistic approach, by perforce, includes research that will build a picture by asking how, why and what' in a narrow, technicist and problem solving situation such as a curriculum evaluation. If a curriculum is reviewed without consulting the sum of more than a set of syllabi, then that review is merely an 'evaluation'.

Through this process I achieved an awareness of how research can be limited by any number of factors, including those imposed by research theorists who view research as tidy and cased by set and regulated patterns. The following quote

demonstrates the limitations particular scholars can place on investigation: "...many anthropologists argue that ethnographic case studies are incompatible with evaluation" (Wolcott: 1983, quoted in Crossley & Vulliamy: 1984). Such an assertion demonstrates the narrowness of those researchers involved in an evaluation that does not include the wider perspectives available through an ethnographic approach. Burns (1990: 224) attests to this:

An ethnographic approach, for example, to the everyday tasks of teaching and curriculum planning, does not define curriculum simply as "a relationship between a set of ends and a set of means"...We can view curriculum as a process in which there is constant interpretations and negotiation going on among and between teachers and students. In this sense the curriculum is the everyday activity of the classroom. The conceptual and methodological tools of ethnography get at this aspect of curriculum planning and teaching.

Avalos (1986) shows how a researcher can widen the parameters of ethnographic case study in what Ragin (1992) would call "casing". This casing allows the researcher to push as wide as she wishes in the need for data collection that brings depth to the issue being investigated. The expansion, the increased casing, is where the distinction between a case study and an evaluation occurs and brings focus to the dilemma stated by Wolcott.

In Avalos' case study of how poor schools in Latin America unwittingly aid attrition, she notes the need for an awareness of how a curriculum is linked to drop-out rates and how a "multi-level approach to ethnography" is important for the school ethnographer for

his study should be 'holistic' i.e. it should show how education is linked with the economy, the political system, local social structure, and the belief system of the people served by the schools (Avalos: 1986:24).

This broadening of scope denies the ‘mere evaluation’ legitimacy. Avalos determines this and implies strongly that such an evaluation could not be a case study. To not investigate deeply into the supposed exogenous forces of a school system that uses the particular curriculum being reviewed, would be to miss the opportunity to know what was really going on with a curriculum, with what it was supposed to be doing, with what was ‘behind’ that curriculum. In other words, without a critical approach, the underlying forces that structure social systems to reproduce inequalities cannot be measured, let alone rectified. The research objectives in an evaluation would have to be narrow indeed to not permit a wider scope and such narrow research questions would position such an investigation as being ‘an evaluation’.

The wider questioning through ethnographic approaches in which critical discourse is employed – finding the links about how knowledge is constructed – is one way in which the ideological component emerges in research. Avalos describes such an occurrence as school attrition rates as a “single social event”, and insists that an ethnographic study would find the relationships “between the single social event and other social factors and institutions” (Avalos:1986: 24). Avalos is aware that this approach would achieve an awareness of how knowledge in a given situation is socially and politically constructed. She builds up an awareness of such relationships in her work in Latin American schools and notes the relationships between individuals and the broad spectrum of social components such as educational systems, military oligarchies and the social class system. This “reproductionist theory” (ibid: 24) incorporates the macro issues I referred to earlier in this discussion. Avalos’ case study takes a micro issue – school attrition and curriculum. Through intensive investigation into what may appear to the ‘mere evaluator’ as exogenous forces,

Avalos builds and expands her case into one that seeks answers to specific problems. In this she demonstrates that anthropology and evaluation are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they work together to ‘case’ a larger picture.

The Case Study Approach

What this case was to actually be ‘a case of’ needed to be determined early on in the life of the thesis. To not have an increased focus as the research expanded would have meant an infinity of ideas and possibilities. As Ragin (1992) states, it is necessary to limit, to case the subject, in order to get clarity and to know where to proceed. This pragmatism of course cannot be assumed to be arrived at so methodically, as the evolution of this case highlights. However, it was at the empirical stage of the process that clarity, of casing, of setting limits to the empirical research arrived. What is important here is that the researcher learns what is essential to the case so he can begin to set limits, to case his investigation, to, in fact, make a case of bounded possibilities. Although new ideas and conceptions were continually evolving, this intellectualising of the facets of the case was more an aspect of grounded theory, which was, by necessity, fluid as the writing-up progressed and ideas emerged with which to both interrogate and theorise the data. Grounded theory provides a way of reflexively theorising research findings and the contexts in which they exist. However, so many contexts emerged from theorising the data that to pursue them all would have been the subject of several theses. In this situation I had to return, again and again, to Ragin’s premise that a case must be cased within borders, that parameters must be constantly renegotiated. The constant reevaluation

of the changing and porous borders of the case study, which incorporates so much within it but which must paradoxically set such limitations, asks the researcher to constantly interrogate his data for focus.

Grounded theory asks for the gradual extraction of theory from the data, as issues are tossed around, explored and expanded to build a theoretical framework around the data that the case has, in turn, framed. However, to not have a good idea of what the actual case was would have meant to meander indefinitely looking for a central focus, in fact, a case. The Venn Diagram³⁷ – an aid of grounded theory – promoted this process of clarification of what exactly the main point of the thesis was to be: the issue of the educational barriers to modernisation and the interrogation of the reasons provided by the Karachi Project as to why modernisation was being apparently inhibited. Lateral aspects of what this was a case of emerged quite late, as theory was extracted. For example, that the Karachi Project was involved in failure was a strong theme which arose only once the main data had been analysed and theorised and the paradox of their continued involvement in the reforms became clearer. Although the thesis then concentrated on this aspect of failure, it did not evolve until the main issue – the interrogation of the madrasa and government schools – had in turn uncovered the factors of class-based society and the non-secularisation of Islam. Critical theory had allowed me to dig deep into political and social processes that highlighted the structures that maintained and reproduced inequalities. Grounded theory – which was the teasing out of the theory, aided by the sharpened critical theory approach – had uncovered these lateral issues from the primary empirical data, conducted in the services of the case in which ethnographic research was the method. These lateral

³⁷ See Page 21 for the Venn Diagram which maps the conceptual framework of the thesis.

issues, however, then took on greater theoretical significance and, in turn, defined, at quite a late stage in the thesis what this was *fully* a case of.

The stone hitting the water was always central to my thinking in this respect of casing the case study. Setting limits to the investigation was vital: at what point can the researcher no longer allow for each of the ever-expanding ripples to be investigated? An answer to this question brings together the close proximity of grounded theory methodology, the case study approach and ethnographic method, the latter of which is sharpened by critical theory. Separating the case study approach from the other inter-related aspects of the overall research is therefore necessary at this juncture, in order to view how a case study approach helped shape this investigation and its outcome.

Ragin (Ragin & Becker:1992: 8) allows for the most succinct theoretical approach in defining how this case was constructed. I was unaware of his categories for establishing what a case is whilst collecting my data. In retrospect, it is his conceptual categories that bring clarity to this discussion, in relation to what *constitutes* a case as opposed to what this particular case is a case *of*. Ragin's (ibid: 8) assessment that: "Specific case categories...emerge or are delineated in the course of the research", has two meanings for me in terms of the way the case study was conducted. The first meaning ensues from the way I formulated what the case categories would be for my research. The Karachi Project itself was a category: an educational NGO. The members alerted me to the madrasa and the government schools and I was significantly interested in them, and their apparent links to being barriers to modernisation, to investigate these two 'categories'. In other words, I had

cased or categorized two social constructs in one of the senses possible in the above quote by Ragin.

The other sense arrives from the delineation having been predetermined by “at least a subset of social scientists” in that such categories as educational organisations “...exist prior to research and are collectively recognised as valid units...” (ibid: 8) by those social scientists. In both senses, my approach has been confirmed by Ragin’s analysis of how a category can be both conceptualised and utilized in a case study. I acknowledge that such categories exist in social science as pre determined units and I also affirm that I had delineated them as my research categories or units for data collection. Ragin asserts that in employing such categories as social units for research those researchers

...also view cases as empirically real and bounded, but feel no need to verify their existence or establish their empirical boundaries in the course of the research process, because cases are general and not conventionalized. These researchers usually base their case designations on existing definitions present in research literatures (Ragin & Becker: 1992: 10).

It is difficult to separate elements of grounded theory from this approach and it is through such intrinsic links that I view the interconnectedness of the various research approaches in this thesis. For, in defining what approach this case study took, it is pertinent to seeing this instrumentalist view of cases, in that they “exist to be manipulated by investigators” (ibid: 10). This allows for conventional social units such as organisations to be explored generically. Ragin argues that by exploring such generic processes as, for example, misconduct across different types of generic empirical units (eg. organisations), “it is possible to develop better theories” (ibid: 10).

The requirement, of both explaining the Karachi Project's accusations against the two schools' systems and of the Project's ultimate involvement in failure, necessitated a substantive approach. By this I mean that there was a need to case the investigation to specific organisations identified by the Karachi Project: the madrasa and the government schools. This initial boundary, or casing, not only acts to limit the vastness of possibilities in explaining Pakistan's lack of modernisation but directs attention to the central issue of the case, which is the Project's assessment of why there is a lack of modernisation. From this standpoint, the possibility of theoretical implications can grow, for it is here that the link with grounded theory emerges. The substantive requirements of explaining the bounded case of the Karachi Project itself, plus its nemeses the madrasa and the government schools, is linked to what I believe is a well defined interrogation of a bounded substantive case. Where it links, as it does in the final chapter to the larger theoretical implication of the oppositional binaries of the West/Islam civilisational divide, is best described through Glaser and Strauss' description of this process from research to grounded formal theory. It is in this process that this thesis is encapsulated:

Since substantive theory is grounded in research on one particular substantive area (work, juvenile delinquency, medical education, mental health,), it might be taken to apply only to that specific area. A theory at such a conceptual level, however, may have important general implications and relevance, and become almost automatically a springboard or stepping stone to the development of a grounded formal theory (1968: 79).

The substantive case of education in Pakistan required a wide research method such as ethnography to fully encapsulate the multiple arenas in which education operates. By accepting that the social units of schools and educational organisations

exist *a priori* ie. in that they exist prior to research, this case study followed one of the conceptual frameworks for what constitutes a case study outlined by Ragin (1992). The case study was also bounded, in that it focused on a set number of issues. Other than the two original issues identified by the Project, which needed to be interrogated in establishing that this was a case of an NGO and its response to the lack of modernity, all of the subsequent issues to be developed arose from the empirical data. How they arose was by interrogating the data from the two educational systems. The ideas, concepts and theories that emanated from those sources promoted the continuing research and theorising. Grounded theory was of major importance here as the primary methodology in establishing that this was a case of an NGO facing social, political and ideological forces that ultimately meant that it was involved in failure.

Grounded Theory: The Inductive Process

It is primarily to the work of Glaser and Strauss (1968) that grounded theory owes its origins, and it is to these authors that this discussion now turns. In so doing, the discussion attempts to achieve a greater understanding of how theorising is reached inductively and how such an approach relates to the method used in this thesis. Glaser and Strauss state that, “grounded theory is theory that fits the data” (Glaser and Strauss:1968: 261). The opposing view, one that comes from quantitative research methodology, is that data should fit the theory. In this scenario, if a researcher has a theory in which to frame his data at the outset of his data collection, he is approaching the construction of an deductive methodology, that which is associated primarily with

the quantitative research paradigm, where data is tested against an hypothesis. Glaser and Strauss note that deductive research is speculative, in that it attempts to fit data to a theory. The authors assert that this approach does not produce valid research theory. Such an approach, they argue, merely speculates and attempts at a reformulation of other's speculations (Glaser and Strauss:1968: 261). The following quotation contrasts the deductive approach and summarises the grounded theory argument; the quotation also reflects the approach to the generation of theory that this thesis has taken:

The simple fact that one cannot find the data for testing speculative theory should be enough to disqualify its further use, for this surely indicates that it just does not fit the real world! Therefore, why should we continue to assume it should fit or have relevant and powerful explanatory variables? Why not take the data and develop from them a theory that fits and works, instead of wasting time and good men in attempts to fit a theory based on "reified" ideas of culture and social structure? Generating grounded theory is what most of us end up doing, even if we start out to fit an existing theory to our data (Glaser and Strauss:1968: 262).

Specifically, this work has used conceptual categorisations which follow Glaser and Strauss' formula for grounded theory:

In discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept" (Glaser and Strauss:1968: 21).

The "diagramme" in Chapter One of this thesis illustrates this process.

The use of "diagramming", a term coined by Strauss (Star: 1997: 2), is commonly used in grounded theory for: "Diagrammes show how the social world is textured, and how the textured world is socially organised. The diagrammes freed up a way of

thinking about relationships, including both the material world and such things as conversations, gestures, and the making of boundaries.” In attempting to make sense of the wealth of knowledge that is generated in data collection, the diagramming of links is important. As Star indicates, the issue of refining the data and reducing it to ‘a case of something’ is helped by such organising. Here Becker’s pragmatism is linked to such skills, for in asking: “What is it a case of?”, the diagramming so much employed in grounded theory research, finds a method of aiding the researcher in this quest. In systematising the data into an organised whole, a case, the researcher has come to the point where theorising enters a circular level, a level where theory is generated from the data to explain the data. The question then arises: To what extent is the inductive nature of grounded theory disturbed by preconceived theories, experiences and ideas held by the researcher?

It is difficult for any researcher to approach a project without preconceived ideas or even exposure to a subject inherent to the topic being investigated.

Of course, the researcher does not approach reality as a *tabula rasa*. He must have a perspective that will help him see relevant data and abstract significant categories from his scrutiny of the data (Glaser and Strauss: 1968: 23).

In my biographical details in Chapter One I clarified what influences had guided my thinking on the West/Islam oppositional binary and those issues which led me to become interested in the subject of this thesis which is the quest for modernisation in an Islamic Republic. I went to Pakistan on the MFAT consultancy with conceptual categories: aid and development, schooling, Islam. The conceptual categories were useful for the evaluation. The categories were within the framework I had to work within for the TOR and aided my investigation of the curriculum. But once my

interest moved from the evaluation to the modernisation of education and the modern Muslims who were attempting this venture, my questions began to fall outside of these categories. Certainly, the new questions, which reflected the new issues to investigate, expanded all of the conceptual categories.

What I observed – the phenomenon of Westernised Muslims attempting to modernise a traditional education system – asked me to look beyond the original conceptual framework of these original categories. In framing new questions for situations I had not before been exposed to (madrasa; Pakistan’s public school system; Islamism; Pakistani history; modernising Muslims) I had to move inductively. The inductive methodology employed is underpinned by grounded theory. In my situation, as I made this shift by moving from the safe territory of the evaluation to new uncharted territory, I began to approach my research findings with the aid of a necessarily expanded theoretical framework. While inductive research asks the researcher to find theory from the data, there is a need to have a strong conceptual background in order guide the questions, the reasoning and, ultimately, to bring forth the most appropriate theory to explain the data. Susan Star (1997: 7) asserts that to think of grounded theory as being permissible only by inducing new, uncharted theory from data is an absurdity. She notes Strauss’ contention that few social scientists are geniuses who construct new and vital theories. With this salient point in mind, the researcher can draw upon theory used in the past to enrich both his own work and, it is hoped, to improve upon the theory being drawn upon. Star highlights this point in an article on Anselm Strauss’ contribution to grounded theory:

In his article “Discovering new theory from previous theory” (1970), Anselm noted that one could use another’s ideas to build complex ideas without

violating the grounded notion of empirical faithfulness...The common sense notion of “grounded” as simply empirical, or inductive, is too sparse. One can take a concept from someone else’s work and use it to extend a grounded conceptual model. (Star:1997: 7).

Continuing on a theme of how grounded theory allows for the use of multiple sources of inspiration, Star discloses below the advantages of a methodology that allows for the incorporation of information that will inform the researcher’s quest for relevant conceptual material with which to theorise:

The result of this eclecticism was not actually a lack of discipline or of structure. Rather the result was a freedom to make sociology anywhere. It was a freedom to make links between fiction, lived experience, and a range of forms of representation (Star:1997: 7)

Combined with the intensive reading of Pakistani newspapers, educational reports, indeed a multiplicity of literature, I began to feel comfortable with the expanded framework of the study I was embarked on. Having decided that the Karachi Project members were my primary sources of empirical data, I needed to interrogate the issues intrinsic to their views on education and society in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The interrogation of these issues, which constitute in effect the oxymoron of “modern Islam”, meant that my conceptualisations had to be recast. Indeed, as Star (1997: 1) notes, concepts are being constantly changed and modified throughout the whole process of working within grounded theory. Since 1997 when I left Karachi I have maintained an intense email correspondence with members of the Karachi Project. It is their emails that I have included in this thesis as the writing has progressed over three years. This data has not substantiated the theoretical explanation but has led it forward. Only by interrogating the data – the literature and the empirical evidence – could I achieve grounded theory.

Nuances emerged from what may have appeared as theoretical categories that were too simple for what is a complex sociological case study. Thus, the categories of Islam, the West/Islam binary, traditional versus modern education, incompetent public schools systems; these categories emerged reconstituted by the major theme of the apparent contradiction of modernising Islam. This was new terrain and one that eventuated from the constant analysis of the data and the evolving categories through the process of grounded theory. Failure is inevitable for the Karachi Project's agenda. The interrogation of the oxymoron points to this. It is around the evolving nature of grounded theory that the story of this case study is located.

Conclusion

This thesis evolved from a seemingly straightforward evaluation of a curriculum. From the very beginning of the evaluation I had noticed that the TOR asked for a limited technicist, problem-solving approach. That it was too straightforward alerted me to the need to extend the evaluation into a more far-reaching investigation in order to satisfy my need that the children who would be using the curriculum would be better served by it. This evaluation turned into an ethnographic research assignment that looked at the wider socio-economic, cultural and political dimensions of the society in which the curriculum was to be utilised. The utilisation of a critical theoretical approach aided me in this quest. At this point I realised that I had bounded my research and that in casing the areas to be investigated I had indeed 'made a case'. Making a case has two meanings: the first being that the issues are set within limits. The second meaning is that the issues have a point, in that it is a case of something, a

focused and articulated topic. In this event, the case was also one that conformed to Ragin's conceptualisation of a case, that is, a case focused on categories that were bounded conceptions prior to research.

How the meaning was to evolve from this primary focus was to come from the way research findings were analysed. Rather than applying the theory to the data, the thesis methodology took the opposite approach in allowing the findings to utilise theories inductively in order to offer explanations. Thus, from an evaluation a wider ethnographic research approach was bounded and focused into a case of an educational system in Pakistan. With gathering momentum the focus of the case changed to the education, modernisation, Islam 'case'. But this change – or rather metamorphosis – was fed by the primary data which alerted me to wider more personally interesting subjects – and thus eventually to my 'cased case'. This process included a critical analysis of social and historical issues. The findings were interrogated through such analyses. Thus, in turn, the case generated its theoretical implications through grounded methodology that interrogated the research findings for substantive meaning. The research configuration was reflexive, with the research components – a critical analysis approach, ethnography and grounded theory – each drawing on the other for methodological and existential support. What evolved, I feel, is a rich and valuable case, which provides insight into how modernity and modernisation in Pakistan are thwarted by structural barriers with deep historical and social roots. This case study demonstrates, through its wide investigation, that no amount of tinkering by a small NGO will effectively ameliorate the poor educational provision in Pakistan, let alone induce that which the Karachi Project so desires: modernity and modernisation in the Islamic Republic.

Chapter Three

Presenting the Data

Introduction

Chapters One and Two discussed the research configuration utilised in this thesis. In this chapter, the data are presented in order to provide an in-depth view of how my experience in Pakistan drew me towards the eventual focus of this case study, and to show the ways in which the original Terms of Reference informed the case study. The data collected for the evaluation informed me of the complex issues which eventually led me to the question of the modernisation of education in the Islamic Republic. This empirical data is presented here verbatim and with minimal comment, as such it testifies to the grounded theory approach that I took in this thesis. The theory was slowly extracted from the data and the data was constantly used to build my questions into deeper structural understanding as the research progressed. The expanded ethnographic nature of the research is also presented here and points to the way that research method evolved as the research progressed. What is of prime importance here is that the research is seen to evolve and is thus a reflection of the way the evaluation metamorphosed into the case study of the modernisation of education in Pakistan.

The Research Path

1. The MFAT Terms of Reference (TOR).
2. Observations and discussions at Junior Model Government Girls Primary School, Frere Town, Karachi.
3. The wealthy private school: visit to Nasra Primary.
4. A middle class school: visit to the CES School.
5. Working-class school: a visit to Habib Girls' School
6. Lower-middle-class/working-class school: a visit to Shahwallah School.
7. Visits to two schools not involved in the integrated curriculum.
8. Visit to a “traditional” village school: Tharpakar Desert Region.
9. Discussing the integrated curriculum at the Karachi Project offices.
10. Meeting and discussion with parents from the participating schools.
11. Questionnaire for teachers involved in the integrated curriculum.
12. Teacher training: head teachers' comments.
13. Discussion on Islam and the curriculum.

The MFAT Terms of Reference

Introduction

The TOR were written by MFAT and provided me with an initial guide to what my duties as an evaluator would entail. The TOR list some 15 specific objectives. I was to evaluate Book One and Book Two of the newly written integrated curriculum used by the Karachi Project in Class One and Class Two of the eleven participating schools. It was this evaluation that the New Zealand government was funding.

Content relevance and the curriculum

The issue of the relevance of the curriculum content is the primary criterion for evaluation in the MFAT Terms of Reference. On evaluating the curriculum books for the issue of relevance, before I left New Zealand, I was alerted to consider the social class that the curriculum was seemingly designed for. From my experience in curriculum design and content it was apparent that this was a curriculum not designed for poor children in an Islamic society – and if it were for such an audience, then there were serious questions to be asked. The other objectives in the TOR relate more directly to pedagogy and, although important, are subsidiary to the main issue of discussion, which centres on ideological and cultural concerns emanating from the evaluation. It is with the issue of relevance, and how this issue leads directly into both the micro issues and macro issues noted above, that I am primarily concerned. I will report on the other pedagogic issues as they relate to the project and in their degrees of associated importance or links with the research issue disclosed.

There were no criteria or definitions provided by the New Zealand Government as to what ‘relevance’ might mean. The term relevance to me can only take on meaning when that term is placed into the context of what is being judged or assessed for supposed relevance. What may be ‘relevant’ for children in an educational setting in Wellington may be irrelevant for children in Karachi. Relevance is relative, and the relative nature of the equation is determined by religious, cultural, social, gender, economic and other factors.

For my second masters thesis, I had conducted a content analysis of four textbooks used in the Papua New Guinea high school system. This content analysis sought to ascertain how relevant that content was, according to criteria I had devised that located relevant education as “education suitable for children who will have little chance of entering the formal waged system and who will in all likelihood return to their rural setting and be involved in subsistence agriculture” (Buchanan: 1993). Taking the preconceived idea that in Karachi I would be working with children from a low socio-economic group, and using the spirit of that same criterion for evaluation used in Papua New Guinea, I had made a tentative assessment of the Karachi curriculum documents by judging it less than relevant for such students.

I had, prior to leaving Wellington, and from previous experience of working on educational development projects, supposed that the curriculum would be for children of a low socio-economic background. The MFAT policy documents, as noted previously, point to the objective of New Zealand’s aid being for “the poor” and those “most in need”. In Wellington I had been informed by the MFAT official in charge of the programme that the funding was “for an education programme for poor people”. I had therefore researched materials on education in Pakistan prior to leaving New Zealand. The materials on the subject had left no doubt that there were huge imbalances in educational provision between rich and poor, for Pakistan does not feature well on an international list outlining national educational provision³⁸. This situation is made clear by the following figures:

Pakistan has one of Asia’s worst systems of government-sponsored education. In 1990 its literacy rate was 35 percent and its literacy rate for women was 21

percent. Primary schools enrolled about a third of eligible students, and of those students only 58 percent completed grade 5. These figures contrast sharply with China and Indonesia, also low-income countries, where total literacy rate in 1990 were 75 percent and enrollment of all and female primary school students reached 100% (Warick & Reimers: 1996).

At this first meeting I asked the group³⁹ what they considered ‘relevance’ meant in relation to the curriculum and to the students that it was being used with:

Something which might be appropriate to the situation at hand.

In education, in our curriculum where things the children learn are relevant, good for them.

Relevant is when we have ideas which might be meaningful and certainly what the children will need for their future lives.

Where we see education as more than just what clerics want. Where religion is not the main thing as we have in this country a situation where religion is education and education is religion.

Does our reliance on terrible education hold us back? Is our development not held back by the poor quality of our education? I say yes it is and we are trying to make things relevant to the children of this country by giving a better curriculum. It is our desire to implement this curriculum.

Observations and Discussions at Junior Model Government Girls’ Primary School, Frere Town, Karachi

Frere Town School is situated in a busy downtown area of Karachi. It is a single sex girls’ school and all the teachers are female. The environs of the school are those characterised by the Director of the Karachi Project as being: “Typical inner city Karachi where there is not so much poverty as hard living for people”. People work

³⁹ I asked all the members of this group if I could record their comments for use in my research and for the MFAT report. I was given permission by all of the members. There was a long discussion on what research ethics entails and on confidentiality. The group were clear that they had no problem with their comments being recorded. I informed them that no names would be used.

here so there is no absolute poverty as you will see in the city outskirts.” The streets were clogged with traffic and the buildings were less salubrious than those of the Karachi Project offices and the surrounding area, from where we had traveled to visit the Frere Town School. The Director informed me that parents of students were: “working class, clerks, government servants, peons, policemen and also several girls belong to Hindu families and their parents are from the downtrodden *shudra* caste...they are sweepers....”

The school is surrounded by high walls and there are some trees in the small courtyard play area. The building is three storied and is somewhat shabby. It appeared to me to be crowded. The Director informed me that this was

not a typical Government school of the country as it has a good building, there is furniture,...you see government schools generally are in very bad physical condition: overflowing sewage right inside the schools, dilapidated school buildings, no roof, broken or no furniture.... (November 21: 1997)

The Karachi Group had financed renovations. They had also funded extra teaching staff in order to reduce the student numbers to forty per class as opposed to the eighty in non-innovation classes.

As further background to the Frere School visit, it is important to note the various opinions expressed by Karachi Project committee members about government schools and private schools – a subject which will involve greater discussion in Chapters Five and Six. It was pointed out to me by Project members, prior to my visiting the Frere School – and on many occasions subsequent to my visit – that the Karachi Project had selected a Government school in which to attempt the innovation of the integrated

curriculum as a “political statement”. By “political”, committee members explained, they meant that if the reforms were to work in a demonstration Government school, then the Sindh Government would be, it was hoped, influenced to provide more of their schools for the reform project. That this is “political” is a recognition that the government schools are not adequately providing sound, innovative education for the students. This negative assessment of government schools, I was informed, is borne out by the proliferation of private schools in Pakistan. Private schools are seen as being able to deliver a more comprehensive and quality education. There are private schools for all socio-economic classes, but they exist primarily for the middle to upper classes. It was the expressed hope of the Karachi Project to turn this negative assessment into a positive one, by providing a quality integrated curriculum which would “increase in value the type of education available for our children in Pakistan in government schools. By trialling this in the wealthier private schools we will see what has to be ironed out first, what can trickle down.”

In November 1997, Frere School had 480 students. Students are enrolled from the starting class of grade one and can continue to grade ten, which is the final year of secondary school. The Karachi Project has permission from the Sindh Government to implement its reforms with the integrated curriculum in the primary grades only –

grades one through five⁴⁰. In 1997, when this study took place, the integrated curriculum was being used in grades one and two. Frere school runs a morning shift, from seven in the morning until noon, and an afternoon shift, from 12:30 pm until 5:30 pm, in order to accommodate for the number of students living in the vicinity.

The Director had arranged a focus group at Frere School, in order for me to conduct research for the purposes of the MFAT evaluation and report. The Director acted as translator as some of the conversation was in Urdu, the official language of instruction in all government schools. I met with nine teachers, plus the two head teachers of the morning and afternoon shifts respectively. We met in a small, dark room, which I was informed was the teachers' room. I was also informed that there was conflict as the afternoon shift head teacher was opposed to the integrated curriculum and thought that the teachers' room should remain as a classroom and she wanted it back. Before the integrated curriculum was introduced there was no teachers' room. The Karachi Project made sure the teachers had a room as, prior to the adoption of the integrated curriculum, teachers had to do all their work on the verandah.

The afternoon shift head teacher left the room after a few minutes of the focus group beginning. A few minutes later another woman entered the teachers' room and handed a note to the morning shift head teacher. The note was read out in English and then handed to all at the meeting, myself included. The note was written in English: "something very strange and for whose benefit?" was the question asked by some of the staff. The note asked that the teachers' room be vacated immediately and that the

⁴⁰ Government schools define primary as grades 1-5; private English language medium schools define primary as grades 1-6 in order for those schools to conform to United Kingdom Cambridge exams.

room be cleared of all materials so that, from this point on, it could return to its proper use as a classroom.

I report the details of this situation as it relates directly to the problems encountered by the Karachi Project in implementing the reforms. “She is not a progressive teacher and there are jealousies and she is always against reforms as she is a didacticist,” reported one of the staff in English.

She owns a private school herself and is never here and the morning head is and there are rivalries and it is all because she is opposed to reforms as they are too new for her. She hates reforms and doesn’t allow for teacher training classes here even.

I was interested to discover what the teachers felt about the relevancy of the integrated curriculum. First, however, it must be noted that the integrated curriculum at Frere had been translated in Urdu from the English version. The Director said,

The English version is used in the wealthier schools because English is always the medium of instruction in wealthier schools. Those schools all follow the Cambridge Examination system so, of course, English is the lingua franca, but English cannot be used here at Frere.

I was to learn much more about the politics of language and education and the ideological importance of their relationship. Briefly, and to provide some immediate context, a comment by a Muslim cleric, at a non-secular school I visited on the outskirts of Karachi, provided insight into the dynamics of this situation. “Urdu is the language of the poor and the language most associated with Islamic education. It is national language, an expression of Islam and of Pakistan.”

In terms of the relevance of the integrated curriculum at Frere, school the teachers all expressed a desire to see content which was relevant to the children of the socio-economic class most represented at Frere School. The comment of one teacher – translated into English by the Director – captures, as I was informed by the Director, the overall feeling of the teachers present:

The integrated curriculum is good in that it mixes all the subjects, but it is not good for children from this district because they don't have things like electric ovens and all those things we see in the curriculum. It is for children of richer people who live in the best parts of Karachi.

The problem of lack of relevance appeared to arise from the fact that the integrated curriculum had been written by the teachers and owners of the private wealthy schools, who represented the major stake holders in the Karachi Project's integrated curriculum innovation programme. These writers, all fluent in English, and (as I discovered) all members of wealthier classes than those represented at Frere School, had translated the integrated curriculum into Urdu for the Government School. A direct translation, the Director stated:

...did not work well, we know this. The children here do not have access to television to the outside world to the ideas of the other countries to the things in the integrated curriculum but we use it and we know we must change it but it's difficult to get the resources to do so.

I will add at this point, that a meeting with the integrated curriculum writers, subsequent to the visit to Frere School, further clarified for me information pertinent to the discussion at hand. Those writers were all involved in some capacity with education in the wealthy schools participating in the integrated curriculum reforms. I asked them if they thought that the curriculum content was suitable for the children at

Frere, and other government schools where I had been told “the main target of our innovation is directed”. I was informed that there would be no immediate re-writing of the current integrated curriculum.

Once this curriculum for our schools is evaluated by you and it is re-written to make those changes, we will make the changes and then that will be that. We will have our curriculum and we have worked hard to get one and we need then to concentrate on our schools again as we have put a lot of time into this curriculum. Years. Years.

When asked if the Karachi Project was therefore seen to be working primarily with schools that were directing their energies to wealthy patrons, who needed a curriculum which reflected their own values, I was informed that this was indeed the case.

The curriculum is perhaps not suitable for the government schools but we are trialing it there just to see if the integration part works; if the content is not relevant, then that is another matter and that will have to be addressed and we will have found that out really. All birds cannot be killed with one stone.

The teachers at Frere School were asked if they incorporated other curricula materials to supplement the integrated materials, which were, by their own admission, “not relevant”. Through the translator one teacher responded that:

Autumn and spring are not things we have in Karachi and if we talk to these children about these things it takes so long especially as they are just five years old and we have to explain so much. Surely if they had television or parents who helped them who talked about spring then we could just talk about seasons which we do not have here. It makes it hard to do this as we have no materials about spring and autumn, which are not our seasons.

Another teacher commented that:

These children are from poor families and what is in the curriculum we have to change all the time because there are no reference points for them. It is strange, much of this material in the integrated curriculum. It adds so much to our work to then have to find new materials.

I was also interested in gender issues and how gender related to relevance, as requested in the MFAT Terms of Reference. The teachers all felt that there were sufficient materials in the curriculum for girls, “given that there is so much that is strange anyway but there are many pictures of girls in the materials.” In taking the topic into the realm of Islam, and the possible relationship between the pictorial representation of girls as ‘Western’ as represented in the materials supplied in the integrated curriculum, I was met with some silence. The Director informed me in English that this was “a subject perhaps new to the teachers who are not properly trained and will not think things out like that.” I refer here to the particular pictures in the materials I had noted of little girls in very short dresses with their panties showing⁴¹, pictures which had been taken from a British textbook.

An issue related to gender and the integrated curriculum that the teachers brought up, centred on their asking me what they should do about graded assessments. It was explained that if a girl gets a fail grade this does not look good to parents – a situation that was occurring in the new system. I asked if it was necessary to give grades for children so young, and whether a result of grade-related work was that it provided parents with an added incentive to take their female children out of school. The figures for female school attrition in Pakistan⁴² did not, I felt, bode well in a system that relegated five year olds as failures. After considerable discussion in Urdu, the Director informed me that the group was of the opinion that there should be a

⁴¹ In terms of ‘cute’...knicker bocker type frilly panties.

⁴² For attrition figures see Warick & Reimers: Hope or Despair? (1996)

discontinuation of grades in the integrated curriculum, precisely because there was evidence to suggest that girls would be withdrawn from school if they received bad marks. Such an event had not yet occurred in the one year that the curriculum had been used, but the teachers expressed the fear that it might happen. The assessment system for the integrated curriculum had not been fully developed and questions about assessment were often raised in subsequent school visits. “Actually,” one teacher said through the translator, “I never give a zero because the girls might be taken from school. ‘If she is stupid, why educate her?’ might be the result.”

It was to the topic of teacher training that the discussion moved next, a topic, I was to discover, that was at the heart of the problems and issues of teaching and education in Pakistan. “Our major problem in using this new curriculum is that we have no training in it. No one trained us to use it. ‘Here it is,’ they said. ‘The new curriculum.’ ” This was a common complaint from all of the teachers and was readily accepted by the Director who stated that “there has not been time to do teacher training.”

“We are trained by the Government and we did not get this kind of modern training. This is modern education....” a teacher stated. “We could do more, we could incorporate more information about ourselves, about what is Pakistani if we had time and training.” “We are busy and we are poorly paid and we get little help really,” was another comment. There was general agreement amongst the teachers that they had been ‘stuck’ with the innovation. All agreed that, in fact, they supported the idea of the changes, and that the changes were good, for they ended the rote

learning style so common in Pakistan but that “it’s all too much too fast and we had no training.”

The teachers also stated that they had little economic incentive to “work as hard as it takes to get this innovation really moving.” They noted that teachers in the wealthier private schools were paid sometimes “six times as much despite not having teaching qualifications.” This pay discrepancy, and the lack of qualifications in private schools involved in the innovations, was corroborated by the Director who stated:

It’s seen by many head teachers (of private schools) that to have middle class ladies teaching the students is better. Often teachers are not middle class and the students suffer or rather the teachers don’t know about the students’ needs in those schools. Also, Government trained teachers are trained in rote learning...it’s better to get untrained housewives and teach them how we want it done in the schools.

A final, but important, issue raised in this focus group was the teachers’ contention that involving them in the integrated curriculum was fine but that this also necessitated new teaching styles, such as student-centred learning. This was also seen as positive by the teachers, but they said “we will see the students returned to the same rote learning and squeezed again into a class of eighty students as soon as they leave the integrated class one and class two curriculum.” This raised issues of sustainability of the programme. Adopting new teaching styles, a necessity inherent in the integrated curriculum, was a major problem for these teachers, as indeed it proved to be for all of the teachers in the innovation across the socio-economic divide of the participating schools. The Frere teachers noted that

We are not trained to do student-centred teaching. The students only have some classes that are integrated then they return to the non-integrated curriculum classes with eighty kids and then that's all the rote learning approach again, all in one day. So it's confusing for them and for us.

From this discussion, it appeared that teachers were confused and anxious about the dual nature of the reforms: student-centred learning was expected, as was full use of the integrated curriculum materials. These two new aspects to their traditional teaching had not been suitably addressed with teacher training. It will be noted in this research that time and again the issue of inadequate teacher training provision arises.

The meeting ended when the afternoon head teacher entered the room and demanded the attention of the morning head teacher over the matter of the staff room.

The Wealthy Private School: Visit to Nasra Primary

Two days after my visit to Frere School, I visited Nasra Primary, a privately owned school. The school was situated in a quiet, tree-lined street in what I was informed was a "quality suburb." The homes, behind high walls, were large and well maintained. Security guards were stationed outside many of the homes in the street where the school is located. I was informed that the owners of these homes were upper middle class: politicians, business people, senior Government people.

Nasra School is situated in what was a private home very similar to the homes in the surrounding streets. It is spacious and elegant and much of the building is made of marble. There are 250 male and female students enrolled. All classes are co-

educational. The students were dressed in pristine uniforms. All the staff are females including the head teacher and her assistant. The school adopted the integrated curriculum because in the words of the head teacher:

We need to have excellent education for our students and not rote learning. We want quality education that will provide for the children's future. They will study here and then probably study abroad as is so often happens with children from wealthier homes. We are committed to this type of education because it reflects what is going on in modern education elsewhere and we must catch up.

Class observation

I observed a forty-minute, integrated class. There were fifteen girls and boys – about equal representation of each. All were aged five years. The teacher used a book about birds and conservation published by the Karachi Project. The children appeared to be literate, for they followed the story as the teacher read and they stood, on occasions, to read themselves. I was informed later that these children all read and write when they come to school at age four or five. “They have committed parents. Their brothers or sisters and parents help them.” In answer to my question about curricula content the informant told me:

They (the children) also have access to television and other forms of media so they are well informed about things. No, for them the integrated curriculum, the content is not so much a problem. No, autumn and spring these are concepts they have no problems with. They would learn from other means about these so we can refer to them, yes.

In the observation the teacher was intent (but with varying levels of success) on achieving student-centred learning. I asked later if this were entirely for my benefit, but was assured that, because of the nature of the integrated curriculum and the

teacher's guide, the teacher herself was doing "what she would normally do." The lesson consisted mostly of teacher questioning, so that the 'student-centredness' was, in effect, the teacher asking questions to which students replied. The answers were, in my estimation, as the class proceeded, provided by boys in about seventy per cent of the cases, where the question was either directed at a student or left open for anyone to answer. There was little control from the teacher so that the children became more and more out of control as the class progressed. The noise level rose and rose. At one point the head teacher came to the door and looked in and gave me a wry smile.

The teacher was using materials that integrated mathematics with the subject of birds and asked questions, from the book provided about such things as "How many birds are in the picture?" "What is six and six?" "Do you like birds?" "Do you like six birds or seven birds better?" "Why do we need to love birds and protect them?" There was much content in the book which could be appreciated as relevant to conservation themes. After some twenty minutes of this the teacher appeared exhausted and stopped the lesson. She asked for one minute of "silent time" which, when compared to the noise of the previous twenty minutes, was somewhat quieter. The children appeared free to get up and play during this time and many visited friends at other desks and whispered loudly to each other.

The teacher then called for attention and began to read a story, which she said was about "Ibrahim and Mecca and birds." The story proceeded in English with some Urdu and followed the themes of birds and mathematics. The students were absolutely quiet and no one moved behind their desks. The story was obviously integrating moral aspects also, for there were references to what good children should

do. “Then there appeared hundreds of birds. Each bird carried three stones in its beak and they dropped the pea sized stones on the army of Ibrahim and everyone was killed.” The students remained quiet at the end of this story. The teacher then asked individual students to tell her how many birds there were and how many stones each carried in its beak. The students put up their hands which was the first time they had done so in response to a question. On obtaining the correct answers, the class ended.

It should be noted here that this was one of the few times I heard any reference to religious ideas or history in the classes I observed. This is a significant point, in respect to what constitutes ‘relevant’ within the integrated curriculum, for, as most of the material in the curriculum is taken from British books, there was little reference to local conditions.

Interview with head teacher: Nasra School

This interview was conducted in English in the head teacher’s small, well equipped office. With her permission I recorded her responses to my questions which I quote below:

JB⁴³: I enjoyed the class. The themes seemed well integrated.

Head: The teacher needs more control. You must understand one thing about our education system. It’s about training of women. We have ladies who need work even middle class ladies like these ones for one reason or another they need work. We take them. It is difficult with our costs to make ends meet as an owner of a school. Although we pay them very much better than in government schools....Females teach here and only females as it would be unsafe to have men, that is still the perception by parents. The only way in fact for a middle

⁴³ JB refers to the author, Jeff Buchanan

class woman to get a job is to teach. It's safe for all concerned and there is no power attached to teaching. None. Women cannot teach in offices.

JB: The control issue. Has that got anything to do with gender?⁴⁴

Head: You saw that boy, the one by the door who was misbehaving and loud. The boy resents the female authority. His first reaction with females is to use terms of address in Urdu which refer to females as lesser. There are many issues here, the privilege he gets as a boy and that's not all. He's from a strict Muslim house and the father won't let him draw figures in school or at home in accordance with Islam. But he shows his mother and she tells him not to show his father and the teachers here are upset because he has told them off for being improper...well, it all just goes on and on.

JB: How does power and education function in Pakistan?

Head: You have to understand that in Sindh everything is controlled by five or six powerful feudal clans. Twenty years ago my mother told me a true story about two fighting feudal clans in rural Sindh. The rivals started schools in each other's area because they knew that with education their enemies would be crushed. Knowledge will bring them down. We fight battles here with education.

JB: And women in the power equation?

Head: Women are submissive. And they know they are submissive so they take control in the house. There they reign one against the other and I don't know why they do this and I'd have to be a psychiatrist to find out.

JB: Can education change the situation for women in Pakistan?

Head: What sort of education? Mullah education? Western education? Both have issues of gender in them and you know which one will emphasise equality. Yes, it's good to have gender issues in the curriculum, but focus on the boys. You have to change their attitudes...tell them...show them. 'This is not how powerful boys act'. At a young stage the girls are the bullies then at another stage about five or six the boys become bullies. But in Pakistan it's too hard to put into a book something like 'girls and boys are equal and girls should go out and work'. We have to say in a book things which are gradual. [On prompting]... Anyway now middle class boys are way behind girls academically and boys are spoiled and won and they come to class and they misbehave and girls do better. Boys are weak and spoiled and are not used to hard work.

JB: Are you satisfied with the content in the integrated curriculum.

Head: I see what you have been saying since you came here [to Karachi] about relevance. It does seem silly that we have no mention of our own city or province or country. I guess we were trying so hard to get away from those influences about nationalisms (sic) that we... I ...those of us who wrote the

⁴⁴ I had discussed the concept of gender and education and power with the head at a previous meeting at the Karachi Project offices.

curriculum. We took from foreign books. But we didn't see that the content was totally Western as you point out. But then again, we are training our children for the Western life they will use computers, we look to the future.

JB: It seems to me there are parallels with Turkey and what happened there under Ataturk.

Head: Yes, yes, we are decades behind. I was appalled by what women wear there when I visited but then...it's all a power thing. A woman in full covering will be raped and assaulted because she looks afraid, is weak. Women get raped around here all dressed up like that and we won't complain, we are submissive."

JB: On teacher training and the curriculum, what should be done?

Head: Have you provide us some training. Honestly, we see our weaknesses and one of them is that there are no trained teacher trainers here who can do integrated curriculum things or new ideas or student-centred things. It's a real problem. Which is why we applied for help from the New Zealand Government. I just wish we'd had help with the curriculum before we wrote it as now it's all done and we are exhausted but we see clearly now that there is so much irrelevant material, that you can't just get teachers to do new teaching techniques and an integrated curriculum at the same time. Ah!

A Middle -class School: Visit to the CES School

This is a middle-range school, in that, of the eleven participating schools, it falls into a category I label as 'middle' in socio-economic status. Nasra School is the wealthiest, the Frere Town Government School and Shah Walliat the poorest. The head teacher at CES noted: "The children here are from well off families, not the top of the range but well off. This is a middle class, well, upper middle class, area with some middle class children, a mixture if you like." The area surrounding the school is wealthy. The homes are large and surrounded by gardens and high walls. The school itself is in an old home, a large building. There are 174 children attending the school. As I entered the school, the children were being photographed by a father of one of the girls; it was explained he was taking a class photo of his six year old girl on her birthday. The father was the head of a major international film company. The

children were all in uniform. It is a mixed gender school with a fifty-fifty gender ratio.

Interview with the head teacher

I had had several meetings, prior to this meeting, with the head, as she had been one of the most enthusiastic and supportive members of the writing of the integrated curriculum. I recorded the following interview with her permission of which I reproduce selected parts:

JB: You may have recognised my concern that the integrated curriculum is not relevant to the children in poor and lower middle class schools.

Head: It may not be relevant to my own children here who are from middle to upper class homes [laughter].

JB: Can you explain?

Head: Well, you're right about not mentioning Pakistan or Sindh or even Karachi and the Director is also now aware of that omission too...we simply just left it all out. We were trying so hard to get the nouns and verbs and mathematics and things right, to integrate.

JB: What about vocational content for children, a less academic approach?

Head: No. Parents, the parents here demand academic. They are all academic. Even the poor ones, the children, the parents, in the poorer schools, in urban areas especially, no, you must have academic. It's their chance. It's their way in. Or way out of poverty they think...I mean, this is a sophisticated city...parents want the best. We all offer Cambridge English exams.

JB: What do you think about schools like yours that are using the integrated curriculum being used as the guinea pigs? I mean, I have heard it stated that there is a trickle down effect. You will polish this new curriculum. Then it

can be used in the poor schools.

Head: Can it? Will it? Are there not major problems in translating it into the needs of those schools? Can you just move it down like that?

JB: Well, I mean, isn't the Project learning what difficulties there are with the curriculum by having it done here as a feasibility, a trial?

Head: A trial for how it works in wealthy schools perhaps and we have our own problems, not with the curriculum but with the teachers as of course they are not trained well. The relevance thing here is not really an issue as it is relevant to our children. They come from homes like this, their parents. It's the poor who will have no use for it.

Note: I have included the following anecdote as it is pertinent to the subject of relevance. When I arrived at the school I was not feeling well. Immediately the head teacher had called her doctor to come over; the doctor has two children at the same school. At the above juncture in the conversation the doctor arrived and after questioning me said I had dysentery. We discussed dysentery in Karachi and he stated that it was a major problem. The problem arises he said because of very poor hygiene. He said he often came to this school to give talks about health and that such an education was vital for children of all a classes. Infectious diseases are the "major killer in Karachi and these diseases are all preventable and, as you will know, that is something for educators to think about." He said that the curriculum in the schools, even in the wealthy schools, should be much more focused on health issues, on issues of civic concern. He said that he had noticed that the new curriculum was light on such topics, that there was room for such issues "and not just health."

Class observation at CES School.

I observed four, forty-minute classes at this school. They were all generally well taught with respect to student-centred learning, in the sense that the students were not rote learning. Student-centred teaching is thought to mean that teachers ask students questions. The notion of group work is somewhat alien to the minds of the teachers I observed. The curriculum being followed in all of the classes was that of the integrated curriculum. I noted that there was not one mention of local conditions in any of the classes. No Urdu was spoken. The children responded well to the teachers and were engaged in learning. Boys and girls were attended to equally in the class and appeared to be at ease with each other. There was no gender segregation in the class, with girls and boys sitting next to each other. At the end of the teaching day, I gave a two-hour class for the teachers on how to teach an integrated curriculum with a student-centred focus. There were two male teachers at this school a reflection, I was informed, of “the head teacher’s modern way of viewing education.”

Working-class School: a Visit to Habib Girls’ School

Habib’s Girls’ School is included in this report as being representative of a working class school. It is one of the city’s largest schools and provides an education for some 700 students. The environs of the school are ordered and clean, with rows of working class apartments in the surrounding areas. The school itself is large and spacious. There are many trees in the large school grounds, and there is a well- equipped library and play centre for the students. The buildings are all three- or four storey, and well

maintained, and all the classrooms I visited had good lighting, desks, boards and plentiful chalk.

“The area reflects the school’s students,” the head teacher informed me. “At our school we have tried hard to make sure that girls from poor families can attend. We have been here for thirty years.” The over-all head teacher has been in her current position for twenty-five years. There is a head teacher for each of the primary, intermediate and secondary divisions. The integrated curriculum had been in operation at Habib for two years prior to my visit, but there were issues with it being implemented, which centred on the primary teachers’ lack of commitment to the innovation. This situation was not unlike that at Frere Town, where the afternoon shift head teacher had acted against the implementation.

Habib School is a trust (non-profit) institution set up by former students and wealthy patrons. Pupils who cannot afford the fees for this private school can apply to the school’s trust fund set up to finance such students. Thirty to forty per cent of the pupils at the school are on subsidies in any given year. The head teacher stated:

Parents with a monthly income of R.2000 can get a subsidy of sixty to eighty per cent, depending on how many children they have. Most parents would have a combined income of R. 10,000 per month, but for them, educating their daughters is a top priority. We charge R.600 per month ⁴⁵ plus R.50 for the computer. This is not a lot of money...well, it is for poor parents, but that’s why we have subsidies. It’s expensive if you have three or four children.

⁴⁵ The monthly salary for a teacher in a private school for poor students receives approximately R. 1000-1200

The school also subsidises bus fares for students.

The following interview with the head teacher was recorded:

JB: Is the issue of gender, that is the inclusion of girls in the way education operates, important to you at Habib School?

Head: yes, which is why we have only girls. We don't want boys. They get in the way and disrupt girls' education.

JB: Does the integrated curriculum have enough issues about girls?

Head: I've gone to most of the meetings about this curriculum and that was an issue so we put in as many pictures of girls as there are of boys. The readers (the books produced by the Karachi Project-author) are very aware of putting girls in a good light and well, girls are important.

JB: Do you encourage girls to do what boys do, to make sure girls get the same opportunities?

Head: If there is a drawing in a book it's usually he. If it's a teacher, it's she. We have defined job roles and this is reflected in the curriculum... Our society accepts certain roles for women. Teaching is safest for women, but changes are happening.

At that point a young woman dressed in expensive, Western clothes entered the room and greeted the head teacher. She was introduced to me as being the sales manager for a major international toothpaste company. The woman was an ex-pupil who had come to visit the head teacher. When the woman had gone the head resumed our discussion:

Head: It's so nice to see our young ladies taking such positions....It's new. It shows change. Ten years ago girls would not take commerce – now we can't stop them. More take computer science and commerce than science. They drop biology and take commerce as their electives. She is from a poorer family....

JB: What about Urdu in schools?

Head: It's about nationalism. During President Zia's term of office, Urdu replaced English by law. For nine years it was the language medium in school. But when he went we returned to English here but slowly as the children had nine years of Urdu. What we did when we were under Zia was just to have very long English classes. We cheated. Parents demand English. Not much in tertiary in Urdu and everyone wants access to tertiary so we must have English. Now we have a mixed policy of English and Urdu.

JB: What about in training colleges? Is that in English?

Head: No. No. It's all in Urdu. Teacher training hasn't changed since 1947. So teachers' English is very poor. But teacher training is poor especially at primary level and when they have a BA⁴⁶ they get too uppity anyway to teach younger children...We want our teachers raw – we train them. There is a perception that you don't need training to teach primary as they are only children and then there is the prestige thing, the hierarchy...secondary is better.

Observation of integrated curriculum classes at Habib Girls School

This was an integrated class focusing on mathematics, science, English and Urdu. There were fifty six-year old girls in the spacious class. They were seated around groups of tables, in a way that appeared intent on promoting student-centred group work. What ensued in the class was a very teacher-centred lesson with no time for students to work together or do problem solving. The teacher did not follow the leads provided in the teachers' manual for the integrated curriculum and allow for student interaction. The lesson focused on teacher student question and answer. It appeared that the teacher thought that this approach was “student-centered” (when I chatted

⁴⁶ A BA degree is a requirement for secondary teachers in government schools.

with her after the class). Individual students were called on in the class to do work on the board in both English and Urdu. Students appeared to be at ease in English and Urdu. There were no references to local conditions or issues. The examples were all taken from the integrated text, which used names such as Peter, John, Mary. The illustrations were all “Western” in content and context. The class was well behaved and orderly, unlike mixed gender classes I had observed in other schools. The other two classes I observed did not significantly differ in technique, contexts or structure from the one described.

Lower-middle-class/Working-class School: a Visit to Shahwallah School

Shahwallah is situated on the outskirts of the city, in a working class district. The Director noted that the area is also “the centre of race riots, religious factions, violence.” The buildings were dilapidated and the area very crowded. Shahwallah is a trust (non-profit) school with some 450 students. It is attended by both boys and girls. The head teacher is a male, the only male head teacher involved in the Karachi Project. I was informed by the Director that the school is “problematic because of administrative weakness” and that, as a result, the implementation of the integrated curriculum had not been entirely successful. The Director informed me that Shawallah was “a victim of race conflict with the school being shut down often.... The teachers also are poor and have poor records for attendance.” There is “some provision for pupil subsidies but not to the extent of Habib School.” The Director also noted that Shahwallah had not attended any curriculum meetings for the past year and that their commitment was in question and needed to “be reviewed in terms of their status with us.”

Interview with the head teacher

The following interview with the Head Teacher was also attended by the Karachi Project Director:

JB: What are the main problems you face in implementing the integrated curriculum?

Head: Teachers are not trained well. And they have very high turn over so when they are finally trained they just leave. Ladies have no incentive to stay. They get married....The other problems are that if we do the integrated curriculum for two years, what happens after that? The children just get dropped back into the normal system⁴⁷.... The integrated curriculum does not cover all of the subjects that the normal curriculum covers...

JB: Do you provide training for your teachers?

Head: No, as I said...there is no time and no incentive for training teachers as they just leave. You have to understand that they are not educated, they do not know that they have to have a commitment to such a profession.

Director: The problem comes from you never attending any of our meetings. The teachers are being asked to do what they cannot do. The kids in grade three are better in other schools after two years of integrated curriculum, they have more confidence.

Head: But that's not our case. You should listen to the inside story.

Director: The problem comes from you never attending any of our meetings which is why things don't work. Which is the problem with your school, lack of commitment.

The meeting then ended, with the head teacher saying he needed to attend to important issues.

I observed two classes with the Director, each of forty minutes. We were informed that both classes were using material from the integrated curriculum. The first class was divided into two, twenty-minute slots, neither of them was from the integrated

⁴⁷ The Director informed me that it was not feasible to carry the integrated curriculum past grade five as then there was a national curriculum which led to national exams.

curriculum. The first slot was in Urdu, with the topic about animals. The students worked quietly on individual projects, which “is very innovative” the Director stated. The second slot did not use the integrated curriculum but used special books written by the Karachi Project. The main topic was the link between malaria and rubbish, using a Karachi Project-produced reader, which all children had in front of them. The use of these books or readers is interesting in the context of ‘relevance’ and the curriculum.

The readers have not been fully integrated into the integrated curriculum syllabus but are recommended in the teacher’s manual. The readers mostly address topics such as health, gender and morals, and include local themes and stories. The class on malaria and rubbish worked well, with students taking an active interest. I feel it is also significant that the students were speaking and reading in both Urdu and English. Urdu is the language most widely used amongst working class people. The students appeared to be using this bilingual approach with confidence and ease and the teacher was helpful in guiding them to an understanding on language issues that arose. This was not a student-centred lesson but teacher/student-centred. There were areas where the teaching was somewhat repetitious and pointed to the need for teacher training.

The second class was a combined history and English class taken from the integrated curriculum. There were fifty students, all six- and seven-year olds, in a small room. Students were squeezed together behind small desks. Boys and girls did not sit together. The students were noisy, with most of the interruptions from the boys. The teacher had the students sing the same song four times before she started the lesson. There appeared to be some link with the song about continents and the

main subject, which was the discoveries of Vasco de Gama. The teacher spoke very fast and it was often difficult to tell if she were speaking in Urdu or English. Typical of her teaching technique was her questioning method, which was to fire a question and then answer it herself. Every few questions she would then have the children repeat that question and the answer. The teacher would then ask: “Do you understand?” to which the students would chorus: “Yes, we understand”. She confused many points of geography and history, even though those points were correct in the curriculum documents. There was no attempt at student-centred teaching. The teacher’s voice reached screaming pitch by mid-lesson and stayed there for the duration of the class. The Director noted that “this is the worst class I have ever seen”, before she got up and left the class.

Visits to Two Schools Not Involved in the Integrated Curriculum

In order to achieve a more informed sense of the conditions affecting education in Karachi schools, and to better assess my contractual obligations for the MFAT obligation, I visited several schools not associated with the Karachi Project: I report on two of those visits here; a private trust school for the very poor, situated in a vegetable market; a private trust school run by an NGO for children of the very poor, on the outskirts of the city. I record my observations here as they are pertinent to the research process and add substantially to the story behind the nature and form of the New Zealand funded innovation.

The school for children of vegetable market workers: Bilquees Edhi

The Bilquees Edhi school is in an area just north of Central Karachi and is for very poor children whose fathers work in the adjacent vegetable markets. The markets are huge, with hundreds of trucks coming and going with produce from rural areas. Most of the workers in the markets are Patans from the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). I was informed that Patans are “the most conservative, very religious”. Patan mothers are not permitted to work in the markets, a custom attributed to “the traditions of Patan culture.” The majority of the Patan men and women are recent migrants and are illiterate. “This school caters for their children and these would be the first generation of literate Patans involved in formal education.”

The school is privately owned by a “poor philanthropist” who has insufficient money to support the school alone. Fees are minimal, in order to provide for the students whose families are very poor. The Karachi Project, using New Zealand Government funds, pays for the head teacher and the librarian. “If we did not pay these funds from our grant, the head teacher and librarian would be dropped as they are not teaching and even though the school needs them, the school can’t afford these two non teaching staff.”⁴⁸ The head teacher is paid R.3000 per month, which compares to R.6,000 for a teaching staff member in a Government school. The Karachi Project’s integrated curriculum is not being used in this school. The only New Zealand aid money supports the two teachers, a sum that was described as “very, very small for two salaries”. Teachers at Bilquees are paid R.1000 per month.

⁴⁸ The Director of the Karachi Project and the head teacher are reported in this section.

The school is situated next to the markets. It is a very small building straddling the fence that separates the school from the markets. The school is divided into small rooms, with the only lighting being natural lighting from the open door. There is very little room in the alleyway, which is used to access the school rooms from the small office at the school's entrance. There is no playground and the only communal room is the narrow alleyway. During my visit there were several mothers in full face veil and floor length robes. The few women without full face veils hid their faces from me as I passed. There is a morning and afternoon shift to accommodate for the 550 pupils. An average of sixty students attend each class.

Of special interest at Biquees Edhi, is the special provision is made for female students to continue at the school for longer than the time provided for boys. Classes start at entrance level and continue through to class 8⁴⁹. From class six onwards, only girls are accepted as students. It is accepted by the school authorities that girls would most likely not be enrolled by their parents in another school if, once they had completed primary in class six, they then had to go to another school. Therefore, girls are permitted to attend the school until class eight in order to avoid possible attrition. Until class six, all classes are co-educational, a circumstance which "defies traditional education in Pakistan." The Patans are traditional but "so keen on education when they get to Karachi that they allow for such liberal Karachi ways." I was informed that Patan girls will most likely marry at the end of class eight or nine, at age thirteen or fourteen. It was thought unlikely that girls would go on to further education after class eight. "It is enough that boys and girls are actually allowed to go to school

⁴⁹ The final year of secondary school in Pakistan is class ten.

anyway; the boys because they would be working in the markets to make money as many in fact do...and girls because...they are Patan girls”.

I asked about gender equity in education for the students and was informed that “home economics and cooking and sewing will soon be offered to girls”. I probed about gender equity issues, as in consciousness raising, being included in the curriculum, and was informed that this was being “subtly done through using the books produced by the Karachi Project”. These books, the readers⁵⁰, are mostly in Urdu and are written “to escape the tedious Pakistani curriculum.” Many of the themes and pictures in the readers involve subtle, gender consciousness raising issues but I was warned that: “You must always be aware of Muslim fundamentalists.”

I observed two classes, a class three geography lesson, and a class six Urdu lesson. The former was in a dark, crowded room with mothers standing at the doorway watching. Girls and boys were segregated by the central aisle. The teacher wrote on the board and the students copied. Students were then asked to individually read from the board and then the whole class rote called what had been read. There was one book provided for each student.

Books are important as they are passed from child to child in a family. This is one problem with the integrated curriculum we have for there are no standard texts. A book is sacred. And there should be only one so the parents don’t have to pay for it for every child....

On looking through the geography book, I noted that there were no colour prints. All of the chapters were about Pakistan. The headings were translated for me from Urdu

⁵⁰ The New Zealand government has funded 13 of these readers to date.

to English. On asking if this was ‘relevant’, the teacher replied that everything about Pakistan was relevant for the students but that “when everything is about Pakistan the children will get bored, especially when it is always about Pakistan”. I was informed that Sindh government schools (this school is not a Sindh Government school but uses the texts found in Sindh government schools) “have mostly Pakistan themes, always about Pakistan and Islam in history and geography.”⁵¹ The children rocked back and forth as they recited their lessons. “This is the style of the Muslim schools,” I was informed. “Rote learning, moving back and forth”.

Through the interpreter, the head teacher explained that she would like to use an integrated curriculum and student-centred learning but

...the exams are not set up for that type of education. When students get to grade six or seven they will have to sit government exams and we will not have trained them for that. We want our curriculum to be different to make it interesting for students but for the exams we must teach Government curriculum. At class seven we can’t just say ‘sorry about this’ and put them back into the normal Government type education with exams.

Another reason why the integrated curriculum had not been introduced was that it required a cash input, which the school simply did not have and which, at that stage, the Karachi Project could not subsidise. I was also informed that a further problem was with teachers being poorly trained. The teachers at Bilqees are all Government trained or from “off the street” and to “train them in student-centred and integrated...very difficult...we just get help [from the Karachi Project] with the readers and moral support and some funding”. It was again stressed that the

⁵¹ Texts follow national guidelines. It was explained that: “There are four provinces in the country and four textbook boards. Each produces its own books but the curriculum framework is set by the curriculum wing in Islamabad and provinces follow their guidelines”.

Government trained teachers were the most difficult of all teachers as they had been trained in traditional ways and were “stuck” like that.

Visits to the Citizens’ Foundation Schools

I also visited the Citizens’ Foundation Schools, which I heard about through someone who stated: “They are very Islamic, they cater to old beliefs.” I had been led to understand by that same source that such schools were for the poor but that they “acted as indoctrination centres about Islam” and that these schools “were centres where children are merely hood winked into thinking they were getting a real education.” I learned that the New Zealand Consul General and the High Commission⁵² had donated R.250,000 to the Foundation in 1995.

I decided to visit the schools simply because my interest had been aroused and I sought more information about the link between religion and education and non-government organisations’ involvement in schools for poor children. After eventually finding a telephone number for a contact, I initially spoke with a woman who said that “My mistress is swimming and can’t speak to you now”. When I inquired further, I learned that “the mistress” was swimming in “her private pool. It is heated”. I felt that this did not bode well considering my previous experience with wealthy schools. I had to think through my commitment to travel to the other side of the immense city to visit the schools in squatter settlements. In a return telephone conversation, I was informed, by the woman I had not had a chance to speak with, that she would pick me up and that I would accompany her⁵³ and the Director of the TCF to two of the

⁵² The NZ High Commission is located in Teheran. The NZ Consul is located in Karachi.

⁵³ I refer to this person as Mrs. J.

schools. What did eventuate from these visits to the Citizens' Foundation schools was of such importance, in the way my conception of how an educational NGO can function in Karachi, that I report in some detail on both the background to these Citizens' Foundation Schools (TCF) and my observations in them.

The Director was a retired army colonel and referred to himself as "the colonel". Mrs J., I was informed, "is the wife of an immensely rich industrialist but she had her own money from Uganda. She was kicked out by Idi Amin". Mrs J. informed me that her two sons were sent to Eton and then to Berkeley University for their education and that she now worked for the poor of the city, in which, she stated, "Sixty per cent of the population lives in squatter settlements"⁵⁴. We drove eighty kilometers, much of that journey being through those squatter settlements, to a school which was set up and administered by TCF. The area immediately surrounding the school was semi rural. Houses straddled along dusty paths and farm animals wandered the streets. I was taken to visit two homes before going to the school. Both dwellings were in compounds shared by extended families. The women covered their heads when we approached and only men spoke with us. "This is where the children come from," the Colonel explained. "You asked where they lived. Here it is. Rural, semi urban. Their families live from animals and from fixing motors and, whatever they have they have from hard work and they are poor".

The school ⁵⁵ was set behind high concrete walls near the houses we visited. The grounds were cramped but clean and attempts had been made to establish trees and a garden. The school was one year old. The teachers' room was airy and large. There

⁵⁴ Karachi has a population of 15,000,000.

⁵⁵ Because there was not a significant distinction between the two schools visited, I report on the one only.

were 300 students in classes from class one through to class six – the final year before secondary. Each child received several milk biscuits and a bottle of milk once a week. There was no funding to provide this ration on a daily basis. “The children are often very hungry and malnourished. We can’t keep a lot of food here or it would inevitably get stolen, eaten by staff...”.

The headmistress would not shake my hand and smiled when I apologised for my insensitivity at extending the offer to do so. All of the teachers were female and all wore a veil that covered their head but not their faces. The face veil was worn by several of the mothers who sat in the school grounds waiting for their children to finish classes. Girls are required to cover their heads. The school is co-educational. “This area is religious, it is Islamic. It is not so influenced by Karachi, what you see in downtown Karachi”. It was explained that, despite being a traditional area, these days co-educational schools were largely accepted in Sindh Province.

Mrs J. stated that when the school advertised for 500 teachers for the Foundation schools they received 1500 applicants “despite the poor pay”. Those who applied were largely poor women who would not have been able to get teaching jobs in middle- and lower-middle- class schools, despite their having teaching qualifications “because these women are poor and those middle class schools hire middle class teachers. They needed recommendations from wealthy patrons to get jobs in those schools but of course....” Only females are employed as parents would not be willing to have their daughters educated by men. “We want girls to be educated and so we must bow to what the demands are. Girls’ education in Pakistan is very difficult, very

sensitive”. All of the teachers employed by the TCF are provided with three months teacher training.

We want them to be able to be kind and sensitive to the children but firm. Not to hit them. We have to undo a lot of the training that they get in the Government teacher training programmes and so we do more modern techniques with them. We train intelligent women who have no formal education past class ten...those who did not have an opportunity to go to training school.

Teachers are also collected from their homes and taken back after school closes to ensure that families are “not worried about their females”.

The role of education and the national and provincial government is of major concern to NGOs and this was no different for the TCF officials. “Ninety two per cent of gross national product is spent on defense and Government salaries, the rest on education, health, whatever”. The teachers, who were also involved in this conversation, added that corruption was the main problem in Pakistan and that this had an impact on educational services. “The irony,” Mrs J. explained “is that the rich are the ones running the NGOs for the poor. Is that ironic?” TCF wants the Government to donate land but not buildings for their schools.

If we have their buildings we are indebted, beholden. We need to get into the Government Schools too, as the Karachi Project has done, to make changes from within because as everyone knows the government schools are hopeless, inept.

A discussion on the Karachi project showed some differences of opinion about the way education should be approached. It was acknowledged by the TCF officials that there were “conceptual differences” between the two groups.

We do not cater for the middle class. Our curriculum is designed for children in such areas. We keep what the Government syllabus has so that children can continue in government schools past grade six, but we are including so much more, hygiene, religion, morals, gardening, analysis...

Classroom observation

I observed one thirty-minute class. There were 34 children in this class, with the average age of the students being six years. Boys and girls sat on separate sides of the room. The class was an English-language instruction class. The teacher used Urdu at intervals to aid the children's understanding. The lesson was conducted in a semi-structured way, with a significant portion of the time spent on teacher/student question and answers. The children copied a list of words from the board and the teacher went from child to child to check handwriting and spelling. There was no discipline problem in the class, and boys and girls contributed equally. The content used to support the language instruction was based on hygiene. Homework was corrected in the final five minutes, and more homework was set. It was a well organised lesson, which followed the teacher's manual. The teacher was polite and encouraging to the pupils throughout the lesson.

A subsequent thirty-minute observation was also of a successfully run mathematics lesson. I also saw one class at another TCF school, which was run along the same lines, where the teacher used the TCF manual to very good effect.

I asked to view assessment procedures at the first school. I reviewed the assessment logs of the classroom teacher whose English lesson I had viewed. All of the students' grades had been entered in a professional manner. Written comments

had also been entered by each child's name. The head teacher also showed me the final grading system, which was also very professionally presented. I was interested in assessment procedures as the Karachi Project has no assessment procedure for class one and class two of the integrated curriculum. The lack of a suitable and sustained assessment procedure had been a major problem recorded by many teachers and administrators. I mention this here to make the point that, overall, I found TCF to be highly professional and committed. I also viewed other projects undertaken by the TCF, such as the free Karachi Kidney Hospital, which is available to "people of all classes free of charge." I noted that the TCF were open about what their philosophy is in working with the "citizens of Karachi" and that their operations appear transparent, both on paper and in their practice as educators for the poor.

Philosophy and rationale for the Citizens' Foundation Schools

The Citizens Foundation (TCF) provides a clear rationale and philosophy, in the preface to their textbooks, and in other materials they supply to potential donors and interested parties. I quote selected passages from the Preface of the TCF curriculum documents, which were supplied to me by the Foundation:

The TCF Primary schools have been established in pursuance of the desire of TCF to promote mass scale quality education in rural and urban and lower income urban areas. TCF education programme aims to provide a foundation of intellectual, moral and spiritual growth within the Islamic framework. This desire can only be fulfilled if TCF schools perform better in areas of quality education and character development of the students. In compliance with these main principals (sic), the curriculum is designed to develop the character individual to each child and equip him with the basic knowledge and literary skills while teaching him the values of a good Muslim and a good Pakistani.

The curriculum, and more so the teachers, are the key to the success of the entire endeavour. While preparing this curriculum the objectives of TCF and the principle

on which the education programme has been based, have been kept in mind. However, the fact that, for practical reasons, the curriculum had to conform to the officially prescribed syllabi was a constraint... Urdu is the medium of instructions...

The Citizens' Foundation Schools' curriculum

The curriculum documents and the teachers' manuals, which are supplied to all teachers in the TCF's twenty-seven schools, are based on the non-integration model. The teacher's manual gives guidelines to the teacher for student participation and student-centred learning. The planned lessons also include teacher-centred teaching. It appears, from reading the manuals and curriculum documents, that a wide range of approaches is used amongst the planned lessons. This is reflected in the philosophy of the documents, which calls for a broad approach and for traditional and innovative methods.

The actual content in the curriculum is geared around the Government syllabi. The rationale for having stayed with the government syllabi is that students at TCF schools will be prepared for the transition they have to make into government schools on completing class six, the final year of primary and the final year that they are able to attend TCF schools. Assessment is also based on Government criteria, a circumstance that

need not worry us as we do stick to the proper way of doing assessment. We are not slow or inconsistent as our teachers do the work in assessment unlike many government teachers so really it's a good system which is just poorly done in government schools⁵⁶.

⁵⁶ Quoted from head teacher TCF school.

The content of the curriculum is clearly focused on local and national conditions. Karachi, Sindh Province and Pakistan are all major components of the content and these themes are integrated across the syllabi. It appears that the content has been matched to the philosophy of the group, in that what is presented in the formal structure of the curriculum is material that is of relevance to children who are focused primarily on local issues and conditions of living. There are few references to conditions that children, such as those attending the TCF, would not encounter in their lives. To make a brief comparison with the nature and substance of the Karachi Project's integrated curriculum, especially to that of class two books, there is a wide differential in matters between the two. TCF content could not be described as catering to middle-class children, with middle-class attitudes, who have an expectation of, at a later stage, being educated in an overseas institution. Both curricula are formal and non-vocational in content.

Visit to a "Traditional" Village School: Tharpakar Desert Region

I was invited, by the Director of the Karachi Project and her colleague, to visit the Tharpakar Desert, where the colleague was to investigate the local village school for an NGO, which was responding to a call for funding from that school. The school was described as being "traditional" by the Director and the colleague. We travelled by car for sixteen hours across the deserts, which parallel Rajasthan in India. The village was close to the Indian border, which proved problematic as there were army personnel who wanted to question our travel into that region. The village was isolated, and dependent for its livelihood largely on camel trading and remittances from villagers who had left for the cities. The area can only be described as 'desert'.

The village had approximately 200 inhabitants. We visited many houses over our two-day stay. There were no television sets and only three radios. There were very few signs of anything 'modern'. I noted for example, that there were no plastic buckets, or plastic water storage systems. Water was stored in old drums and camel skin bags slung over rafters inside the houses we visited. There was no electricity.

The school was situated in a thick adobe building a short walk from the village. The headmaster was also the village chief and a mullah. In this triple role, he played out the most important person in the area. He was accommodating and friendly and proud of his school and village. He allowed us to visit places where women would normally have had to use face veils in order to meet us. Because he was informed that I was conducting research, he ordered that women were to speak to me through our interpreter.

The school was divided into two sections; one for boys, and the other for girls. Men taught the boys, and women, the girls. I observed two classes in the boys' section, the girls being out of formal classes as they were preparing for a special festival. The classes were taught using Sindh Province syllabi in mathematics and geography respectively. Through an interpreter I learned that there was nothing in the lessons that did not conform to the Government syllabi. The classes were attended by twenty-three boys, all aged about six or seven years. They did not wear uniforms. They recited much of what the teacher said. They also chanted after the teacher from what was written on the board. They copied from the board into books. The classes were preceded by prayer, and there was another minute of prayer at the end of the class. During the day, the males all went into the mosque to pray at the times for

prayer. The women did not. All the materials in the school were in Urdu. English was not taught because there was no one to teach it. The head stated that

Most children here will not go to another school when they finish here. Girls will finish before boys. We are all basically one clan and proud of our traditions. We have strong traditions. It is our will and Allah's will to remain like we are with our traditions. When someone comes back from the city they will not bring those traditions from there they will again be in our traditions.

I asked what education did to dilute such traditions.

When we do school here we do it mindfully of religion. There is no distinction and we teach from the Koran here. All children know the Koran and can recite by memory from the Holy Book. We teach our children to be Muslims.

I also asked if girls had special treatment in any way.

Yes, of course, as girls are sacred to our traditions. We allow them to have education, which is not always the case in Pakistan. I was in Lahore and in Karachi working and I saw what they do where it is more open. I thought education for girls was fair or they become disillusioned and bitter. But our girls are taught to be good Muslims, to love their home and family and husbands. Men too.

When I asked about vocational training there was some difficulty in getting across what I meant in that there had been no attempt in the past to do such training and, I felt, little comprehension of what such training was. The head stated:

We have here in this place work, which we all do. All children work. They therefore learn what there is to know and they also have several years of school. This is book learning. This is learning from the Holy Koran.

Discussing the Integrated Curriculum at the Karachi Project Offices

The following discussion took place at the offices of the Karachi Project. Present were the officials and curriculum writers responsible for the integrated curriculum⁵⁷. The owners of the participating schools were also present. I had asked the group to visit in order to discuss various issues about the curriculum. The following dialogue is a selection of issues with particular relevance to the themes in this thesis:

JB: Who pays for the changes that have occurred in the curriculum?

X: The schools in the programme. Well, half of them pay and the other half never did or did for only some time. Now about half sometimes pay⁵⁸.

JB: The wealthy schools...do they pay?

X: Yes, sometimes although not all of them...and not all of the time either.

JB: Then where does the money come from to pay for the time and materials?

X: We are a voluntary organisation. Y and Z have worked very hard⁵⁹ on writing the curriculum.

JB: But they have said they will not re-write the curriculum to suit poor schools once they have perfected the curriculum for their own needs in the wealthy schools. We know that the curriculum is not meeting the needs of the participating poor schools.

Y: But we are competing in my school for students from wealthy parents and we compete against top class schools so we can have a curriculum which reflects their class. We now have that sort of curriculum.

JB: Should New Zealand fund schools which teach that class or poor schools?

(At this point the conversation changed from English to Urdu).

X: We are upset that you think the curriculum is not relevant. There was never any criticism about the content when it was being written and we all worked hard when it was being written and now the criticism.

⁵⁷ I asked all present if I could use their comments in later research. I was given permission by all ("Why should we be ashamed of what we have to say?" I have decided to keep all comments anonymous.

⁵⁸ Schools are asked to contribute R.2000 per month for the services provided by the Project.

⁵⁹ Y and Z are owners of a wealthy school and a middle class school respectively.

Z: Also, how can untrained teachers know about relevance education? We simply didn't realise the problems when we were writing it.

X: in our defense, we have introduced the curriculum to poor schools not just rich ones and so the changes progress down into those schools.

JB: Successfully?

X: No, we see that now.

JB: So future New Zealand funding for a curriculum change that benefits rich schools only. Is that equitable?

Z: The changes appeal to the poorer schools. With training.

JB: Should New Zealand funding go into teacher training so that the reforms have a greater chance of working?

JB: We all need help. Everyone here needs help. We are starting new with education reform, all of us, whatever class. We need outside experts to come and show us how to do these things. We simply are all stuck in old-fashioned ways and need outside help.

X: Training is a good idea. Yes, we have discussed this many times and we know the problems with providing training. Setting up and funding training has its own limitations.

The meeting ended.

The following conversation was recorded with the Director of the Project.

Director: It's true, the one Government school with the new curriculum is not working.

JB: The relevance issue with the curriculum. Do you think Y and Z have a point in that it's relevant to their schools?

Director: It's true we...I...didn't notice this relevance issue in the curriculum. I did in my books [the readers written and produced by the Karachi Project] and that's foremost in our minds just to give the kids better... more interesting....more relevant...materials. You've opened our minds to this, mine anyway.

JB: K said that it (the curriculum innovations - author) would 'trickle down' to the poor schools. It's hard to see how, isn't it? I mean, how can something like a curriculum trickle down, the effects. I think the effects have trickled

down, in fact, in that it isn't working in the poor schools. The student-centred aspect, the changes, are all too much for untrained teachers.

Director: I know and when you think about it we have an irrelevant curriculum for the poor schools now and they had irrelevant before...the only ones to get what they needed were the rich schools. I think we should phase it all out...and start again in the just the poor schools....

JB: But your readers are very relevant... I'm impressed with their content and you have said they are colourful and attractive, which in Pakistan is so different...unique. So how did the curriculum escape what we see as 'relevant' as in your readers?

Director: I am being grilled! A lot of what happened...well you have noted that Class One books [in the integrated curriculum] are more relevant, some Pakistan things and some effort to make them like the readers. But that was G...she was wonderful and G did all that and we all thought it was great and then G left for Canada with her family. So class two suffered because G was not here and X and Y have not the experience...

JB: So they just wrote a curriculum which suited their schools needs...rich schools...without really thinking it through?

Director: It's...well...yes...I never really thought this through. We had hundreds of meetings and essentially what's happened was they took materials from foreign books and put them all together and there we have the integrated curriculum from foreign books. We didn't have the expertise to write the curriculum, nor the time, so we just took it. I see this now as I sit here...it's all coming to light. You've told us about the gender thing, the relevance thing, and yes, there are worries about this.

JB: It's fascinating isn't it? How things come about? X and Y wrote the curriculum and worked damn hard at it and what came out was a book which suits their schools and, if I hear properly, they were to be the trials, the prototypes for the curriculum for the government schools.

Director: And it hasn't worked.

Meeting and Discussion with Parents from the Participating Schools

The Karachi Project officials had never held a meeting with parents of the children involved in the curriculum reforms. One of the main problems teachers had noted about the reforms was the parents' attitude towards the reforms. Several teachers told

me that parents simply did not know about the integrated curriculum, and what it meant in terms of structure. Parents appeared not to know that there was a new content curriculum. Parents were also concerned that no central, subject text was being provided as there is in 'traditional' class subjects. I asked the Karachi Project to organise a meeting of parents from the participating schools. Four couples came to the meeting. No parents from the low socio-economic level schools attended. The parents were informed that they would be discussing various aspects of the new integrated curriculum and were asked for their opinions on the content, and how the content related to their children's lives. It appeared to me that all the parents were well-to-do, and fluent in English. I was informed that "two of the parents are not so well off or sophisticated and are quite religious, actually" (personal communication, 16 December, 1997). What follows is a selection of those comments most pertinent to the theme of relevance education.

Father 1: Okay, so this is a Westernised curriculum but we live in a class-divided society and our social class is Westernised. We need it. Our kids are in Karachi, we are middle class so the curriculum affects that, we cannot shield them.

Mother 1: We want them to have a good education and a good education in the West is a good education in the East. Why differentiate between us? You can succeed because you have this education, so we want it too.

Father 3: Yes, and look where they are now. We don't want that.

Mother 3: We cannot separate religion from our life. Islamiyat ⁶⁰ needs to be put in, but keep it short. It's too hard to draw the line in Pakistan between secular and non-secular and we need to make that clear, otherwise religion takes over.

Father 1: At this age it's the basic learning age and children think they only learn at school so won't listen at home. So we need religion at school too. We need it integrated. Aren't we all for an integrated curriculum?

⁶⁰ Islamiyat refers to the religious instructions classes in schools.

Mother 3: I asked the teacher to incorporate more prayer as kids listen to teachers...that's the place of learning. So how can I get my kid to say prayer at home when he doesn't do it at school...so kids think prayer is not important.

JB: The readers produced by the Karachi Project have subjects relevant to local conditions and also to international issues. What are your views on the readers?

Mother 3: The topic about sex abuse is excellent. Thank you for putting in such a relevant topic. It's very new for Pakistan but real.

Father 2: Your book on litter is very relevant to Karachi because everyone here throws their litter into the streets. It's not like overseas where they are careful. We need such books.

Father 2: Your books are the best produced in the country and I like them because they are produced in this country and they are useful for the children. And colourful and different.

Mother 4: This year our son has brought home the readers and we all read them. They're the best part of the curriculum because they give him lots of reading skills. The West has a better education than in the East. Why differentiate between us? You can succeed because you have this education, so we want it too.

Father 2: Yes, we have to survive against international competition.

JB: How much do you want which reflects your national values, concerns? I hear that there is antagonism to non-religious education. On one extreme you have Taliban education⁶¹...

Parents' questionnaire

Prior to the discussion, the parents were asked to complete a questionnaire. The results are discussed below.

When asked to "define in a few words what the integrated curriculum means to you" only one of the eight parents answered with a definition of what an integrated curriculum is: "To make the children learn about all the subjects collectively instead

⁶¹ Mention of Taliban education was made as the subject had come up in the conversation. All of the parents had expressed concern that Taliban philosophy was exerting pressure on Pakistan's authorities to become 'more fundamentalist' something that appeared to alarm the parents.

of separating them in various groups”. The remaining replies were similar and suggested that parents believed the integrated curriculum was about “relevant education” and “interesting education topics” and “easier materials”.

In response to the question: “What would you say to someone who suggested that Islamiyat Education belongs in the home and not at school?” the following replies were recorded:

They should be joint efforts about Islamiyat Education by the school and the parents.

Yes, I agree. It is easier because of all the different sects etc. In fact, the learning of the Arabic⁶² language should be exposed.

He is not conversant with the Islamic teachings.

If it is an Islamic country, Islamiyat should not be taken as a subject or a religion but should be taught in the school as well as at home.

It is very important at school as well as at home.

I would say that the child won’t study Islamiyat at all. He is going to become limited to only the learning of the Holy Quran and that only includes learning – ratification (sic) – of Arabic⁶³. He won’t have basic knowledge.

Basic at the school, and practice at the home.

Parents were asked to select topics they would want children to study. The results are presented below:

⁶² Arabic language is a compulsory subject in Pakistan’s public high schools.

⁶³ Rote learning the Quran in Arabic is central to Islamiyat in many schools in Pakistan: see Aziz Talbani (Reference section).

Question 4: Listed below are some topics that children can study. Please tick ten of the topics that you think they should study. Please read through the list before you tick

Question Number	Title	Suitable	Not suitable
a	Humpty Dumpty	5	3
b	My teeth	8	0
c	Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs	5	3
d	Uses of the Neem tree	8	0
e	Olive trees in the Mediterranean Area	0	8
f	Sheep farms in New Zealand	2	6
g	Climate of Sindh	7	1
h	Why people get diarrhea	7	1
i	Mexican food	0	8
j	Camels, donkeys, water buffaloes	8	0
k	Mohenjodaro history	6	2
l	Dances of Pakistani	5	3
m	London Bridge is falling down	1	7
n	Karachi seaside	8	0
o	Life in the Tharpakar desert	6	2
p	Pakistani food	5	3

Questionnaire for Teachers Involved in the Integrated Curriculum

A special training workshop in integrated curriculum teaching strategies was set up. Twenty-seven teachers, from all of the eleven participating schools, attended. Before I conducted the workshop I administered an anonymous questionnaire. The results are as follows:

Teachers were asked to list their highest qualification. Seven listed that they had a masters degree. Twenty listed a bachelors as their highest. Nine of the teachers stated that they had received teacher training but all of those respondents noted that these were various short term ‘workshops’. One teacher, with a Masters in Arts, stated she had a BEd. None of the other seventeen respondents had any formal teacher training.

Asked to note how many years of experience in “traditional curriculum” each had, the range went from fifteen years to nil. The average teaching experience across the group, in this category, was 4.6 years. The average experience, in terms of years that each had in teaching the integrated curriculum, was 1.7 years.

The teachers were asked: What type of teaching do you think is more effective in teaching students: non-integrated or integrated? All the teachers chose “integrated” as the most effective form of teaching. When asked to explain their answer the following examples were recorded:

More effective learning will come out.

Children participate actively and will use his mind.

Classes lively and concepts clear. Students takes interest and learning more easily.

It has a natural approach.

By the end the child himself is able to do things independently.

The teachers were asked to rate the effectiveness of the integrated curriculum in their school along the following continuum: very effective; effective; not so effective; not effective at all. Six teachers stated that the integrated curriculum was working “very effectively”, twelve stated it worked “effectively” and eight teachers stated “not so effectively”. When asked to record the most important reason for their answer those who stated that the curriculum worked “very effectively” noted their reasons as:

There is administrative help and aid with teaching methods.

The system is very easy for children.

The teachers follow the work plan strictly.

Teachers who thought the curriculum implementation was “effective” noted their reasons as:

It’s taken a long time to get coordination.

Teachers find group work unruly.

Group work is difficult for teachers.

Teachers, parents and management still need convincing.

Teachers who thought the curriculum implementation was “not so effective” noted their reasons as:

Frequent change of teachers.

New teachers take time to understand and by the time they do they leave.

Conflict between head teachers.

Parents are from backgrounds that mean they can't understand the method.

The question asking teachers to list what they would like to tell their head teacher and the Karachi Project officials about problems, they as teachers encounter with the integrated curriculum, recorded primarily that:

There was little copying work for children to do.

More teacher training was needed.

Parents caused problems by complaining that there was no copying for children to do.

Children had little chance to do handwriting; handwriting suffered.

The teachers were presented with the following 'wish list' and asked to prioritise the items from one to three, with one being the most desired.

Positive feedback and thanks from education authorities.

Extra salary for teaching this new curriculum.

Useful resources.

Time off to prepare and read for my classes.

Quality teacher training in integrated curriculum.

Information on student-centred learning.

All the twenty-seven teachers chose “quality teacher training in integrated curriculum” as one of their three choices. The next most desired category, with thirteen priority responses, was “useful resources”. Nine chose “extra salary for teaching this new curriculum” and nine chose “time off to prepare and read for my classes”.

The meeting with the teachers also covered the issue of what they believed was ‘relevant’ in terms of content, but this subject was not covered in the questionnaire. The discussion was interesting in that it was not one on which teachers had a firm conceptual grasp. In small groups teachers were asked to note that they thought students from poor backgrounds should learn in school. Then teachers were then asked to note what students from rich backgrounds should learn. There was little distinction between the two sets of answers. The reason the teachers believed all children should study academic work, as the teachers noted children should do, was because it meant all children would have the same opportunities. However, within the nature of ‘academic’ the teachers did feel – as the discussion showed – that the topics should be “relevant to real lives”. Teachers noted that the topics covered in the integrated curriculum, such as: nature, weather, kitchens, countries, food, were relevant as topics, but that the resources were poor so the potential was lost. The teachers stated that they thought that the Karachi Project’s readers were excellent, in that they were relevant and were good supplements for the integrated curriculum. There was a general feeling that the integrated curriculum catered for rich children and that the children in the poor schools would not be “able to understand many of the concepts or pictures or what was going on as it was not related to their lives.” Teachers then said that they needed more resources to supplement the abstract

Western-oriented language and examples in the curriculum. It must be noted that I did not bring into the discussion the notion of “Western curriculum”. This notion arose from the teachers. Several teachers noted that students needed Western concepts in order to survive and to do well. One teacher noted that there “is enough information about our religion and way of life, students can get that anywhere, pick it up”.

Teacher Training: Head Teachers’ Comments

I had many conversations with head teachers representing the variations in socio-economic backgrounds in the eleven participating schools. During various interviews I conducted, the following comments were made by those teachers on the subject of teacher training:

If we insist on a curriculum that informs our students...I mean if we want to train our children in the modern curriculum and subjects, then we must have trained teachers. The teachers can’t even follow all the modern information we put into the integrated curriculum and the government-trained ones are the worst.

You can have as much re-written curriculum as you like but the teachers need training in how to use it.

I see my teachers teaching this new curriculum, and they do it badly because they can’t think like teachers, because they are not trained as teachers.

How can we have good teaching if we don’t have good, trained teachers.

We take women off the street because they are low paid and will work part-time and they have little training.

It’s expensive to train teachers and I try to at my school but then they up and get married and it’s all a waste.

You see it’s like this. We think that by providing them with a good curriculum, a detailed, how to do it, one, that we will get good teaching but they can’t think on their feet.

I never hire a government training college-trained teacher. They're hopeless. They're trained to do rote learning and they are just poorly trained.

It's my philosophy never to hire a government-trained teacher. I'd rather mould them to the way I want them to teach.

We only have women teachers in Pakistan. Men won't teach. It's a woman's career because they accept low pay and half-time work.

Even us head teachers are not trained and we just picked it up, so how can you expect us to know all of this about curriculum development.

Yes, we lack training, the so called specialist training, which is why, you see, this curriculum, we asked you to come and evaluate, why it is in such, well, an ad hoc mess. We have not trained people to do it. We need one person to come and co-ordinate it all. To show us how to do it as we need the training.

Discussion on Islam and the Curriculum

The following discussion was recorded, during a meeting of various participants in the curriculum-writing process, at the offices of the Karachi Project.⁶⁴ The discussion on Islam arose from an initial remark about the obvious and volatile ethnic differences in Karachi and how curriculum content and Islam were affected by such distinctions. It needs to be noted that reference to Taliban Afghanistan and the proximity of that country to Pakistan, and Pakistan's close political connections with the Taliban, are frequent in such conversations. The relationship of 'fundamentalist' Taliban Afghanistan in terms of "what might happen similarly in Pakistan" cannot be underestimated. The discussions I had had at other venues, had brought me to an awareness of the considerations educators have about the plethora of religious and ethnic factors situated in their own state, and in the wider arena of the region. These discussions and considerations will be analysed in-depth in later chapters. I relate the

⁶⁴ I asked if I could record these comments and was given permission to do so. The participants who came from the eleven schools were not concerned about their names being recorded but I have chosen to record their comments anonymously.

following dialogue, for it is pertinent to the major theme in this research: of the nature of relevance and its relationship to power, ideology and education:

X: I'm too scared to put the real issues into my curriculum. Too much fire. Include only a few Islamic stories because what about Shia and non-Shia kids and the reactions of parents?

Y: What have we put into this Class Two curriculum which reflects our values?

X: Nothing. But we have to ask ourselves, why not? Well, we're too scared.

Z: When parents ask why there is nothing about Islam in the curriculum I tell them it's not the role of the school to teach Islam. We teach honesty, cleanliness etcetera, and that is essentially Islam. Obey the traffic rules is Islam. Not to hurt each other. And these things appear in the Readers [the books produced by the Karachi Project]. Islam says "be good" and we teach that without going to the Koran to prove it. It just is.

Y: But surely something about Islam. It's our culture.

W: The mullahs are old fashioned. Some of us are interested in change. The stranglehold of religion. Is it right to put this all into children's minds now, at this stage, just like in madrasa?

JB: This could be a New York City or a New Zealand curriculum. It is for a middle-class audience in a secular society.

Z: There are universal truths. Rules about goodness, so that justifies this curriculum.

Y: But what about Islam in all of this. Are we missing something out? Our own culture?

W: We have spoken much about modernisation in these discussions with him [JB]. Surely we understand that why we do not have modern standards here in Pakistan is because we are still teaching in non-modern ways and with non-modern curricula?

Z: She is right. Why do we have such backwardness here? Not just because of feudal ways in land ownership, but feudal minds. It is minds that are feudal here and surely education...we can think how we can overcome such backwardness through modern education.

W: Right for this is why we are still in middle ages like Taliban want us all to be still. Who here went to school in madrasa? Did you Z? Or you X? No. We all went to private modern ones, and even one to the Catholic School

[laughter], so why do we condemn all these others to a middle ages education in madrasa.

Z: Or in government schools for that matter.

Y: Islam is the discussion here.

X: But all of us women here are Muslims and good Muslims. Do we all believe in the same things about Islam? No. Of course not. We are diverse and how do we put that diversity of our religion into effect in a curriculum without offending some groups?

Y: But Islam is the binding issue. Why is it not in the curriculum?

Z: Because it need not be stated.

X: Rules need not be stated according to a certain religion. We teach goodness through other means and the parents can teach Islam at home. We would rather teach them the ethics at school.

X: And those ethics come loud and clear in our Readers. Our Readers have been designed to teach ethics. Look at the book on litter and the one on animals and the one of honesty.

Z: This country is corrupt and teaching Islam over the decades has not changed anything, so why do we think teaching Islam will change that situation? We need to be neutral and appeal to all types of people at once through neutrality.

JB: Let's look at the way there is difficulty in saying that the curriculum can be neutral. Only by analysing our curriculum can we say that there is no real objectivity and a non-ideological curriculum. The theme of kitchens we keep referring to in the curriculum. I don't think that's neutral. There are Western women at ovens, and Western children, and blenders, and all sorts of gadgets. How many children from the poor schools would have access to kitchens like those, and it's my belief that we are sort of holding up that as the way to be, as if that's what they should have.

U: Surely kitchens are neutral. Maybe it's just not relevant this kitchen we have but how is kitchen not neutral?

JB: Under these headings tell me what you would write about such kitchens:

[The following exercise was recorded on a white board. The participants suggested the following points under the headings.]

A Feminist Concept of the Traditional Kitchen:

- Exploits women
- Doesn't promote gender equality
- Size determinant: is always the smallest room in the house yet the most work is done there.

Taliban Concept of the Traditional Kitchen

- Women should remain there
- Men should be excluded
- Promotes fundamentalist Islamic doctrine
- Food restrictions
- Girls' training, education

After this discussion it was decided that the existing theme on kitchens needed (at some point) to be re-written to include more Pakistani content. The current theme of kitchens was dominated by pictures and references to technologies, which were, all the participants agreed, found only in very affluent and Westernised houses: “Even my kitchen isn’t as sophisticated as that one,” one participant remarked. It was also decided that a Rationale, which would state in appropriate language the philosophy of the curriculum content, in that it was suitable for an urban, middle-class, schooling system, would accompany the Teacher’s Guide. The Rationale was suggested as a response to the situation teachers found themselves in with some parents, who complained that there was little in the curriculum about Pakistan and Islam. The participants had reported that some, not many, parents were upset that children were not getting “values” education: “The parents don’t know about the new curriculum. They send notes back asking us what’s going on.” I suggested that the nature of the integrated curriculum might be hiding those values (whoever they essentially belonged to, and in what context). A Rationale might offset some of the issues parents had raised about the curriculum. It was also decided, on my recommendation at this particular meeting, to have a focus group with children’s parents. A meeting was subsequently set up with two parents from each of the eleven schools, to ascertain both what they knew, or thought, about the Karachi Project, and about the issues of curricula relevance.

Conclusion

The research I conducted for the purposes of the MFAT contract was eventually subsumed by further research in order to expand the investigation into what was occurring on a more general level in education in Pakistan. As I stated in Chapter Two, this original evaluation grew into a case study, which became centred on the Karachi Project's conception of their reforms as agents of modernisation for Pakistan, together with the barriers to the reforms. What the barriers are to the modernisation of education in Pakistan, came to particularly interest me. The empirical data collected in Karachi were the base upon which I began to involve myself as the case gradually unfolded. I realised I needed a greater understanding of Pakistani history, ideology, education and sociology in order to piece together the complexity of the case study, which the Karachi Project had alerted me to during my time with them. Over the next three years, a constant email correspondence with Project members aided my mission. I also turned to the literature to augment my data and to build upon my understanding of the many aspects of the case study's central questions.

Part II

Interrogating the Issues

The second part of this thesis is concerned with the interrogation of the Karachi Project's assertions that the madrasa and the government schools constitute the major structural barriers to modernisation in Pakistan. As such, in the first instance, this is an investigation into the two micro issues that constitute the basis of the thesis in that they must be interrogated to test the validity of the Project's claims.

What ensues from the interrogation of this data, are the lateral issues that emanate from the initial interrogation, namely: the history of Pakistan; the situation of the class-based structure of that country; and the ideological construction of Islam. These micro issues, and the lateral issues that emerge from them, are investigated in order to provide historical, political and ideological insight into the situation of non-modernity that is the reality for the majority of Pakistan's population.

The larger issues, those which are both informed by and which inform the micro issues, are analysed in the following chapters. The 'clash of civilisations' is perceived as a real and potent force in international political and cultural relations. The details of this civilisational clash are inextricably associated with the oppositional binary between Islam and the West. What constitutes this binary and how is it linked to the epistemological construction of each of those two civilisations? What factors

motivate and perpetuate the oppositional binary that is so strongly associated with the clash between the two major civilisations in the contemporary world?

The inculcation of modernisation in Pakistan was the major theme the Karachi Project emphasised in their discussions with me. The members believed it would be their educational reforms that would significantly help address the social imbalances and lack of modernisation caused by the structural barriers of poor educational provision in Pakistani society. The story of this thesis is set within this claim, and the subsequent interrogation of the data provided to verify the claims are analysed in this section. Ultimately, the micro and macro issues that constitute the content of the chapters in Part II, point to a system of obstruction so enormous that the Karachi Project is destined for failure.

The Karachi Project's conception of modernisation, which is based on the members' perceptions of what modernisation is in the West, is ultimately antithetical to the prescriptions of what must constitute society in an oligarchical, conservative, Islamic society. How an oligarchy and a religion combine forces to maintain their respective, and yet intermeshed, powers is of central concern in this section. It is within this relationship that the reasons for the failure of the Karachi Project reside.

Chapter Four

The Land of the Pure: The Construction of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Introduction

The history of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is important to the issues in this case study, for without an understanding of the forces pivotal in the composition of Pakistan it is difficult to situate the problematic of the Karachi Project and its reforms. The geographical area now known as Pakistan became independent of India and British colonial domination in 1947. This chapter concentrates primarily on the history that led to the creation of Pakistan. Events from that time on are incorporated into other chapters as they relate to the themes of the thesis.

Several themes of importance to this case study emerge from studying the history of pre-independence Pakistan. First, the historical roots of the ideological construction of the new state emerge from the sense of loss felt by Muslims as Western colonialism penetrated traditionally Muslim lands. Second, is the concept of “little Islams”. This theme is important for a clarification of the roles played by different ethnic groups, social classes and Islamic sects in the problematic growth of a state hegemony through a dominant discourse based on the myth of Islam. This consideration bears directly on the shape and content of the state apparatuses –

including education – that attempt to control diversity in contemporary Pakistan. Third, the legacy of pre-British rule and British colonial rule are considered in an attempt to situate the continuing difficulties of state institutions in establishing state apparatuses, including a public educational system and its bureaucracy⁶⁵. Across these many issues that lead to a clarification of the Karachi Project's location within contemporary Pakistan, is the need to view the geopolitical area that preceded the new state as a complex and diverse region and not as a *tabula rasa* upon which a nation could be rationally inscribed at its birth in 1947.

The End of Muslim Hegemony?

By the beginning of the twentieth century, it increasingly appeared to Indian Muslims that Islamic ideology was losing its hegemony throughout those regions that, for centuries, had been under the direct control or spiritual domination of Islam (Metcalf: 1982: 43). This understanding acts as a backdrop to the eventual revival of Islam as a political discourse – what is contemporaneously termed “Islamism”⁶⁶ – in some parts of India prior to Partition in 1947. The political dimension to Islam is important here, for, in viewing the *real politique* of the demise of the great Islamic empires, India's Muslim intelligentsia could clearly place themselves within the increasingly subject and weakened state of their own religious and cultural position. Northern India had been ruled by the Mughals – a period of strong ideological control, which had seen its demise under Christian, (yet secular – a dangerous and problematic paradox to Muslims) British colonial rule. The powerful Safavid Empire had declined through internal political fragmentation and European colonialism in

⁶⁵ Chapter six investigates the public education system and the peculiarities that characterise it.

⁶⁶ See Sayyid (1997) for a discussion on the meaning and significance of Islamism, which he defines as a systematised revival of Islamic principles and their politicisation.

neighbouring Persia (Bloom & Blair: 2000: 236), and the Ottoman Empire had imploded by the end of World War One. By the 1920's, the decline of the political security – of greatness – associated with the Muslim empires was keenly felt by Indian Muslims. They increasingly conceived the world as dominated by the strange paradox of Christian secularism (Low: 1991: 4; Aziz: 1967: 109).

The threat to Islam and the Islamic world was evident to Muslims universally. Low (1991:4) asserts that, for Muslims at this time a major fear was the “singularly inappropriate institution of the secular nation state”⁶⁷. In 1924, when the new Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Ataturk abolished the Caliphate – the last Caliph in Islam – a sense of calamity occurred within the Muslim world and precipitated, in effect, the revivalism of Islam as a political force. The sheer importance of the abolition of the Caliphate needs illuminating, for, as Low (1991: 5) suggests, the loss felt by Muslims in the subcontinent has been underestimated in the historiography of that region as it relates to the event of Pakistan.

Of significance also, is that the abolition was not the logical consequence of a slow process, through which a new counter-hegemony had significantly replaced the old amongst the dominated classes, in this case non-Westernised Muslims. Symbolically, the Caliphate was Islam's earthly nodal point. In other words, Ataturk's abolition of the Caliphate was a counter-hegemonic strike against Islam in the name of modernisation. But, as Gramsci asserts, a counter-hegemony has to be accepted and inculcated for it to become a successful hegemony. Islam is universal, not exclusively Turkish. As such, political events particular to Turkey, and sufficiently problematic

⁶⁷ The concept of the nation state is problematic to many Muslims. The Quran calls for a universal religion that transcends political and ethnic barriers. The modern nation state is therefore interpreted by some as the antithesis of Islamic doctrine.

in that location, were not necessarily to be seamlessly inculcated into the psyche of Muslims universally. The Muslims of India reacted against the localisation of Islamic politics by the Turkish reformer, for, in one sweep, those reforms were seen to universally usher in the legitimisation of the West at the expense of Islam and its ideology. Sayyid confirms the pivotal role of the Caliphate for Muslims and how its abolition impacted on Muslims.

The centrality of the Caliphate as the source of political authority and legitimacy started with the death of the Prophet (in AD 632). It is the death of the lawgiver that marks the birth of the law; it is the death of the Prophet which institutionalised Islam. I mean this not simply in an abstract sense but empirically: the codification and collection of the Quran begins with the death of the Prophet, as does the collection of *hadith* (sayings attributed to the Prophet) ...If the lawmaker is no longer there to hold together the discursive strands of a political community, the political community risks disintegration (Sayyid: 1997: 38).

By the 1920's Indian Muslims had organised an increasingly strong representation against the dominant British and Hindu rule primarily through the Muslim League. The demise of Muslim empires and the abolition of the Caliphate were of major importance in galvanising this reaction against the dominant alliance of powers in India.

Conception and Birth: Pakistan and the Role of Ideology

With regard to the birth of Pakistan, and the unique historical conditions that led to its creation, it is important to see Islam as a galvanising ideology, which aided in the general cohesion of the otherwise diverse composition of the Muslim population in

India⁶⁸. Sayyid (1997: 45) is, I believe, correct when he defines the role of Islam as one signifying its ultimate “it-ness”, one which is reduced to a core, an element, the fundamentals to which all Muslims concur, and from which fragments can then separate, as in sectarian distinctions. Islam is the metanarrative of what it is to be a Muslim. Although not referring directly to the role of Islam in the creation of Pakistan, Sayyid’s point is pertinent: “Islam has emerged as the means of articulating a multiplicity of positions without losing its specificity” ⁶⁹(ibid). The specificity is the “it-ness” of Islam: the ideology which *is* Islam and which transcends the non-specificity of ethnicity, class and sect, as was ultimately the case in Pakistan⁷⁰. To disagree with this position begs the question: If there had been no Muslims in India at Independence, would there be a Pakistan today? The answer is clearly that there would not be a country with a name that translates as The Land of the Pure (Lamb: 1991) – in reference to the pristine nature of Islam, a nation constructed for Muslims.

It would be difficult to argue that Indian Muslims had not only understood the subservient place they held in a colonised British India, but that they had maintained a certain degree of resistance to the prevailing hegemony. As noted in the previous section, they had felt the loss of the great Muslim empires and the ever-increasing encroachment of Western colonialism. The Muslim League was the primary organisation in the call for a stronger Muslim identity in India from the early part of the twentieth century. By 1942, the League saw a growing possibility for the achievement of this goal as the colonial power began to lose its strength and hold on

⁶⁸ Of emphasis here is the particular historical specificity of the Muslim/Hindu divide, which galvanised the diverse Muslim population – class, region, language – under the ideology of Islam. This “pan Islam” drive was not successful in uniting the Arab states in the 1960’s under Nasser – a point that locates the specificity of the construction of Pakistan as unique.

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ A relevant comparison is with contemporary Palestine. Ethnicity plays the major role here: Christian and Muslim Palestinians are united in the struggle for a Palestinian state. Ethnicity is the nodal point bringing cohesion to the struggle against Zionism.

India during the Second World War. Muslims⁷¹ from all classes and regions within India began to understand the possibility of a federation within India – or a separate Muslim state – as the end of British rule became more a possibility than a dream:

In March 1942 the British promised to concede India independence once the Second World War was over...When in August 1942 Congress showed itself ready to use force to make the British 'quit' India without taking the interests of the Muslims into account at all, the attitude of a great many Muslims in India's Muslim-majority provinces began to shift. The sharp warnings of their co-religionists in the Muslim minority provinces of their likely future in a Congress ruled India now began to be treated very much more seriously (Low: 1991: 10).

With the imminent decline in British power there was increasing room for resistance. It is interesting to view this position through a Gramscian analysis of how counter-hegemony can work:

Periodically there may develop an organic crisis in which the governing group begins to disintegrate, creating the opportunity for a subordinate class to transcend its limitations and build a broad movement capable of challenging the existing order and achieving hegemony. But if the opportunity is not taken, the balance of forces will shift back to the dominant class, which re-establishes its hegemony on the basis of a pattern of alliances (quoted in Lye: 1997: 7).

The subordinate class, in the situation under discussion, was the Muslim population of India who were dominated by a Christian/secular colonial ideology and a Hindu led Congress. Intrinsic to the situation described, is what Low (1991: 7) sees as:

...a common phenomenon at the termination of empire ... [in] ... that when it at last becomes clear that imperial power is actually going, the principal issue for nationalist positions switches from being how it can be made to go, to the distribution of power within the forthcoming independent state when it does.

⁷¹ Not all Muslims were convinced of the need for a separate state: there were reservations in some provinces about the possible domination by other provinces should a state be constructed. Over time, this concern lessened as institutional arrangements were proposed and the strength of the counter-hegemony increased. Also, as the mass killings increased, the reservations were reduced: See Talbot: 1998.

What the ideological form of that new rule was to be has occupied Pakistanis ever since that period when it became clear that a new state was a possibility.

Muslim or Islamic State?

The complexity of events that led to the creation of Pakistan need not detain the discussion at this point⁷². What is important is to illuminate the ideological position of Pakistan when it was constructed in 1947, as a result of the desire by an increasing number of Indian Muslims for their own state. Whether this state was to be an Islamic one, based exclusively on *sharia* or Quranic law, a secular Muslim state, or a state based on an ideology that was a compromise between the two positions, has proved a divisive and contentious issue ever since Independence. This situation bears directly on the vicissitudes of the Karachi Project, for there is a significant distinction between an Islamic and a Muslim state and how education in either will be fashioned.

In a secular Muslim state the presumption would be that education would be less influenced by the prescriptions of an Islamic or Quranic state. This lack of definition, and the continuing seesaw interpretation of that disputed status is, in my contention, the major focus in relation to the success (or lack of success) of the reforms being initiated by the Karachi Project. It is within the respective hegemony of each of the two forces – or the shades of distinction that lie between them – that the fortunes of the Karachi Project lie. It is, therefore, of relevance to investigate further the specific history surrounding the issue of Pakistan's ideological construction; in the confusion that is the history machine surrounding Pakistan lies the confusion of the place of

⁷² For a complete description of the issues which led to the state of Pakistan see, for example: Talbot:1998; Low:1991; Jalal:1985

education generally, a situation discussed at length in Chapters Five and Six, which focus respectively on traditional Islamic education and modern public school education.

Islam and Ideology; Writing History; Creating Myths

In his essay *History Writing in Pakistan*⁷³, the Pakistani historian Mubarak Ali introduces us to the problem of history writing in Pakistan. It is valuable to quote Mubarak Ali at length, for he points to the competing myth-making apparatuses that appear to have accompanied much of the history making in Pakistan – an aspect in the construction of new and competing hegemonies in this relatively new state.

There are three different opinions about reshaping the history of Pakistan. One view is that as Pakistan came into being in 1947, the history of Pakistan should be started from this point with the understanding that the pre-partition history belongs to the history of India. In the second approach it was argued that the history of Pakistan should be written from the Arab invasion of Sindh (711) in order to give it an Islamic character...In the third view it is said that ancient history cannot be ignored so it should be included in the history of Pakistan. This point of view gives importance to the Indus Valley civilisation and provides roots of the territorial rather than religious nationalism...As a result of these narrow approaches, history in Pakistan has lost its charm and vibrancy. To become effective and powerful, it should be liberated from the stranglehold of ideology.

Talbot (1998: 4) adds to Mubarak Ali's contention that Pakistan faces a crisis of legitimacy when it comes to analysing its historical realities:

Like all new states, Pakistan possesses its foundational myths. The circumstances of its birth and vagaries of post-independence politics have given these 'conjuring tricks' added influence. The official reading of history

⁷³ The article by Mubarak Ali was given to me by a civil servant who I interviewed in the Sindh Ministry of Education. The article has no publishing details.

still maintains that the Muslims of the subcontinent were a separate nation from their Hindu neighbours.⁷⁴

What comes with the investigation of the history of Pakistan, is the inevitability of confronting the “foundational myths”. At the core of the myths is always Islam. In Talbot’s case, his negation of Islam presents a situation that, paradoxically, conjures Islam back into the picture as a core aspect for dissection. It is the dissection of that core that those concerned with Pakistan’s history must negotiate.

Essentially, and the argument is being reduced to an essential, Islam was the focal point for the construction of the new state of Pakistan in 1947. What united Muslims, caught at that particular moment in time, at the creation of the new state, if not Islam? As divided and divisive as the region was, and as chaotically represented by the multiple “little Islams” of classes, sects, linguistic groups, provinces, regions and political leanings to which Muslims belonged, in that vast geopolitical area was the core of Islam. The question then is: What is the core? How is it composed? The core is the unifier and this is what Sayyid (1997: 40) maintains is the nodal of Islam – the ‘it-ness’, the core signifier, a concept which emerges from Saussurean linguistics, which distinguishes between the image (signifier) and the concept (signified). The signified is that which emerges from the signifier; in this case the signified are multiple “little Islams” (ibid: 40). These Islams refer back to the signifier, which is the image; what Hussain (1966:2) calls “Islam as the myth”. It was to the myth⁷⁵ – the core – that the pluralities of Islam returned to in the lead up to Partition. This is the ultimate hegemony of Islam, for it incorporates into its oneness a multiplicity into

⁷⁴ Talbot (1998:8) himself confuses the issue here for he contends that Pakistan is based on a new ethnicity; Pakistan may be trying to evolve a new ethnicity but in 1947 it was Islam which created that opportunity to begin. In this he ignores the role of Islam and creates his own foundational myth.

⁷⁵ Myth here indicates: “A coded indication of the central values of society”

which it can again fragment. Islam accommodates, it stabilises, a condition Gramsci notes is at the heart of what hegemony does. Gramsci's conception of Catholicism, as an ideology which fragments and, thus, serves through different voices its different constituents: women, men, peasants, the bourgeoisie, is applicable to the concept of Islam. Certainly, at that period of history, the distinctions of the "little Islams" were sufficiently hegemonised by the dominant Islam, the signifier, to be persuaded to 'join' the dominant discourse of the signifier, which is Islam.

As Strinati (1995: 166) states when discussing the concept of hegemony:

It can be argued that Gramsci's theory suggests that subordinated groups accept the ideas, values and leadership of the dominant group not because they are physically or mentally induced to do so, nor because they are ideologically indoctrinated, but because they have reason of their own.

I contend that "reason of their own" is the return to the core of the basic ideology, as was evidenced in the time leading up to Partition when the pluralities, the "little Islams" referred (not deferred) to the signifier. It is in the post-Partition stage that the pluralities still maintain allegiance to Islam, the myth. The myth is the strength of Islam. It accounts for its presence and its durability over 1500 years and it accounts for the creation of Pakistan. This situation in turn, of course, poses problems. Hussain (1966: 1) states: "...Pakistan is highly conscious of her weakness as a nation and that fact that Islam is the only factor making for an effective nationalism." This weakness exposes why the various "little Islams" (classes, ethnicities, political groups etc.) all vie for position under the necessary "Islam" banner but each with its own agenda. Lamb (1991: 27) sums up the danger of this state composed of pluralities: "The more

fragmented the country becomes, the more aggressively its people fall back on Islam...”

The role of class in the formation of Pakistan has been raised by historians. It is certainly a factor, but only in that it serves to illustrate how that factor is eventually subordinated by the factor of Islam. Low (1991: 159) illustrates the role of economics by interviewing two Muslim businessmen.

Ispahani, a business magnate from Bengal, admitted that there was ‘an almost fanatical determination’ among Muslims not to be dominated by Hindus, for it ‘was impossible for the Muslims to achieve economic emancipation at the hands of the Hindus.

The link between class and race not only illustrates the complexity of the issue, it also further informs the discussion about the centrality of Islam as the defining feature in Pakistan’s construction. The second businessman, a member of the Bengal Muslim League,

... described the Pakistan movement as ‘a movement of the Muslim middle class against the Hindu middle class’. Inevitably the communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims gained precedence over class conflict within the Muslim community (ibid).

The question of whether Pakistan was constructed as an Islamic state or a predominantly secular Muslim state, remains an aspect to be fought over by the competing “little Islams”, in whose different interests lie their own mythology. For example, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the ‘founder’ of Pakistan, is reputed, by secular Muslims, to have been a secularist who desired a secular Muslim state but “which he never really defined” (Hussain: 1966: 54).

The Zia regime further reworked the foundational myth to posit that Jinnah and the Muslim League leadership as demanding Pakistan in order to establish not just a homeland for the nation of Indian Muslims, but an Islamic state. Thus only by returning to the pristine Islamic intentions of its creators could Pakistan establish its true identity and achieve its national unity (Talbot: 1998: 5).

Mubarak Ali notes the dramatic shift adopted by the Jamait-Islamit party, which opposed the creation of Pakistan – on the religious principal that Islam was a universal religion and could not be confined to a nation state: “[Their books]...have been re-written and all those passages which were against Pakistan and the Muslim League leadership are expunged.”

It is contended that Islam is at the base of the formation of the new state. It is beyond the scope of this work to establish what, if any, truth can be found in the complexity of Pakistan’s foundational histories. Where the question of what interpretation the state takes in applying the long spectrum of Islam from ‘secular’ Islam to ‘pristine’ Islam is where this work is concerned. This concern is central, for it affects the application of the secular and modernist reforms of the Karachi Project.

Because there is no universally accepted rendition of what ideologically constituted Pakistan, other than “Islam”, the unresolved question arises constantly: “What Islam constitutes the ideology of the nation? Conservative Islam? Liberal Islam?” The question is an intrinsic aspect of the lived experience of Pakistan. The various ideological allegiances, which manifest themselves from ruler to ruler, shift their foci according to their own ideological needs. Hussain illuminates a point central to an understanding of how the Karachi Project fits into the shifting ideological situation in

Pakistan, for the Project's fortunes are decided by which ideology, which "little Islam", is in ascendance and in most control of the state apparatuses.

The interpretation of Islam and the meaning of the word have been defined in Pakistan in various ways: so much so that there exist different shades of opinion and modes of thought ranging from extreme conservatism to a considerable degree of leftism. These divergences are particularly apparent because the basic issues were thrashed out in order to arrive at a constitution and not just on social issues or the interpretation of the existential world. However, one unifying factor remains: Islam, whether for justification or in a prescriptive spirit. The Islamic state as an ideal and Islam as a myth are the two constituents of the Pakistani ideology. These two factors have not been translated into social programmes but they do have some influence in conditioning the state of mind and the attitude of the Pakistani nation (1966: 25).

The experience of the foundational core of Pakistan suggests a hegemony intrinsic to the core of Islam – the signifier. What emerges from this core is the "little Islams", which constitute the very complex realities of the contemporary nation state, and which bear upon the fortunes of those competing in the various hegemonies that struggle for position within such pluralism. Muhammad Khan, a restaurant worker in Karachi, adds a personal perspective to this conundrum: "I am a Muslim first, then I am a Pakistani, and then I am a Pashtun" (quoted in McCarry: 1997: 58).

It is doubtful that there would be consensus amongst Pakistanis as to their hierarchy of allegiances in contemporary Pakistan. Given the realities of ethnic, class and sectarian, diversity and discord, the stability provided by a universally accepted homogeneity is wishful thinking. Various nationalisms have arisen within the borders

to contest the legitimacy of the state. A decade ago the Pashtun nationalist Wali Khan stated that he had been a Pashtun for 4,000 years, a Muslim for 1,400 and a Pakistani for 40 years (Talbot: 1998: 1). However, on recognising the pluralism within contemporary Pakistan and the problems that the state has in controlling that diversity, that fact that Islam was the ideology that brought these forces together in 1947 cannot be diminished. It should come as no surprise that Islam, which proved such a successful tool in creating the state, has been applied, in varying degrees, by successive rulers since Independence, to attempt a national cohesion, in the hope that such a move would prove as successful as the initial creation. Less in concern, to build a unifying nationalism to strengthen the foundational core philosophy of Islam, is the cynical deployment of Islam. This deployment of Islam is the one which “has become a habit of being used whenever a ruler’s popularity disintegrates and he or she begins waving the scimitar of Islam” (McGirk: 1: 1998). For all Pakistanis this move translates into the questions: Whose Islam?

Colonial Legacies: Present Realities

The country is chaotic and we all suffer from this. Just look about you to see this. The bureaucracy and the military are creatures that eat us. Unless we do something ourselves we will get nothing. The Government can do nothing except make it more messy (personal communication: November 19, 1997).

This dismal picture of what Pakistan represents to a member of the educated middle class of Karachi, was one I heard often from people in various sectors of society with whom I spoke during my time in Pakistan. The story is reiterated in the literature concerning the nation’s fortunes. The statistics on development indicators point

directly at a population for whom daily life is a struggle⁷⁶ for “nearly two in five Pakistanis live below the poverty line” (Zabriski: 2001: 16). If the above informant is correct in stating that the bureaucracy is dysfunctional – and there is no reason to assume that it is not – then the problem of state education is to be included in the list of bureaucracies that are unable to function at an optimal level. This situation is central to the Karachi Project’s motivations for educational reform in Pakistan. It is, therefore, important to investigate the historical background of that state which emerged in 1947 in an attempt to shed light on how contemporary state institutions function. The actual dysfunction of the state education system is the subject of Chapter Six. It is not the intention of this chapter to focus on that issue but rather to look for generalities in the history preceding Partition that may shed light on contemporary Pakistan.

Authoritarianism

This chapter has established that the hegemony of Islam is pivotal in Pakistan’s construction. That conservative Muslims have maintained control throughout most of Pakistan’s post-Partition history is evident, from both a reading of the literature ⁷⁷and through discussions with Pakistanis. The theocratic authoritarianism, which thus ensues across the state apparatuses of Pakistan, is but one aspect of authoritarianism. Linked inextricably to this theocratic disposition, is the civil structure of Pakistani society, which is also based on authoritarianism, the roots of which lead back to pre-colonial influences..

⁷⁶ See Chapter Six for statistics on education, health and poverty indicators.

⁷⁷ See Lamb, C. (1991) *Waiting For Allah*; Duncan, E. (1990) *Breaking the Curfew*, for detailed analysis of successive regimes which have used conservative Islam.

Throughout the nineteenth century British colonial forces took control of the North West areas, that land mass which is today Pakistan. The British encountered strong, independent tribal groups with distinctive cultures based on ethnic groupings. By the turn of the twentieth century, the British had established themselves as an authoritarian colonial power, through military force and by the manipulation of political allegiances amongst the subordinated groups. Talbot (1998: 55) makes a distinction between British rule in areas of India that were colonised much earlier and those of the North West frontier. In the former areas, force gave way to commercial interests and, by the time of Independence, a more representative form of Government had been inculcated. In the North West frontier, however, the situation was different. The tribal groups were never as successfully hegemonised. As a result, law and order – the rule of repression – was a feature of colonial domination until the time of Independence. “Political participation was far less developed there and permanent police powers existed alongside emergency coercive measures” (ibid).

The British themselves had inherited, in their colonial territories, a political and social system based on strong authoritarian rule. The largely tribal areas of Sindh, Baluchistan, Pathan and the Punjab were difficult to subdue. In an attempt to achieve colonial domination, the colonial apparatuses not only used force, but also developed power alliances with the existing authorities in those areas. For example, “the irrigated areas of Sindh and the Punjab had developed a settled agrarian lifestyle prior to the intrusion of the colonial state” (ibid). Van den Dungen (1972: 78) notes that “...in these areas the powerful landlords became part of the British governing structure.” By incorporating local leaders into the British system of autocracy, the British legitimised and supported feudalism, a system based on authoritarianism. Talbot (1998: 61) asserts that the links established by the colonial power with the

leading landowners were “to threaten the post-colonial democratic development” of Pakistan. A system based on cronyism and power alliances, which supported the wealthy, and one in which entrenched feudal practices had a profound effect on the adoption (or the lack of adoption) of modern institutions, in such areas as the North West territories of the British colony, which were to become Pakistan. “In 1944, for example, Balochistan possessed only four government high schools and had a literacy rate of under 2 percent” (ibid: 62).

Modernisation in the Middle East, as in other parts of the ‘Third World’ has meant only economic growth, capital accumulation and industrialisation under the auspices of multi-national corporations, led by an authoritarian elite and serving the interests of a privileged minority (Moghissi: 1999: 54).

Hussain (1966:33) draws together the eras under discussion, all of which are characterised by authoritarian rule:

After the pristine spirit of Islam had vanished [that is, after the death of the Prophet] Muslim rulers governed absolutely with the religious support of Islam⁷⁸. The same situation obtained with the Muslim rulers of India and inculcated a deep respect for authority...During the British period the executive was never, indeed could not be, responsible to the legislature and the “slave mentality” which had secure foundations even before the British, deepened.

Inheritances from the Anti-colonial Struggle

Hussain (1966) and Low (1991) describe the struggle for independence as one in which the interests of class, tribe, and sect had to be subordinated to the collective ideology of Islam. The Muslim League emerged as the dominant representative in this struggle. This subordination impacted on the future state in that it initiated a legacy of

⁷⁸ Note the “religious support of Islam” as opposed to the core, the “it-ness”, the signified.

authoritarianism from the founding principal of Islam, which was represented through an organisation, notably the Muslim League.

Gramsci notes that a hegemony takes time to envelop its constituents. In utilising the ideology of Islam for their purposes of galvanising support for a Muslim state, the Muslim League was not successful in constructing a hegemony in which all members of the Muslim community were automatically inculcated. The time frame in which the Muslim League was working was not sufficient to bring about a totalising envelopment of all the “little Islams”. Although the above discussion has focused on how Muslims did, in fact, refer to the core of Islam and that they were able to suspend the interests particular to the “little Islams”, there was, amongst some groups, a continuing resistance to being hegemonised by the increasingly dominant discourse.

These exceptions to the hegemonising force were to discover the coercive power of that apparatus which needed them in its collective drive for independence. In not accepting the goals of the Muslim League these recalcitrant groups were on the outside of the dominant discourse of the time, and the repression that ensued has been well documented ⁷⁹. For example, the Punjab was a Muslim-dominated province. However, because of economic and political ties with Hindus and the Indian Congress the Punjab Government was hesitant to join the Muslim League. It was not until just before Independence, and under extreme pressure from the Muslim League, that the Punjab Congress joined the League and left its affiliation with the Hindu Congress ⁸⁰. As the League’s ideological authority – and its repressive apparatus – began to gather momentum, the pace, in turn, brought with it those who had reservations about a

⁷⁹ Aziz: 1967; Low: 1991; Talbot: 1998, provide evidence of how the Muslim League coerced Muslims to join the Muslim League.

⁸⁰ See Talbot (1998) Chapter Three for a discussion on this topic: also Low (1991)

separate state for Muslims. The apparatuses of the Muslim League, which became the ideological template of the new Islamic state, used their increasing power to control those dissidents and force them into its orbit. In this situation the seeds of coercion and authoritarianism were inculcated into the new state.

Low (1991) and Talbot (1998) demonstrate this theme through presenting historical data on how the League coerced its way through the dissenting Muslim population. Both authors illustrate, through details of the League's meetings and policies throughout the subcontinent, how individuals and groups were forced to comply to Muslim League hegemony. The various factions of the Muslim League, all of which were supposedly working towards the same goal, had, by the 1940's, become dominated by the All India Muslim League (AIML). The AIML, under the directorship of Jinnah, centralised the Muslim League and left in its wake disenfranchised Muslim League groups throughout the provinces, who had to submit to centralised rule. Increasingly Jinnah's power was consolidated. Whereas this situation was not one Jinnah necessarily conspired to, given his declared desire for representational politics, the exigencies of the time culminated in the centralisation and concentration of powers (Talbot: 1998: 91).

Nevertheless, the Working Committee [of the AIML] always rubber-stamped his [Jinnah's] behest and the centralising powers conferred by the AIML Constitution provided a model for Pakistan's future political development (ibid).

Hussain (1966: 33) asserts that Jinnah: "Although a true leader in the sense of Weber, acted as a popular dictator". Jinnah died soon after Independence, and before a Constitution was written, meant he left the state "orphaned". This situation of unresolved ambiguity is part of the continuing drama of Pakistan's legacy.

Summary: The Conundrum

This brief discussion of the history of Pakistan has limited itself to a few major themes that shed light on the nation's contemporary situation. What is evident is that history has written the contemporary template of Pakistan's ideological and state apparatuses, which are a confusion of ideologies and thus a competing system of hegemonies. The contradictions evident in Lamb's observation about the overlapping of historic periods, are not merely interesting cultural observations for the traveller. The socio-economic realities, which continue to marginalise the majority of the nation's population, have roots in the past. Central to this, is the conundrum of the foundational myths, and difficulties in deciphering the realities of Pakistan's independence period. The secularists and the non-secularists both saw Islam as the core signifier for the establishment of a nation for Muslims. Lamb brings the ambiguities and difficulties of this situation to light:

The country had been created at cross purposes: secularists like Jinnah...had wanted it to safeguard Muslim political and religious interests, while the clergy saw it as a new cradle of Islam purged of modern influences. Consequently, from the start, they had no hope of agreeing on the role Islam should play in the running of the state (1991: 8).

The ambiguities of this situation played well into the entrenched power structures inherited by Pakistan, from both the feudal pre-British and the British colonial periods. The unresolved ambiguities mean that there is major instability in Pakistan as opposing hegemonies vie for, obtain, and, in turn, lose power, along a continuum of Islam that reaches across the many spectra of what Islam means in its diversity. Authoritarian rule has been maintained over institutions such as education, throughout

the fifty-odd years of independence. That form of rule, which reflects old social patterns, is reflected in contemporary discrepancies in educational provision. How the Karachi Project fits into this conundrum is the central theme of this thesis.

Chapter Five

Madrassa Education: Barrier to Modernisation?

Introduction

Madrassa is the Arabic word for school. Madrassa are traditional Islamic schools in which the Quran and teachings and texts sacred to Islam are the overwhelming focus of education. In Pakistan, madrassa range from schools for young children through to university level institutions. In rural areas, where eighty per cent of Pakistanis live (Lamb: 1991: 23), madrassa are the most popular form of education.

The Karachi Project determines madrassa to be one of the main barriers to the modernisation of Pakistani society. To the members of the Karachi Project, madrassa have maintained a pedagogical focus that has remained “unchanged since ancient times, always the same relentless wishywashy of memorisation of the Quran and chanting...” (personal communication: November, 1997). The Moroccan educationalist Talbani characterises madrassa as a reproductionist system in which “stasis is valued for its epistemological purity” (1996: 34), a situation that, to the Karachi Project members, suggests barriers to modernisation. Conversely, Islamist scholars ⁸¹ from all segments of Muslim society agree that Islam should follow Quranic dicta and preserve, in purity, its form and structure through education. In

⁸¹ Islamist scholars refers to those who follow Islamism, the political ideology of Islam: See G. Sayyid: 1998.

between these two poles are Muslims who see the need for a combination of Western and Quranic education.

This chapter will interrogate the Karachi Project's premise that madrasa act as barriers to modernisation in Pakistan. The chapter begins with an historical overview of madrasa. A focus in this discussion is the curriculum content of madrasa education, which is problematic to the Karachi Project in that its emphasis on religious instruction represents a barrier to modernisation. In this, the discussion turns to the debate inherent in the apparent oppositional West/Islam binary on the "duality of knowledge". The problem of what should be taught in an Islamic school, and, by extension, in an Islamic society, is linked to this binary – this duality – of modern i.e. Western, versus Islamic content. Islam, in attempting to maintain its hegemony, responds to modernisation and modernity in various ways, a reflection of the ambiguous role Islam plays in its variant forms in Pakistan ⁸². How madrasa have responded, as apparatuses of Islamic hegemony, is a theme central to this discussion. As the chapter on the history of Pakistan disclosed, there are millennia old issues that bring a number of dilemmas to the contemporary Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Madrasa education is amongst them and, as such, it necessitates an in-depth study in order to place its influences within the macrocosm of the West/Islam binary on which this thesis focuses.

⁸² See Chapter Four for a discussion on how the history of the ideological construction of Pakistan mitigates against a homogenous approach to what constitutes the Islam and thus the ideological construction of the state.

Madrasa in History

Talbani (1996: 68) states that madrasa “became important in the following 100 years after the Prophet’s death as his teaching encouraged Muslims to seek knowledge”. Nayyar ⁸³ (1998: 216) states that the emergence of madrasa occurred in the eleventh century. Other sources on the subject of Islamic thought and intellectual development, disclose that the prototype of the madrasa existed, as systematised institutional entities, in such locations as the mosque and private homes within several decades after of the death of the Prophet Muhammad (Wagner & Lotfi: 1980: 239; Eickelman: 1978: 498). Prior to the political legitimisation of madrasa as the only ideologically acceptable source of education, centres of education were involved in the teaching of non-Quranic subjects such as philosophy, medicine, mathematics, literature, languages and art (1993: 35). After the eleventh century, madrasa had been established as a recognised and vital institution in those areas conquered by Muslims and subjected to the new faith. From this period, the madrasa were rigidly focused on Quranic knowledge, to the exclusion of secular subjects.

An analysis of madrasa in various Islamic societies demonstrates how independent madrasa gradually became more firmly under the control of Islamic powers after the tenth century. These ideological powers evolved to support the relationship between ideological and repressive state apparatuses, which, with reference to Islamic societies, constitute theocratic hegemony. Under such a system:

... all forms of knowledge not patronised by madrasa, and not a part of Islamic learning, such as philosophy, chemistry, astronomy, and mathematics, were

⁸³ Nayyar is quoted from Hoodbhoy (1998).

pursued privately, and to an extent secretly, under the guise of other subjects such as the traditions of medicine” (Talbani: 1996: 69).

Writing on the time of the early Islamic kingdoms of the tenth century, Nayyar (1998: 218) notes how state controls were gradually applied to independent educational institutions, in a period noted for its relative intellectual flexibility, and openness, in contrast to that of subsequent eras, which came increasingly under greater Islamic ideological control. How this increasing control occurred in relation to the rise of madrasa supremacy is explained (ibid.):

Within this freedom to establish schools, there was the system of state patronage under the institution of *waqf* (trust) through which the schools were financially supported. This also turned out to be the instrument by which an independent teacher was made a salaried employee, securing his financial well being on the one hand, but making him susceptible to state pressures on the ideological front of the other (ibid.).

This systematised, and colonialist, process, which incorporated strong economic incentives to force compliance, eventually constituted a complete hegemony in education in Islamic societies. Western knowledge, which accompanied Western imperialism, tested that hegemony and the state apparatuses that supported it (Eickelman: 1978; Wagner & Lotfi: 1980).

What is of further interest in this situation in the early Islamic kingdoms of the tenth and eleventh centuries, and as it relates to contemporary Pakistani education, is the reaction of individuals to the exclusion of non-Islamic curricula during that time. Nayyar states that during that period:

The exclusion meant that the study of “foreign sciences” had to be pursued privately; without being subsidized in the same manner as the Islamic sciences

and its ancillaries. But there was nothing to stop the subsidized student from studying “foreign sciences” unaided or in the *waqf* institutions outside of the regular curriculum” (ibid.).

Although there are many reasons why students in Pakistan choose to study at private, Westernised-schools – a subject to be discussed in detail in the following chapter – one of the main reasons would not be dissimilar to that for of students in the tenth century - the desire to study secular education, or education which was not classified and framed by Islamic precepts. What varies from region to region in the Islamic world, is the degree of acceptance of such alternatives to Islam, as “the pure knowledge” (Talbani: 1996: 63) imparted in madrasa. In this, the degree of Islamism – the political support for Islamic ideology and the subsequent degree of hegemony – is measured according to that degree of political pressure on conformity to Islam.

The statistics on madrasa education in contemporary Pakistan show that madrasa are growing in number and in enrolments. Nayyar (1998: 226) notes that at independence there were 250 state registered madrasa. Nayyar does not clarify what he determines as ‘madrasa’ when providing these numbers. It seems that, within the borders of the newly constructed Pakistan in 1947, there would surely have been more than 250 madrasa, if we view a madrasa as including the small rural mosque schools, which traditionally were the only schools available for rural children, a situation pointed to by Wagner and Lotfi (1980: 239) on the provision of madrasa education in the Arab world. Nevertheless, Nayyar (1998: 227) states that in 1987 there were 2,862 madrasa catering to all levels of education, from the primary level – where the instruction is based on memorisation and recitation of the Quran – to the highest levels – where students can graduate with the equivalent of the MA degree. It should be noted that it was Zia ul Huq who issued an ordinance in 1981 providing for

equality of degree status for madrasa graduates with those degrees conferred at state universities. This then allowed holders of a madrasa degree, from an advanced study course in a madrasa, to hold a position in the civil service or other employment, based on the grade scale for such employment.

This caused enormous anger for it meant that we who went to a real university and did all that hard study for real thinking suddenly have chaps and women in the service who can only recite the Quran. They got the same level of pay and status when they got their religious degree. It was equivalent to an M.A [laughter] (personal communication: November 21 1997).

This was the response to my asking an informant in Karachi of their opinion of this ordinance

Nayyar (1998: 232) provides several reasons for the huge growth in the number of madrasa in Pakistan over recent years. He states that there are reasons for the growth, since the 1970's, of these schools that are rooted in the revival of Islamism, a revival that has made such religious education ideologically attractive to Islamists. This situation links with the premise that the state, in seeking to inculcate its discourse of Islamism as a dominant ideological construct, has supported this process through its ideological apparatuses – namely the madrasa – and through the increased pressure on public schools to teach Islamiyat ⁸⁴.

The poverty of formal government schools is cited by Nayyar (ibid.) as one of the major reasons why parents send their children to madrasa. The fact that government schools are so poorly run and equipped is sufficient reason to not attend them

⁸⁴ Islamiyat is the compulsory subject of religious instruction. Zia strengthened Islamiyat in 1980 (Talbot: 1998: 279).

especially as they cost money, an issue of enormous importance to the general population who cannot easily afford school fees.

While supporting a child through schooling is burdensome for a majority of parents, the education in the formal sector fails to impart skills that are normally seen as relevant to the basic needs of livelihood (ibid.).

For parents [in Pakistan] with very low incomes, the sheer expense of school, such as the cost of uniforms, textbooks, and book bags, may make it impossible for their children to attend school” (Warick & Reimers: 1995: 17).

Thus there is a significant economic incentive to attend a madrasa: the perception that formal schooling will not lead to employment is one incentive to take a religious alternative; also, and significantly, according to Nayyar (1998: 233),

Madrasah, unlike formal schools, are attractive because they are invariably boarding schools, providing free boarding and lodging, free books, and often even clothing to their students. Thus, while the parents have the satisfaction of their children receiving an education, they are almost completely absolved from their upkeep.

Saudi Arabia has paid for the building and maintenance of madrasa in Pakistan and for the school expenses for millions of Pakistani children of Sunni families. Iran does the same for members of the Shia sect in Pakistan (personal communication: September 2001).

Hegemony and Power

It is important to understand how the Karachi Project, which represents Western⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Western styled secular education refers to that education, which some Western democracies such as the USA, New Zealand and Australia have adopted, where religion is not part of state education.

secularised education, is permitted in an Islamic Republic ⁸⁶. Educational provision in Pakistan allows for multiple types of education: state madrasa, state public schools, private religious schools (including two Catholic secondary schools in Karachi), and private secularised schools, such as those run by members of the Karachi Project. The majority of school students are enrolled in state madrasa and state public schools (Nayyar: 1998: 34). It is important to note that the Pakistani state allows for this diversity in a controlled way. This allowance of diversity in an Islamic state is an aspect of the place in which Pakistan is situated, that is, on the continuum between conservative fundamentalist societies such as Afghanistan, and liberal Islamic states such as Bahrain. When a member of the Karachi Project noted: “We are always being looked at by the mullahs. We must be very careful,” she notes this fear as an aspect of the panopticon which is an aspect of the repressive apparatus supporting the hegemonic dominance of Islam. This dominant hegemony is integral to the foundational ideology of Pakistan and, as Chapter Seven will detail, the country’s rigid class system. This state-sanctioned situation sustains the vulnerability for any discourse that may be viewed by the dominant discourse as approaching the situation of being dangerously counter-hegemonic. The oppositional dualism between West/Islam knowledge exposes this vulnerability.

The controlled allowance of diversity in education can be viewed through Gramsci’s premise that, in order to maintain stability in society a state can release the pressure for pluralism by accommodating certain levels of diversity. The state allows a space for the middle class to operate within. This space allows for the needs of the upper class, that dominant discourse which also benefits from modern school systems.

⁸⁶ This subject is dealt with briefly here. For a more in-depth analysis see Chapter Seven.

In this situation, there is both a symbiotic relationship and one that is based on an uneasy alliance. If stability is threatened, then the dominant discourse must react to protect its class-based interests, which are based primarily on maintaining the balance of power in relation to the means of production. It is within this, often-tenuous relationship, in which Islamic discourse is manipulated by and, in turn manipulates, the volatile social-political situation that the Karachi Project manoeuvres for survival. As the following discussion on Western knowledge and Islamic knowledge will disclose, there is such antagonism between the two discourses that controls by the dominant discourse mitigate against a full expression of the diversity in educational provision in Pakistan. The Karachi Project feels that, within their own privately owned schools in downtown Karachi, they are merely “allowed”. In attempting to inculcate their reforms in madrasa, and in poorer schools in working-class districts⁸⁷, the Project invites severe criticism for attempting to infiltrate counter-hegemony into the dominant discourse. A Project member stated:

Our fortunes really do rely on who is in power at any given time.” “If there is a swing to the mullahs we have to put our heads down. During Benizir’s time it wasn’t too bad.... Not as bad as when Zia was in control when he tried to put Islam into everything...(personal communication: November: 1997).

The Duality of Knowledge in Islamic Societies

A discussion on what constitutes “Islamic knowledge” is vital in order to shed light on how it conflicts ideologically with the stated goal of the Karachi Project, which is to secularise and modernise education. The importance of state ideology in the

⁸⁷ See Chapter Three, which presents the research findings on poor schools in working class Sunni dominated districts.

hegemonising process – as it is applied through Pakistan’s state education apparatuses – necessitates an understanding of what constitutes that knowledge which the state has endorsed in its ideology and how that knowledge conflicts with “Western knowledge”. The conflict between the two epistemologies in Pakistan is played out in the arena of education and reflects the drama of the oppositional binary of West/Islam.

The commonality across Islamic sects is their exclusion of secular thought from matters of the revealed truth. The secular/non-secular division in Islamic societies is the tug of war between modernism and Islamism, which accounts for the duality. This battle has been reflected in education through ideological and political forces that dictate adherence to either epistemology or shades in between each. On this subject it is worth quoting at length from the Muslim educationalist Faisal Rahman (1982) for he sets the issues of the contemporary situation succinctly. Although Rahman states that he is addressing the concerns of “modern Muslim theorists”, I propose that the issues in the following quote have antecedents that span the history of intellectual thought since the first European contacts with Islamised societies:

Two basic approaches to modern knowledge have been adopted by modern Muslim theorists: (1) that the acquisition of modern knowledge be limited to the practical technological sphere, since at the level of pure thought Muslims do not need Western intellectual products – indeed, that these should be avoided, since they create doubt and disruption in the Muslim mind, for which the traditional Islamic system of belief already provides satisfactory answers to ultimate questions of world view; and (2) that Muslims without fear can and ought to acquire not only Western technology but also its intellectualism, since no type of knowledge can be harmful, and that in any case science and pure thought were assiduously cultivated by Muslims in the early medieval centuries, whence they were taken over by Europeans themselves (1982: 46-47).

The exclusion of types of knowledge is exemplified in contemporary Islamic societies where maintaining the “purity of Islamic knowledge” is of as much importance to Islamists as its exclusion is to the modernisers in those same societies. Al-Attas, a pre-eminent Malaysian educationalist, notes that there are two types of knowledge and it is in this duality that the debate between the forces of Islamism and its detractors centres:

The first knowledge unveils the mystery of Being and existence and reveals the true relationship between man’s self and his Lord, and since for man such knowledge pertains to the ultimate purpose for knowing, it follows that knowledge of its prerequisites becomes the basis and essential foundation for knowledge of the second kind, for knowledge of the latter alone, and without the guiding spirit of the former, cannot truly lead man in this life, but only confuses and confounds him and enmeshes him in the labyrinth of endless and purposeless seeking (1993: 147).

Al-Attas received his PhD from London University. According to Al-Attas, only those men (sic) who have a deep and committed understanding to the “right and correct path of Islam” should be permitted to look at both types of knowledge (ibid.). With this contention, he thus exhibits that he is one of the “selected men” to receive the secondary knowledge which he describes as “dangerous, secular knowledge” (ibid: 24). This situation points, not only to Foucault’s contention about the problematic of the power inequalities involved in such “politics of truth” (1980: 67), but to the moral philosophy behind what adherents to such ideology see as the necessary separation amongst types of knowledge. This further illustrates the hierarchical nature of education, a subject on which Al-Attas expounds in his considerable writings on the subject of Islamic knowledge, education and secularism. He states that: “Secular knowledge introduces man (sic) into this labyrinth of endless and purposeless seeking”, which “might not produce a good man” (Al-Attas: 1993:

44). As was noted, Al-Attas states that only those men who have a deep and committed understanding to the “right and correct path of Islam” should be permitted to look at both types of knowledge. These selected men, who themselves must be “at all times wary of speculative and secular thought” must bring to all other men “the first type of knowledge which is given by God, through revelation to man; and this refers to the Holy Quran” (ibid: 145). The replication and production of elites in the Islamic world is conditioned in part by who has access to what knowledge; the continuing conformity to this system demonstrates the traditional hierarchical structure of Islamic society and its basis in theocratic discourse.

When Al-Attas states that only those men who have a deep and committed understanding to the “right and correct path of Islam” should be permitted to look at both types of knowledge, he enters into the area of repression for if the “man” strays and joins the world of secular knowledge, then there is to be punishment. Islam institutes this through its epistemology and its associated ideology in which the state-repressive and ideological apparatuses play their part. The situation, where the man must be epistemologically pure but, where necessary, work with the “wrong knowledge” is problematic. According to Al Attas, a Muslim scientist or technocrat would therefore signify an oxymoronic situation. Certainly, according to the Iranian exile Shayegan (1992), such a situation, as a Muslim scientist attempting to live under the aegis of a strict Islam, would be subject to cultural schizophrenia.

Writing of Western-trained Islamic technocrats in his book *Cultural Schizophrenia: Islamic Societies Confronting the West*, Shayegan notes:

For the technocrat... is not a coherent being but is made up of splintered fragments of desire, scattered packages of awareness, crumbs of contradictory wishes pulling this way and that, right and left, each in its own direction (1992: 152).

There is no way out for this creature in Shayegan's analysis and, in this, he posits himself not far from Al Attas, who warns of the dangers of mixing epistemologies, for man (sic) is weak and must be vigilant against losing the traditional, sacred knowledge of Islam. Shayegan states:

The technocrat may be a believer...but whatever he says or does his actions affect traditional culture, if only because of the foreign nature of his functions. For he is "Westernized" to the marrow, however vehemently he may assert the contrary. His knowledge is more or less modern and, like it or not, he is one of modernity's mainstays" (1992: 152).

Excursions into the "other" in the Islamic reality of what *is* reality is dangerous and contradictory, as testified by Al Attas, and it is equally divisive and schizophrenic according to Al Attas' sardonic detractor Shayegan.

The dualism inherent in Western/Islamic thought is evident in various degrees across the education spectra in Islamic societies. Nayyar, (1998: 215) titles his discussion on the formidable and extensive contemporary madrasa system in Pakistan: "Madrasah ⁸⁸ Education – Frozen In Time" (ibid), a reflection of his bias in the discussion on what he considers the ossification of Islamic education. Madrasa, run under the aegis of an educationalist such as Al-Attas, would no doubt reflect the reality of a madrasa of the tenth century, where "the only subject was Islamic knowledge (*fard'ayn*)" (Al-Attas:1993: 143). Nayyar and Al-Attas, both Muslims and both writers on Islamic education, stand at opposite ideological poles. The

⁸⁸ The distinctions in spelling reflect regional variations in the Arabic.

apparent stasis of madrasa education is linked with the primary notions of what must constitute “good education” (Al-Attas, 1993: 143). This definition of “good education” – that is, knowledge that conforms to non-secular knowledge – is supported by other academics and educationalists working in the Islamic world (Al-Afendi & Baloch: 1977; Khan: 1986; Lacar & Moner: 1986); bad education (by implication) is that which does not conform to non-secular knowledge. This conflict is played out in the plurality of educational provision along ideological lines in Islamic societies; to the conservative traditional Muslims, madrasa are sacred institutions in which only, by the traditionalist definition, relevant and valid knowledge is imparted and that knowledge can only be Quranic. However, there are Muslims, like the headmistress of a privately owned, secular school in Karachi who stated: “Islam has no place in the school” (personal communication: November, 1997).

What constitutes the enormous boundaries between the two extremes of knowledge provision in Islamic societies? The same question, of course, could be asked of a Western society where, at one end of the educational spectrum there is “Christian fundamentalist” provision, which eschews secular education but which must incorporate secular subjects because of state dictates. At the other of the spectrum are secular institutions the proponents of which “are nervous about religion” (Aitken: quoted in *New Zealand Herald*, 11 March, 2000). Western societies have, in most cases, incorporated into their governing apparatuses the provision for secular education through the aegis of the separation of the church and state, an historical outcome of the Enlightenment. New Zealand’s Education Act of 1877 stipulated that education was to be secular. The content of a state-controlled curriculum will be

reflected in the respective ideological positionings that institute these boundaries. There will be strong insulation against content that is not deemed appropriate by that controlling ideological entity. Talbani (1996), writing on Islamic education, quotes Basil Bernstein to support his own contention that states control bases of knowledge through their apparatuses. Bernstein notes that: “The way a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits, and evaluates educational knowledge reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control” (ibid: 67).

The discussion on the continuity or, as the Karachi project would have it, the stasis in madrasa education, is evidenced in the content of dual knowledge. The Islamic philosopher and educationalist Al-Ghazzali (died AD 1111) illustrates this level of continuity when his ideas are compared to those of the contemporary Al-Attas. Al-Ghazzali was influential in establishing the

...nature and scope of Islamic pedagogical knowledge based on epistemological dichotomies. The first division was between revealed (*wahy*) and acquired (*iktisabi*) knowledge. Revealed knowledge was sacred and given to the chosen few. Transcendent and absolute, it should be accepted without question...Undesirable knowledge included philosophy and ancient sciences and were excluded from the curriculum... (Talbani: 1996: 69).

The conflict inherent in the “duality of knowledge” reflects the dichotomy of West/Islam itself. Shayegan confronts the dual knowledge problematic by stating it has induced a schizophrenia in Islamic societies, no matter what degree of Islamism they adhere to. Shayegan also endorses the Foucauldian analysis of power and control exemplified in Foucault’s contention that: “Every educational system is a means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them” (quoted in Talbani: 1996: 67). Shayegan

illustrates how knowledge is controlled by the mullahs and religious educationalists in Iran, who, he notes:

For centuries were the exclusive holders of knowledge, both in the traditional schools (*maktab khaneh*) and on the more sophisticated and learned level of the higher schools of theology (*madrasseh*)⁸⁹ in order to maintain hold over the masses – especially the illiterate masses who make up the bulk of the population (1992: 158).

Shayegan, commenting on the effects of the ideological constructions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, investigates the logic of such thinkers – and, by implication, the Malaysian theologian Al-Attas, who shares the prescription of the Iranian educationalists. The context of Shayegan's writing is the conflict of Islam with modernity, which promises secularism, intellectual freedom, human rights and equity in gender: "...for these days modernity is a patent and inescapable reality" (ibid: 159). Modernity is inescapable perhaps, but not without a fight and certainly not without a dose of "schizophrenia", an accusation with which Shayegan is at pains to cripple the legitimacy of the Iranian mullahs and educationalists. He states that their knowledge is nothing but a denunciation of modernity where only "the Book" can be legitimate and that, with these so-called infallible "revelations" the mullahs and educationalists control the masses and their path to modernity. For Shayegan, there is no duality of knowledge in an Islamic environment where the full reign of Islamism holds sway, such as in the Islamic Republic of Iran for:

Basically, all science, whatever its origin, is legitimate only if it is rooted in the revelations crystallized in The Book (Quran)...And who but the mullahs has access to these sources? This hierarchy of knowledge, packaged and bundled

⁸⁹ Shayegan distinguishes between these two types of schools. Generally the literature uses the term *madrasa* for all schools that are Quranic.

with such practiced skill, contains everything capable of being known, revealed; only those destined to do so, using the appropriate methods, can gain access to what remains hidden, and therefore esoteric, behind appearances. This world...has a terminology of its own which is far more rigorous than the stammerings of intellectuals as they strive in vain to locate and specify their thought processes. It has its own watertight conceptual apparatus, its own well defined categories. It is an extremely well-ordered world which has the great advantage of being supremely static, immobile as the pyramids (ibid: 159).

The schizophrenia is seen in the continuing and unresolved conflict over the dual knowledge system operating in Islamic societies. Power and control, as exercised for epistemological and ideological pursuit, is evidenced through the conceptualisation of what constitutes appropriate thought in the minds of policy makers in the Islamic world. That policy may allow for only non-secular thought in schools, or any combination of thought from strict Islamic education, as attested by Al-Attas, to that liberal, secular education the Karachi Project would like to see instituted in schools in Pakistan. However, in seeking change – a way forward from this stasis of strict Islamic thought – the question arises of how that change can be made possible, given the controls under which it exists. It is certainly a question posed by the Karachi Project. The control used by the state powers to discourage change, and thus preserve the “intellectual purity” that Talbani (1996: 86) suggests is the idealised Islamic existential system, can only be achieved by preserving the pure order that this Quranic epistemology demands. The question posed above is then perhaps more appropriately posed as: How is that order preserved? Shayegan offers the following thoughts on the issue at the heart of this discussion on dual knowledge systems of secular versus non-secular thought in Islamic states. By implication he suggests that state apparatuses have a vested interest in excluding modernity from education for:

The source of this power [ideological and political] is the fact that the clergy remains on the same wavelength as the people. Culturally, [with reference to

Iran, but by implication Pakistan] both are pre-modern. Their models of reference, their memory, move in the same orbit; clergy and people both evolve (sic) in the same constellation. They understand each other because they live in the same epoch; they are mental contemporaries' (Shayegan: 1992: 158).

Lamb sheds light on this situation in her observations of Pakistani society in which she says: "I never lost the initial sensation of how, instead of passing from one epoch to another, the centuries somehow co-existed there" (1991: 7).

What type of knowledge should be taught in Pakistan? Who should have control over making these decisions? A point that needs to be highlighted here, in relation to the vicissitudes of the Karachi Project's agenda of secular reforms in education centres, is the proximity of Taliban Afghanistan to Pakistan. Under Taliban rule secular content is banned from educational institutions. Madrasa are the only schools permitted to provide education. Females are banned from attending even madrasa. The members of the Karachi Project referred constantly to the Taliban in conversations I had with them while in Pakistan. Central to the Project's fear of a Taliban-styled rule in Pakistan is the complete abnegation by the Taliban of non-secular schooling. A member of the Karachi Project reported:

The problem for us in Pakistan, is that our government is one of the few in the world who recognises the Taliban Government and who supports it with arms and finances. What does this tell us? Will we go down that road? Remember, Afghanistan was a communist country, they tried secularism. There was a big middle-class and prosperity. And look now. We are afraid of the Taliban, even here in modern Karachi, because we have seen what happened to modern Kabul. You watch. You hear these mullahs speaking (personal communication, November, 1997).

The Karachi Project sees itself as a liberal, secularised group that would be the first to be repressed under a highly resurgent Islam, as recognised in the above remarks.

“We must always watch the mullahs, not be too aggressive against them because we have them to fear,” was another remark made by the same person. The fear of a Taliban-type world where Islamic knowledge will accept no other form of epistemology (except for selected circumstances of “appropriate technology”) is real. Ghulam Hasnain, a Karachi reporter, notes:

In some cases [in Pakistan], previous attempts to impose fundamentalist law have taken bizarre forms. When a mullah named Maulana Sufi Mohammad decided to enforce strict *shari’a* law in his mountain valley near the Afghan border, he prohibited driving on the left side of the road because the left hand is deemed unclean. Numerous car crashes failed to deter him. Inspired by the Taliban’s medieval puritanism, mullahs in northwest Pakistan are destroying TV’s and setting up roadblocks to stop cars and rip out music cassettes (quoted in McGirk: 1998: 51).

Another Project member stated:

You see, we are surrounded. Iran on one side, Taliban on the other. You don’t know how lucky you are to be living on an island [New Zealand] in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. We are not an island here in Karachi.

The repressive state apparatuses, which control the ideology of the state, therefore control the people’s minds, an hegemonic situation attested to by both Al-Attas and Shayegan. Fear of encroachment by fundamentalist forces that eschew secular thought is as real to the liberal members of Pakistani society as the fear of losing Islamic hegemony was to Muslims at the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924⁹⁰. State apparatuses in Pakistan act in concord in this Islamic state – especially one in which the main reference for the constitution is Islam – for they are used to reinforcing the central point of Islam: Islam as ideology. In Arabic, Islam *means* submission.

⁹⁰ See Chapter Four.

Dual Knowledge: the Selective Approach

The role of technology is of interest in any discussion on dual knowledge systems. The level of Western-inspired technology that is acceptable in an Islamic state in which modernity is scorned, is a most problematic question for many Islamists, for modernity bred modern technology. Having condemned modernity (secularism, democracy, gender equity, human rights, civil government), Islamists in many Islamic societies locate modern technology in the realm of 'bad knowledge'. Tibli (1998: 94) notes that many of the fundamentalist thinkers and rulers who have embraced Islamism, and legitimise its epistemology through the application of "medieval concepts", are caught in this dilemma. Tibli argues that such Islamists, who seek the purity of traditional Islamic thought (so-called Islamic thought: Tibli argues that such thought is a corruption of the Prophet's original epistemological intentions),

envisage a de-Westernization of knowledge in order to free themselves from – what they perceive as – the epistemological imperialism of the West. This means, of course, that they want simultaneously to acquire Western technology and to reject the Cartesian rational world view that fostered it.

For such thinkers, the only means of epistemological legitimacy comes from the Quran, which is the complete and final revelation – there is no other knowledge. The dilemma posed by the technology of an inimical epistemology, is not the contemporary event of a resurgent Islamism. Indeed, as the history of the Christian-West/Islamic divide demonstrates, there has always been this problematic of incorporation of Western knowledge, which is so associated with the secularism, consumerism, and scientificism of the West. Bernard Lewis (1994: 26) outlines this dilemma from an historical perspective:

As the Turks had replaced the Arabs as the rulers of Islam, so the “Franks” had replaced the Byzantines as their principal Christian adversary. There was a continued willingness, as there had always been in medieval times, to acquire, buy, imitate, or adopt the military technology of Christendom – from the Byzantines, Greek fire; from the Frankish Europe, artillery. Right through the centuries of the Ottoman advance and retreat Turkish Muslims were ready to adopt, or at least consider elements of European technology – but not European civilisation....What was adopted therefore was limited to what was recognisably and immediately useful – weaponry, naval construction, the practice of medicine...clocks, watches, eyeglasses...But as far as possible these were stripped of their cultural associations and thus reduced to dead artefacts, without organic roots.

It is easier to oppress calls for social reconstruction based on modernity than the technological and material outcomes of that Western epistemology. Technology has been widely accepted, despite the calls for its limitation in Islamic societies. While it limits the social constructs of modernity, Saudi Arabia, a strict Islamic state, is not concerned with this question of technology. Reporting at the 1997 First Islamic International Conference on Teacher Education, in Mecca, the educationalist Al-Afendi perhaps best summarises how the Saudis see dual knowledge within the framework of education and national development: “Modern Western civilisation has merits and advantages which shouldn’t be denied. It’s scientific and technological achievements are not against the spirit of Islam” (Al-Afendi & Baloch: 1977: 23).

The main theme of the Mecca Conference was to reinvigorate Islamic education. With this in mind another speaker noted that: “A number of factors brought about the decay of Islamic education including math, science...” (ibid.). The seesaw of the debate is witnessed in the proceedings for a further speaker stated that Islamic education failed because it did not: “...promote technical and scientific knowledge

and medicine on the erroneous assumption that they would lead to skepticism and uncertainty and disbelief” (ibid: 147).

The Karachi Project’s very real fear is that in the volatile political situation which is Pakistan, there could be a resurgence of Islamism as strong as that which characterises neighbouring Taliban Afghanistan. Given the volatility associated with the ambiguity of the foundational ideology of Pakistan, which seesaws between Islamism and more liberal approaches to Islamic ideology, the fact that madrasa reflect the ideology of the dominant discourse brings home the position of the Karachi Project: Madrasa are a barrier to modernisation. The more rigid and Islamist the dominant discourse, the more repressive of Western knowledge that power structure will be. Technology is victim to this: videos, satellite dishes, and televisions. As ‘liberal’ as Saudi Arabia may be to technology, it is elective in its approach. Television satellite dishes are banned in Saudi Arabia. Closer to the Karachi Project is the contender for extremism in abnegating modernisation let alone modernity: Afghanistan.

Contemporary Taliban Afghanistan illustrates the extreme of where Islamism can lead in its desire for a “pure Islam” and its subsequent abnegation of Western forms of modernity. Television sets, videos, tape decks and CD players have been banned by the Taliban, in the fear that such may be used for “immoral purposes” and simply because such technology demonstrates modernity which is associated with Western epistemology (Marsden: 1998). To this effect, the Taliban’s state apparatuses demonstrate a singularly hypocritical system of power, control and repression. Writing in the *Guardian Weekly* (April 12, 2001) Pamela Constable notes about the Taliban, whose principal goal is to forge a nation of puritanical conformists:

The enforcers of this extreme Islamic ideal are the Taliban's religious police, a feared force of black turbaned men with guns and whips who career through the streets in open trucks. They answer only to their employer, the powerful Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice...Thieves have their hands amputated, homosexuals are crushed beneath toppled walls.

This selective disengagement with Western knowledge and technology is evident throughout Islamic states. Presumably the Taliban, who ban video players but crush homosexuals under "toppled walls" do the toppling with bulldozers or trucks. In 1988, when I was living in Kuwait, three homosexuals were stoned to death in Saudi Arabia. The stoning – a traditional form of punishment under *shari'a* law for adulterers and homosexuals – was performed by burying the men up to their waist. A dump truck was then brought in to tip the stones on to the men. Technology and Islamic law in fundamentalist societies has reached an accommodation with the ideological and repressive state apparatuses to such a degree that the stated aim is to abnegate Western knowledge. In this situation the 'stabilising' incorporation of 'other' is negated and the hegemony of the dominant discourse is enforced by state repressive apparatuses to maximise the effect of that totalising hegemony.

The issues raised in this section illustrate the social realities of how the continuum between incorporation and non-incorporation of Western knowledge operates across Islamic societies. Taken to an extreme in some societies, technology can also be viewed as 'non-neutral', as a manifestation of a Western knowledge and therefore undesirable. In attempting to reform education in madrasa, and other educational institutions where Islam is a dominant subject, the Karachi Project seeks to underscore the totalising effect of where Islam can go if manipulated. To this effect, the Karachi Project members would concur with Manshipouri's (2000: 9) contention that:

“Without secularism, religious ideologies tend to become totalitarian and the underpinnings of a normative tolerance are weakened.”

Intellectual Technology: Memorisation and Power in Islamic Education

Submission to God and His infallibility is the major precept of Islam for, as noted, in Arabic Islam *means* submission. The submission of the individual who follows the precepts of Islam is the article of faith and existential reality for that individual. Talbani states that the main objective of madrasa education is to aid in that submission for in order to achieve bliss (*sa'ida*) in the hereafter there is no alternative but to submit to the forces which aid the pure road to bliss. In order “to submit” – there is no room for critical discourse under such an aegis – one must follow the traditional path to bliss. In Mecca, at the 1977 International Islamic Conference on Teacher Education, an educationalist stated: “The goal of education for a Muslim is to become an obedient and righteous servant of Allah” (Al-Affendi & Baloch: 1977: 92). The “intellectual technology” of the madrasa is an aspect of the existential submission. The “intellectual technology” of memorisation is the basic pedagogical feature in traditional Islamic education (Brown: 1972; Wagner & Lotfi: 1980; Nayyar: 1998). Memorisation and rote learning are the two most commonly recognised pedagogic features in traditional Islamic education and are characteristic of the pedagogical style “which continues until today” (Talbani: 1996: 243).

Education was commonly conceived as the teaching of fixed and memorizable statements and formulas which could be adequately learned without any process of thinking as such... (McDonald, quoted in Talbani: *ibid*).

Memorisation of educational material plays a large role in pedagogy and learning in contemporary Pakistan. One of the main objectives of the Karachi Project is to institute changes in the education systems under their immediate control and to see those changes disseminated throughout the Pakistani education systems⁹¹. Memorisation is not confined to the rote learning of the Quran, which is evident in the madrasa and all other educational institutions in which the Quran is “taught”. The teaching of the subject *Islamiat* is compulsory in all schools in Pakistan. *Islamiat* is concerned primarily with the study of the Quran and this involves the compulsory memorisation of the suras of the Quran. An official in the Karachi UNESCO office informed me that in the first three years of a child’s education he or she must

memorise all thirty *sipuras* or booklets of the Quran in Arabic. It is considered a great privilege by parents that their child can recite with correct diction the entire Quran which is a guarantee of heaven in the next world.

Another teacher stated:

Memorisation is an ancient practice in madrasa. You can still see them [students] swaying back and forth memorizing like parrots. And we have that same old practice still in schools not even madrasa ones but the government schools where the teachers are too lazy to learn new methods. Memorisation is just our culture. In maths, in science, in English, in geography, you just name a subject and you will see these teachers shouting : ”Repeat after me!”

On December 13, 1997 an article in the Karachi daily paper *The Dawn* reported that students at a teachers college in Islamabad had gone on strike. The strike had occurred because, as the students were reported as saying: They were not allowed to cheat in examinations. A Karachi Project member stated that this was in fact a serious situation and the students had a reason to strike, for lecturers do not wish for an

⁹¹ These education systems are: the madrasa, the government schools, the private school.

interpretative or argumentative answer to examination questions. Rather lecturers, the informant told me:

Demand that students will regurgitate back what they themselves have said in classes and from what papers they have given the students to memorise. So how can tertiary students recall so much information? They must cheat if they have to give it all back word for word.

Sobia Aslam, in a letter to the editor of *The Dawn* (Karachi, May 13, 1999) on the subject of memorisation in Islamiat classes, demonstrated that not only is there open debate on the subject of religious education, but that memorisation as a pedagogical tool does indeed hold strong political and ideological sway in contemporary Pakistani education. The letter is worth quoting in full for it identifies the issues surrounding memorisation:

The new and supposedly improved Islamiat compulsory book for class nine is a very good example of careless and fatal planning by the policy makers. The book has been approved by the Government.....The new medium of teaching and learning Islamiat has been declared Arabic! The Pakistanis have absolutely no background of Arabic. They can read the Quran but not understand it. Do the policy makers think that learning by rote a few words of Arabic, young people are going to start understanding Islam better? Let me state it in clear terms that those who designed this new syllabus definitely did not do so to please Allah, or to make the students understand the religion better or in any way serve the vital interests of the country. This has only been done to promote the sale of guide books for students, in which business they must be having their own deep-rooted personal financial interests. This policy has made a mockery of the subject of Islamiat and has left students, their parents and virtually all others connected with it in one way or another in a big dilemma.

Faiza Hussain (2000: 28) sums up this common sentiment about education: "There is no emphasis on understanding, the children are not encouraged to create or dream or idealise." Eickelman (1978), however, offers a variation on the commonly held, stereotypical view of memorisation as mindless rote learning.

Historians and sociologists have tended to take at face value the ideological claim in Islam of the fixed nature of religious knowledge. Consequently, not much attention has been given to a more critical analysis of how such a system of knowledge is affected by its mode of transmission and its linkages with other aspects of society (Eickelman, 1978: 490).

From a case study conducted in Morocco, Eickelman extrapolates to the condition of madrasa education throughout societies under Islamic influence, on the subject of pedagogy and the “intellectual technology”, which is, he suggests, the prevalent condition of knowledge transmission but one which is misunderstood by both Westerners and Western-educated Muslims. Eickelman offers a critical analysis of the stereotypical conception of Islamic pedagogy which is based on the view that Islamic pedagogy is tedious and does not have a function other than to deny critical thought. A number of writers support the generalisability of Eickelman’s case study of the condition of such educational provision in Morocco to that found across societies under Islamic influence. (Nayyar: 1998; Wagner & Lotfi: 1980; Al-Afendi & Baloch: 1977; Rahman: 1982; Talbani: 1996).

In his analysis of the use of memorisation and rote learning in madrasa education, Eickelman posits that this form of pedagogy is such a facet of traditional Islamic culture that it cannot be understood by those who have not analysed the social value that arises from such intellectual technology (Eickelman: 1978: 492). By stating that memorisation does not involve thinking and deep cognitive processes, critics of this form of education employ Western expectations of what education must signify. Eickelman’s argument rests on the premise that:

The measure of understanding appropriate to Islamic knowledge is its use, often creative, in wider social contexts than those provided by the milieu of learning itself or by the abstract manipulation of memorized materials in ‘classroom’ situations (ibid.).

Indeed, the very idea of comparing Islamic education and its traditions to Western pedagogy is anathema to some Islamic educationalists. At the Mecca Conference an educationalist stated: “We should not compare Islamic education with the western form of knowledge and education because ours is original and an integral system in itself” (quoted in Al-Afendi & Baloch: 1977: 121).

This advice finds corroboration in Eickelman’s findings that Islamic culture has its inherent functions, which can only be distorted when compared against Western expectations and analysis. From his research conducted amongst students of Quranic schools, Eickelman states that mnemonic devices were not employed in the memorisation of Quranic verses. He posits that this was a deliberate pedagogical omission on behalf of madrasa teachers:

Such potential mnemonic cues were not systematically developed, perhaps for the implicit reason that their use would associate extraneous images with the original word of God and thus dilute its transmission (ibid.).

The “use” of memorisation, therefore, would be primarily for the replication of “spiritual purity” amongst the faithful. Similarly, the intellectual technology of memorisation has rarely employed the technology of reading – and certainly not in the early stages of a child’s education when reading and writing were not subjects included in the madrasa syllabus. This fact arose not only because there were few books or manuscripts available until the late nineteenth century in most Islamic societies, but because such technology as books would deter from the belief that

God's word, as revealed truth, must be memorised without the aid of human technology and thus preserve its purity against contamination and possible changes through interpretation.

“Understanding” (*fahm*), in the context of such concepts of learning, was not measured by any ability explicitly to “explain” particular verses...An informal attempt to explain meaning was considered blasphemy and simply did not occur. Instead, the measure of understanding was implicit and consisted of the ability to use particular Quranic verses in appropriate contexts (ibid: 494).

Giddens (1991) supports Eickelman's request for an understanding of the traditional Islamic intellectual technology that progressive educationalists such as the Karachi Project find difficult to support. Giddens states:

In traditional cultures, the past is honoured and symbols are valued because they contain and perpetuate the experience of generations. Tradition is a mode on integrating the reflexive monitoring of action with the time space organisation of the community...Tradition is not wholly static, because it has to be reinvented by each new generation as it takes over its cultural inheritance from those preceding it. Tradition does not so much resist change as pertain to a context in which there are few separated temporal and spatial markers in terms of which change can have any meaningful form (Giddens: 1991: 37).

Giddens asks for an understanding of stasis in a context where change is epistemologically and ideologically prohibited. Modernity – or any change - is disallowed within such an apology for tradition. Tradition is sacred. However, power and control mechanisms, which manifest themselves in state apparatuses, cannot be ignored when discussing education and its “traditions”. Such traditions maintain stasis, which may or may not be legitimate if it continues to maintain repression and exclusion. Memorisation in Quranic schools demonstrates this situation of control for ideological reasons. Giddens does point to the methods of control when he discusses the intellectual technology of writing in traditional societies:

In oral cultures, tradition is not known as such, even though these cultures are the most traditional of all. To understand tradition, as distinct from other modes of organising action and experience, demands cutting into time-space in ways which are only possible with the invention of writing. Writing expands the level of time-space distanciation and creates a perspective of past, present and future in which reflexive appropriation of knowledge can be set off from designated tradition...Moreover, since literacy is the monopoly of the few, the routinisation of daily life remains bound up with tradition in the old sense (ibid: 38).

The absence of reading and writing in madrasa is interesting when linked to the concept of social reproduction theory. Giddens describes literates as controlling a monopoly. Because teachers were the holders of all sacred knowledge, to have that knowledge available for the taught, in written form, may have meant that the power of the teacher was diminished. Eickelman alludes to this possibility but does not substantially build upon it in his thesis on the nature of knowledge transmission. The reason why literacy rates have been very low in Morocco and other Islamic societies may be explained, therefore, from the historical legacy of this situation of creating a 'strong border' around aspects of learning that may extend 'too far' into non-Islamic knowledge. In this instance, the technology of knowledge - that is literacy skills through the use of books - can be seen to have been manipulated by the hierarchy to maintain those strong borders around knowledge and to maintain their own power bases. Eickelman suggests that reading and writing were never promoted because of the absence of books and written texts, in sufficient numbers to provide for the population. Lewis (1994: 35) suggests that writing was always the domain of scribes in the Islamic lands and that the spiritual nature of Arabic disallowed its replication by machines. I suggest that there are ideological reasons for this and that the nature of the state ideological apparatuses in Islamic societies, which associated critical analysis with blasphemy, provide an insight into how and why literacy skills were

curtailed. In as much as the scribes and the mullahs were in control of the script and therefore of literacy, an analysis in Freirean terms would state that the ‘strong borders’ already mentioned are “practices and relations of unequal power” (quoted in Lankshear & Lawler: 1987: 69). The Karachi Project’s agenda can be seen in Friere’s analysis of these social relations:

If humans are to pursue their vocation on equal terms with one another they must break down these structures of domination and oppression, and increasingly replace them with social arrangements which positively enable all humans to participate in creating history, culture and, ultimately, human *being* itself (ibid.)

As will be noted at greater length in Chapters Six and Seven, on state public school education in Pakistan, there is a definite link between ideological positioning and illiteracy. This link can be further argued when gender considerations are introduced into the discussion. It is important to note that, rather than critically analyse how power is hegemonic and repressive under a system of intellectual curtailment with the application of strong borders around both content and pedagogy, Eickelman allows for, paradoxically, only a clearer idea of how that hegemony was instituted and maintained through memorisation and the absence of critical thought. This is particularly so when children in non-Arabic speaking localities were (and are) expected to memorise scriptures in Arabic, a language they are not taught to understand. When Zia ul Haq instituted compulsory Arabic classes in 1982 (and Urdu, which was playing for the nationalist card), he was drawing on the sentiment of the Islamists (Talbot: 1998: 279).

In that memorization and rote learning had “uses” (Eickleman: 1978: 494), which are intrinsic to and constitute the social fabric of Islamic society, we note from

Eickelman's description that social order was maintained precisely because memorisation, and the punishment associated with the enforcement of such knowledge transmission modes, was an accepted aspect of social training to maintain social order. This requirement precedes contact with the West (Lewis: 1994: 49), but the sentiment is heightened after that contact. In fact, in order to establish their new faith in conquered territories, Muslims needed to institute forms of obedience and punishment. Formal education was one way to control the newly converted: the intellectual technology involving passivity was useful in this conditioning. Being passive to that which turns around you allows for the "docile body" – a Foucauldian analysis with application in this instance. Talbani's (1996: 70) analysis of madrasa pedagogy would agree with this concept for:

The collection of traditions, including the Quran, is termed "that which is listened to" (*al-sam'*): greater emphasis is placed on listening to a teacher, who is active as transmitter of knowledge, while the student is passive.

Within Islamic discourse, there is evidence of a very real imperative that social systems be linked to structures which will maintain social order and keep it from descending into chaos.

A very sound and balanced Islamic education is necessary to protect our young generation from the onslaught of Western influences and to keep them within the fold of Islam as practising Muslims (Al-Afendi & Baloch: 1977: 91).

As was noted previously, secular knowledge in Islamic epistemology is associated with the decline in social stability and will allow for the dysfunction and plurality of ideas that bring that dysfunction (Al-Attas: 1993: 147). Al-Attas' concept of such stability/instability is prevalent throughout the philosophical texts on Islam. Where

Eickelman describes the “use” of strongly bordered educational practice as providing a mandate for man’s reason to be structured for the communal benefit, which in turn maintains social order, we note the “use” is Foucauldian in that there is a discipline and punish element at all times prevalent within such socially normative conditioning. Al-Attas explains this phenomenon through the Islamic concept of Being. I quote this author at length for he brings into focus the epistemological picture of Islam in its relation to why memorisation is essential as a tool of self regulation and normative behaviour in the face of humanity’s overwhelmingly insignificant place in the hierarchy which, at all times, must be subservient to the greater Being. Eickelman omits this epistemological inquiry in his explanation (one might argue his ‘apology’) for structures, which an analyst imbued with concepts of how epistemologies link with apparatuses to repress humans, surely could not ignore:

As the philosophical basis for the purpose and aims of education, and for the establishment of an integrated core-knowledge in the educational system, it seems to me important to recollect the essential character of Reality. In the same way that the Islamic vision of Reality is centred on Being, so it is that Being viewed in Islam as a Hierarchy from the highest to the lowest. Within this context, is also seen the relationship between man and the universe, his position in the order of Being and his analogical description as a microcosm reflecting the Macrocosm without the reverse being the case. Knowledge is also ordered hierarchically, and our task at present is to alter the system of education known to us – and in some cases to modify it – so that it patterns itself after the Islamic system of order and discipline (Al-Attas, 1993: 148).

Memorisation and rote learning do have their perceived social uses such as the inculcation of discipline to effect social accord and thus maintain peace and stability and social relations within a recognisable cultural system. ‘Accord’ is one interpretation or legitimisation for the need to maintain discipline along homogenous lines in a heterogeneous setting such as the vastness of the ‘Islamic world’. Accord is what Al-Attas would state was the social legitimacy for such pedagogy. “Hegemony” is the counter label as used by various Muslim educationalists (Nayyar:1998; Wagner

& Lotfi: 1980; Talbani; 1996), who describe such “intellectual technology” as repressive. Such pedagogy is ultimately “why social development and backwardness have continued to plague Islamic societies” (Sayyid: 1997: 167).

Reproducing and Replicating Power: Ideology and Education

Education plays a vital role in both producing and replicating the ideological constructs that are ‘Westernisation’ and ‘Islamism’. Although this discussion is concerned with the form and function of Islam, and its reproduction and dissemination through the role of education, the way the Western agenda is reproduced differs little from that of the Islamic agenda, when viewed through an analysis on power, ideology and reproductionist theories note this relationship:

Curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation are three “conduits” via which those values that are institutionalised by policy are imposed upon pupils – as part of the overall process of social reproduction (Lankshear and Lawler (1987: 232).

The pedagogical relationship with state apparatuses and their ideologies constitutes a mechanism of social engineering. Islamic education has functioned primarily to perpetuate Islamic theology in order to reproduce itself as a theocratic agency. Islam has, as its basic premise, the belief that all knowledge– “everything” – emanates from the revealed word of God; by “everything” is meant the existential entity of Islam as a faith that supports and *is* that existential entity. The sacred mission of Islam is to bring this revealed word to all of humanity. This universalist, historical imperative has been aided by educational institutions that have, throughout Islamic history, sought to inculcate this divinely inspired mission. Islam has been highly successful in this theocratically inspired and legitimised geo-political mission. This success of

Islam is testified through the number of adherents and its long history of endurance and continuing globalisation. It is, in large part, through the institutionalisation of its belief systems that Islam has maintained and expanded its presence for close to fifteen hundred years. Fuller and Lesser, (1995: 2) note:

Islam is probably more deeply integrated institutionally into state and society than any comparable religion. This gives it greater staying power as a cultural force distinct from the West and renders it more impervious to the inroads and assaults of Westernisation.

How, through the various forms of educational provision, this distribution of power and the principles of social control are maintained in Islamic societies, is to investigate the legitimisation of power through institutions and groups “who are charged with saying what counts as true” (Foucault: 1980: 67). These institutions have long-established and systematised methods to ensure their replication and continuation. The madrasa play this role as inculcators of ideology and as the modes of reproduction, within the belief that their particular ideology is truth. They are supported in this role by the other agencies of the state. This duality of state constructs is, in Althusserian terms, a combination of the state *ideological* apparatuses and the state *repressive* apparatuses. The latter category enforces the former (Althusser: 1971: 257). In the process of state Islamism, the revealed truth is disseminated with the aid of both apparatuses: the education system and the law, so that hegemony is maintained and counter hegemony curtailed. This dual ideological apparatus is the madrasa and *shari’a*, the Islamic law system. Truth is inculcated and enforced through this duality. The self-normalising agency in this reflexive relationship is inherent within the obedience/punishment equation, which maintains discipline.

Discipline is one of the major reasons promoted by Eickelman (1978: 493) for the social “uses” of pedagogy in Islamic education. This, translated, is methodology that has social use or application. Pedagogy in madrasa, to Eickelman (and the Karachi Project), means “memorisation and rote learning” (ibid.), both of which institute strict and unquestioning belief and thus conformity and self normalisation. This Foucauldian analysis strengthens the argument of the replication/reproductionist theme which has maintained Islamic hegemony across the varied ethnic and cultural areas of the Islamic world. “Each society has its general politics of truth, that is, the type of discourse it accepts and makes function as true” (Foucault: 1980: 131). In Islamic societies the madrasa conforms to this role in tandem with the state apparatuses of the military and the police.

Summary

This chapter is titled “Madrasa: Barrier to Modernisation?”. The Karachi Project members do not question that the madrasa acts as a barrier to modernisation. Madrasa and stasis are indivisible to the Project members. In presenting this title as a question I have attempted in this discussion to investigate the issues which are integral to an understanding of what madrasa are and how they function as a microcosm within the larger picture, – the macrocosm – of this case study, which centres on education and change in Pakistan.

As a universal religion, Islam has been spectacularly successful in maintaining its numerical power. In its attempt to maintain its essential premise of the infallibility of

the Quran and the Prophet's place in cosmology, it has also been resoundingly successful, for Islam is observably an epistemology that has maintained a great degree of faith in its founding principles. How Islam – in its various sects – has maintained this is due, in no small regard, to its education system, which is so tightly linked to its ideological and repressive state apparatuses. The madrasa have been a major force in maintaining the hegemony of Islamic ideology.

Today, the 1,500 year old confrontation with the West has not diminished the power of Islam. The hegemony of Islam has accommodated much that is Western. To what degree this situation exists depends on what particular Islamic society is being analysed across the enormous geo-political area that is the 'Islamic world'. In Pakistan, a degree of political and social stability has ensued, for, in accommodating aspects of Western knowledge, Islam, which is the foundational core of that nation, has been able to maintain its supremacy through accommodating a degree of Western knowledge. The degree of acceptance has always been controlled by state apparatuses, both ideological and repressive. The madrasa play an integral role in this relationship with change and stasis.

Modernisation represents a quintessentially Western construct, one with deep roots in Western thought and history. However, it is not so much modernisation that Islam has fought against, but modernity, that other quintessentially Western configuration of principles, which include democracy, secularism, human rights, and gender equity. The Karachi Project never separated modernisation from modernity in their discussions with me in Karachi. The slow and inequitable process of modernisation in Pakistan is what Moghissi (1999) asserts is the consequence of lack of modernity in

Islamic states. Indeed, it is significant that across the twenty-two Arab states there is not one democracy (Mernissi:1992: 6). Pakistan has a barely functioning democracy; since 1947 there have been only three elected leaders (Lamb:1991: 5). Within this system of control, education is not free to be truly diverse in its representation of the diversities that exist in society. Madrasa, as apparatuses of the dominant discourse of Islam, have been highly successful in maintaining the status of Islam and its dominance in Pakistan. In the complexities of the question presented, it is possible, therefore, to discern that madrasa have aided the maintenance of the barriers to modernisation.

Chapter Six

The Public School System of Pakistan: Power Constructs and Ideological Control

Introduction

The Karachi Project members stated, categorically, that the public school system in their country is dysfunctional, corrupt, and oppressed by political and ideological interference. As such, Project members view the ineffectual schooling system as another barrier to modernisation in Pakistan. In order to understand the realities of the contemporary public school system, as outlined by the Karachi Project members, this chapter will consist of an interrogation of their allegations through a systematic description and analysis of what comprises public education in Pakistan. As the Karachi Project works only in primary education and its experience and attitudes are thus located mainly within this sphere, this analysis will focus for the most part, on that level of schooling.

A description of the education components of student enrolment, expenditure, education policy, curriculum content, pedagogy, physical infrastructure and gender are presented to facilitate the objective of clarifying the state of public education in Pakistan. The chapter begins with the subject of student enrolment for this issue offers an immediate and stark assessment of the situation of schooling in Pakistan. The chapter will investigate aspects of the social, economic, cultural, historical,

ideological and political issues that both inform and emerge from Pakistan's public school education. However, the theorising of the data presented in this chapter is kept at a minimum, in order to present the reader with a picture of what the actualities are with regard to public school education. The theorising of the data will occur primarily in the following chapter. This investigation seeks to interrogate the validity of the Karachi Project's assertion that the Government public school system is a major barrier to modernisation in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Enrolment in Government Primary Schools

Seventy five percent of children enrolled in primary education attend government schools (Zia: 2000:12)⁹². Reimers and Warick (1995:14) note: "Most students attending government schools come from families with modest incomes." Pakistan's primary school system consists of five years of schooling. However, the Pakistani educationalist Pervez Hoodbhoy (1998: 2) writes that a Pakistani child spends 1.9 years at school when time at school is averaged across 1993 UNDP figures of the school-aged population. A report in *The Dawn* newspaper notes that: "According to official figures, the number of primary schools is 150,963 which includes 46,691 schools for girls⁹³." Warick and Reimers (1995: 15) note that: "In 1990 the [primary enrolment] rate for Pakistan was only 37 percent for all eligible children and 27 percent for female children. However, Hoodbhoy (1998: 73) states that: "

⁹² This figure does not include children of primary school age who are enrolled in madrasa or private schools. Rahman (*The News*: 23 April. 1997) estimates that there are "2 million children enrolled in private schools. Out of these at least a million and a half are in private English medium schools or Urdu medium schools while the rest are in mosque or madrasa schools". The madrasa school figure is disputed by Karachi Project members who stated that: "millions of children attend them".

⁹³ These figures do not indicate how many coeducational schools are included in the total.

Of the 19 million children between 5-10 years old, about 12-13 million are in primary school (of which only about 5 million are girls). This gives a participation rate of about 65 percent overall, an estimate that varies significantly among regions and is probably on the high side.

It is significant to note the difference between the enrolment figures provided by Reimers and Warick and those provided by Hoodbhoy. This distinction is important for it highlights the very real problem of attrition in primary schools. The 65 percent⁹⁴ Hoodbhoy states as being the enrolment figure plummets once attrition rates are factored into the equation.

Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) are, on average, about 12-20 percent above Net Enrolment Rates (NER) in Pakistan, reflecting the enormous inefficiency and wastage in that system, which is plagued by high repetition and drop-out rates” (ibid).

Given the 37 percent enrolment rate proposed by Warick and Reimers, which is based on World Bank figures for 1993 (1995: 14), the 55 percent net enrolment rate proposed by Hoodbhoy still speaks of a very high percentage of primary school aged children who do not attend school.

A comparison of enrolment figures with other countries highlights the situation of school enrolment in Pakistan.

China, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, all low income countries, have enrolment rates of 100 percent for children of primary school age...[In 1990] India, of which Pakistan was once a part, had 97 percent of all eligible students and 83 percent of female students enrolled in school. Bangladesh, which broke from Pakistan in 1971, had enrolment figures of 73 percent for all students and 68 percent for female students (Warick & Reimers: 1995: 15)⁹⁵.

⁹⁴ Hoodbhoy's figures are based on World Bank figures for 1996 (Hoodbhoy:1998: 73).

⁹⁵ These authors do not state if their figures are gross or net enrollment rates.

Farah Zia writing in *The News* (March 12, 2000), a major English language newspaper published in Karachi, adds emphasis to the issue of attrition rates in Pakistan's government public schools:

Pakistan's education system is ill-equipped to engage and absorb the students, half of whom end up leaving it....There is a clash of priorities between the state and its people as far as education is concerned. When 75 per cent of the country's children go to the government run schools, the state's priorities obviously assume a greater significance. Very logically then, 50 percent of the children entering the schools are out before they have completed their primary education. This figure is cited by no less than the Government of Pakistan in its report titled "Education For All: The Year 2000 Assessment Country Report" developed in September 1999. According to the report the primary school drop out rate was 50 percent in the years 1992 and 1999.

There are significant discrepancies in enrolment figures between rural and urban areas, a fact that Hoodbhoy (1998: 74) demonstrates:

In 1991 primary gross enrolment rates in all schools (private and public) were 56 percent in urban areas and 39 percent in rural areas. In 1996 the figures were 68 percent and 50 percent respectively. Enrolment in middle schools, which account for three years of education (grades 6, 7, 8), present even lower figures in GER between rural and urban figures: In 1991, 29 percent of children were enrolled in middle schools in urban areas and 18 per cent in rural areas. In 1996 the ratio moved to 35 percent and 20 percent respectively.

Hoodbhoy further notes the discrepancies in enrolment figures between the four provinces in Pakistan. This is an important issue and one which will be a focus of analysis in the following chapter, where the premise will be developed that feudal practices⁹⁶ exist more strongly in some areas than others and that continued feudalism impacts on school enrolments:

⁹⁶ Feudalism will be defined and discussed in detail in Chapter Seven. In brief, this thesis uses the term 'feudalism' to denote "a socio-economic system whose basic characteristic is the exploitation of peasant labour by lords" (Abels:2000:2). The majority of scholars used in this thesis refer to feudalism as the predominant socio-economic system in Pakistan (see for example: Talbot: 1998; Hoodbhoy: 1998; Sreedhar: 1998))

The national data also hides the large differences between provinces and, within provinces, between the rural and urban sectors; the enrolment rates range from a low of 38 percent in Balochistan (18 per cent for girls) to 77 per cent in Punjab (ibid: 44).

Clearly, primary enrolment in government schools in Pakistan is very low compared to other low-income countries. The situation has changed little since 1947, unlike figures that demonstrate the growing enrolment rates for both boys and girls in primary education in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India during the same time frame⁹⁷. The huge population increases in Pakistan since Independence cannot explain Pakistan's lower enrolment figures, given similar population increases in those countries cited⁹⁸

The Economics of Education in Pakistan

Warick and Reimers (1995:14) and Hoodbhoy (1998:43-67), question the relationship of Pakistan's relatively low primary school enrolment figures to the nation's economic situation. When compared to both India's and Bangladesh's higher enrolments, Pakistan's low relative enrolments cannot be accounted for by a comparative low income alone. Using 1993 World Bank economic figures, Warick and Reimers note that across India, Bangladesh and Pakistan:

Pakistan ranked first on Gross National Product (GNP) per capita, India second and Bangladesh third. Nor could the enrolment figures be accounted for by differences in the rates of economic growth for the three countries. Between 1980 and 1991 Pakistan and India both had an average annual growth rate of 3.2 percent while the rate of Bangladesh was only 1.9 percent. And enrolment

⁹⁷ For details see World Bank: "Fifty Years of Educational Change": 1993

⁹⁸ The comparative percentage rate of natural population increase for 1990 is (in millions: China 1.3; India: 2.1; Indonesia: 2.1; Bangladesh: 2.7; Pakistan: 2.9. (Todaro: 1992: 216)

differences cannot be attributed to differences in income distribution across the three countries. At the time of the school survey [1993] Bangladesh, India and Pakistan did not differ markedly in the percentage of income or consumption found in households ranging from the lowest 20 percent to the highest 20 percent in each country. For example, the poorest 20 percent of the population has only 9.5 percent of the income in Bangladesh, 8.8 percent in India, and 8.4 percent in Pakistan. The wealthiest percent of the population has 38.6 percent of the income in Bangladesh, 41.3 percent in India, and 39.7 percent in Pakistan.

Nadeem Iqbal, writing in *The News* (12 March, 2000) reports that: “According to the Year 2000 Assessment Report of the Ministry of Education, Pakistan on average spends 2.12 percent of GDP on education.” Citing statistics from the UN Human Development Report (1995) Hoodbhoy demonstrates that in 1992 education expenditure as a percentage of GDP was: Pakistan 2.7 percent; India 3.7 per cent; Sri Lanka 3.3 percent; Bangladesh 2.3 percent. Further, Hoodbhoy states that:

The primary reason for the sad way in which education has been disregarded is that the government barely spends \$3 per capita on activities important to human care, compared to \$130 spent by Korea and Malaysia...

Hoodbhoy questions the conceptual framework in which education existed in the first decade of the new nation where: “Education was included in the social services rather than in productive sectors of the economy” (ibid: 37). In questioning the aspect of human capital investment, Hoodbhoy raises an important aspect of education and its relation to society for:

While the First Five Year Plan clearly recognized that economic development was a means to an end, ie. to provide a richer and fuller life for the people, it did not *recognize the economic value of education* (author’s emphasis) (ibid).

Morrish (1971:210) points out with reference to Pakistan’s education allocation that:

...only 1.8 per cent of their gross national product is allocated to education. This certainly compares very unfavourably with UNESCO's recommendation that developing countries should devote 4 per cent of their gross national product to the expansion of their educational programmes.

Norman (quoted in Duncan: 1990:18) clarifies the situation of expenditure allocation in Pakistan on a class basis:

Barely 4 per cent of government expenditure was allocated annually for education, health, and social sectors. Moreover, when one considers that most of this expenditure was targeted towards the urban middle class, there was virtually no provision for the education or health of the largely illiterate and malnourished population

The analysis in Chapter Seven as to why education is seemingly neglected, will uncover the relationship between the various social classes and the allocation of resources to each. At this point, it is pertinent to see where government spending is allocated ⁹⁹ in order to demonstrate that education is not a priority in government spending: debt servicing receives 46.7 percent of the GDP¹⁰⁰, while defence is allocated 34 percent. Social services receive 5.1 percent and subsidies and administration 8.5 and 5.1 per cent respectively. Talbot (1998:100) adds to the contention that the military have been the winners in asset allocation by successive Pakistani governments since 1947:

The Pakistani army was greatly expanded from its modest beginnings, but only at the cost of dependency on foreign aid and by siphoning funds from development activities.

⁹⁹ These 1994 figures come from the "Economic Survey of Pakistan", Ministry of Finance, Islamabad: 1995 (quoted in Hoodbhoy:10:1998).

¹⁰⁰ The source of this figure does not state how much of that debt is derived from defence expenditure.

This brief overview of the economics of education in Pakistan points to a situation that has an ideological basis. At the core of this ideology is the conflict between what modernisation means to a conservative Islamic society run by a military/land-owning oligarchy. The question here relates back to the central issues of modernity (critical education, gender equity, human rights, distribution of wealth) that Moghissi (1999) determines as being the real test of what modernisation means. If the funding for a progressive and well functioning school system is denied the population for ideological reasons, then we can state, with assurance, that the Karachi Project members are correct when they assert that a major barrier to modernisation is the current system of state education.

Education Policy

The history of education in Pakistan since 1947 shows a systematic series of discrepancies between government policy and its implementation. As the sections in this chapter demonstrate, there has been some quantitative advancement in educational provision in Pakistan. However, it is clear, from the statistics on such issues in education as enrolment, gender equity and literacy that the emergence of progressive and high-minded educational policies, from government bureaucracies every five years, does not necessarily lead to their application. Why this inability to implement what appears to be sound educational policy has continued throughout Pakistan's history is the subject of the following chapter. However, it cannot be left unrecognised, at this stage of the discussion, that the discrepancy is due to the entrenched power relationships amongst the feudal land owning and industrial elites, the military, the bureaucracy and the ideological construct of conservatism, which

binds them to block real progress in human resources such as education, health and social services. What follows is a brief description of the various policies and plans promulgated by successive Pakistani governments since 1947. These policies demonstrate the ostensible will to promote education in Pakistan. However, contrasted to the clear policy vision, is a general lack of transparent and committed application by successive governments, due to such constraints as: lack of funding; misallocation and misuse of funding; reversals of official policy; political and ideological posturing; bureaucratic incompetence; and ideological co-option by the entrenched powers of the bureaucracy.

In a series of articles in *The News*, which analyse the history of education policy in Pakistan since Partition, the Pakistani educationalist Kaiser Bengali presents the education policies from successive five-year plans and then the actualities of their implementation. These findings are corroborated by the other commentators used extensively in this section – Hoodbhoy (1998). Bengali titles his series of articles¹⁰¹: “Nothing but sham: history of education planning and policy making in Pakistan...an education only to adorn the dustbin of history.” He summarises his work with the following commentary:

Over the 50 year period since independence, efforts to increase the enrolments and literacy levels of 1947 include seven national education policies, eight five year plans and about a half dozen other schemes...all have been prepared and launched and a dozen or more conferences, seminars, workshops and other moots on education have been held...The philosophical pronouncements about the profound importance of education, lament about past failures, and glowing optimism about impending success form a pattern across all policies, plans, programmes and schemes...These “policies” have served only to adorn the official files – plans that never fail to keep the multitudes ignorant and illiterate. (Bengali: *The News*. 3 October, 2000)

¹⁰¹ There are four articles in this series in *The News*, (Karachi): Part One: 12 September, 2000; Part Two: 19 September, 2000; Part Three: 26 September, 2000; Part Four: 3 October, 2000.

It must of course be recognised that in 1947 Pakistan was largely insolvent. It had virtually no industry and was 99 percent dependent on agricultural produce for export revenue (Hoodbhoy: 1998: 34). Its formal education system barely touched the lives of the majority of the population. Most of the educational facilities that the British had organised were concentrated in what remained as India. Jinnah himself dismissed the British contribution to education in its colony as “colonialist” (ibid: 35). He sought to institute a progressive educational system in the new nation. In 1947 Jinnah inherited a small, formal education base upon which to realise his dreams of a well educated society, which could contribute to and compete in the world, a vision which he expressed at the nation’s first education conference in 1947 (ibid: 39). In both West and East Pakistan in that year:

There was an estimated 10,000 primary schools...The total enrolment in various educational institutions in 1947-8 has been estimated to be one million in primary and middle schools (including 130,000 girls); 58,000 in secondary schools (including 7,000 girls)....(ibid: 35).

In 1947 the fledgling government was immediately embroiled in a war against India. It was awash with refugees and was attempting to locate itself ideologically and politically. Given these problems, it is noteworthy that the National Education Conference was held in 1947 at all. What is of interest, other than this initial commitment to education in a time of crisis, was that, at this conference, Jinnah himself demanded that education should be progressive and devoid of colonial influences. However, he also insisted that education should be tied to the religious and cultural background of the new nation. This introduced a conflict that has never been resolved in Pakistan education policy or in its implementation. The balance can

be seen to favour secular education during some periods but then move to a non-secular emphasis during others. Certainly, since the military coup of General Zia in 1977, non-secularisation in education has occurred to a much greater extent than during any previous period (Talbot: 1998: 100). Those rulers following Zia, have continued the non-secular emphasis in education. The continuance of this policy is due not only to the generally increased momentum towards Islamism, but also to the support that a strengthened Islamist ideology has had in bestowing legitimacy on a feudalist hierarchy which claims a strengthened Islam as its guiding principle.

Successive education policies since 1947, have demonstrated a commitment in principle to the sort of education that the Karachi Project would term “modern”, with the exception of the ever-present issue of non-secular education. Bengali (12 September, 2000) identifies the main government policy guidelines since 1947 as a commitment to:

universal literacy, universal primary school education, compulsory education for five years, adult education; improved teachers’ conditions and teacher training; improved school infrastructure; progressive curricula; female inclusion in education...

The National Education Conference of 1947 was followed, in 1951, by the National Plan of Education Development, in which the guiding principles for education, which were outlined in 1947, were assessed and strengthened. The following First Five Year Plan (1955-60) is significant, for what ensued demonstrates how the education policy direction it promoted was systematically ignored by those powers that controlled the funding. The policy concentrated on the need for primary education and proclaimed that:

A system of universal primary education is imperative. Primary education is essential to prepare citizens for the discharge of their democratic and civic responsibilities and to provide them with equal opportunities for economic and cultural advancement...(ibid).

The Plan states categorically that primary education was to receive the greatest allocation of funds. What occurred was the opposite. As the discussion in Chapter Seven will show, powerful class interests intervened. Resources were allocated to their own educational interests, ones that reflected large-scale industrial development. Modernisation was a reflection of a top down approach to building a national economic structure. Higher education was what industrialisation needed, and the allocation of funds for tertiary education was taken at the expense of literacy and primary education, as per the policy statements. Hoodbhoy (1998: 40) cites Mahbub ul Haq's evaluation of the Plan, which promoted universal primary education:

The government gave priority to higher education and primary education was neglected. Resource allocation to the education sector was inadequate and intra-sectoral priorities in education during the First Plan proved contrary to the promises made in the Plan. During the first decade the state elite, in collaboration with the political elites (which came from the land owning classes) formulated the government's development policy...(ibid: 41).

Morrish (1971: 211) also describes the First Five Year Plan and its implementation as being one where the majority poor were neglected despite the policy in their favour. By allocating funds to tertiary education Pakistan was following the elitist system of education that it had inherited from the British "because of course society does not change overnight... and it was formerly quite true to say that the elitist view of education in Pakistan still persisted."

Bengali (12 September, 2000) quotes from the Second Five Year Plan (1959), which begins “with a harangue on the undesirable attitude of the people towards public duty, government, nation building, manual work and education...” Bengali goes on to quote from the next statement in the policy document, which lamented the fact that little improvement had been made in primary school enrolments and in literacy since the previous plan.

The litany of the discrepancies between education policy and the lack of policy implementation is further outlined by Bengali:

The 1970 Education Policy Document reaffirmed the government’s “commitment to universal elementary education” accepting it as “a basic principle of State Policy in the Constitution of 1956 and 1962.” However, it also lamented that “the attainment of this goal...seems to have receded further and further with the lapse of time and today Pakistan has one of the highest rates of illiteracy in the world... (ibid).

Bengali reports that the 1970 policy was overtaken midstream, in 1971, by the war between East and West Pakistan during the rule of General Yaha Khan. This situation meant that:

The egalitarian principles enunciated by the ousted government had yet to see the light of day in practice. However, they were literally expunged under the new dispensation (ibid).

Bengali’s analysis of the military dictator Yaha Khan’s approach to education does not fit with that of Thomas (1992). Thomas outlines the education plan promulgated by the military regime as being one which reaffirmed the egalitarian principles which had hitherto characterised Pakistan’s education policy: “General

Yaha Khan, in his first press conference in 1969, announced greater emphasis on social sector development including education” (1992:97). Bengali’s cynicism about the effects of the military regime’s promulgation, which appears to have led to the 1970 Education Policy, either arises from a matter of confusion regarding sequencing of events, or from a suspension of trust in government ability to deliver the goods. This discussion should not be detained here in trying to sort out the intricacies involved in historical overlaps of policies and their implementation. From analysing Bengali’s and Thomas’ discussions on the period, it becomes clear that, whatever the high sounding note taken by the military government on education, all was lost in that period due to the war between West and East Pakistan. According to both authors, the implementation of education policy was a casualty of an expensive and debilitating civil war, which lead to the reallocation of funds from education to the war effort.

Neither Hoodbhoy nor Bengali cite the populist Zulfikar Bhutto’s terms in office¹⁰² as leading to significant changes in the destiny of public education in Pakistan, despite that leader’s rhetoric about the need for a social revolution through education. Hoodbhoy dismisses this period as a lost time when social change was merely a figment of the imagination despite the rhetoric. Talbot (1998: 215) states, with reference to Bhutto, that: “No leader since Jinnah had possessed his authority. Bhutto’s charisma was rooted in his embodiment of popular aspirations for social justice...” According to Talbot, despite this characteristic, Bhutto was both: “...the Western-educated progressive and a despotic feudal chief” (ibid). The figures for the

¹⁰² Z. Bhutto was leader of Pakistan from December 1971-July 1977

period of Bhutto's rule demonstrate that funding for education was not increased during his term in office.

The promise of across the board expansion was not fulfilled. The total public development expenditure on education ranged between 3.5% and 5.2% of that total or slightly below the range set by other regimes (Thomas: 1992: 99).

Under Zia ul Huq¹⁰³, "The 1978 Education Policy was primarily directed towards Islamisation and failed to address the challenges of educating the masses in a realistic manner" (Sattar: *The News*: 6 March, 2000). Indeed, as Talbot asserts: "The Islamisation process became the most identifiable feature of the Zia regime..."(1998:270). Zia's influence on education meant that: "At the primary level, the Government sought to tackle the problem of mass illiteracy through patronage of mosque schools" (ibid: 279). The 1978 Fifth Five Year Plan, also promulgated under the Zia military government, noted in its preface:

As a consequence of neglect of primary education, Pakistan has a high illiteracy rate (78 percent of population above 5 years was illiterate in 1971). Illiteracy has been a major factor contributing to economic and social backwardness (ibid).

In attempting to Islamise society, Zia managed to disrupt any progress that was being made in the national education system. By turning education into an ideological appendage of the Islamisation campaign, sectarian and political divisions, within both the educational sector and the wider society, were heightened. Zia's policies did call for universal primary education and the eradication of illiteracy. In a seemingly ironic way, he attempted to increase literacy rates by subsidising or building 12,000 new mosque schools in which literacy would be taught.

¹⁰³ Huq ruled from 1977-1988

Traditionally, literacy for literacy's sake is not the role of the mosque school. He also attempted to have science taught in mosque schools (Talbot: 1998: 279), which perhaps best highlights his disruptive influence on education in that period. In attempting to fuse two quite oppositional features of education, it could be stated that the whims of such swift and contentious ideologically bound policy changes, only affected national education negatively on both sides of the ideological spectrum. Islamists were offended by having to introduce seemingly secular subjects into mosque schools. Non-secular educationalists were alarmed by the introduction of Arabic and Urdu as compulsory subjects, through which Zia played to both the religious and the nationalist sentiments. Neither literacy nor primary enrolments significantly improved during his tenure¹⁰⁴.

The similarity, in the litany of broken policy promises and authoritarian redirections of policy to suit political whims, did not diminish in the post-Huq period. Hoodbhoy breaks off his discussion on the history of educational policy abruptly at the fifth Five Year Plan (1978-1983). It appears as though Hoodbhoy, one of Pakistan's leading educationalists, can no longer labour the point that policy and application of policy are not two distinct and mutually exclusive components. He dismisses Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif as feudals and, therefore, as being caught in the same class consciousness as their predecessors. He states:

It will not escape the reader's attention that every article herein – with one notable exception – is critical of the state of public education. Indeed few Pakistanis doubt that the system fails to deliver (Hoodbhoy: 2:1998).

¹⁰⁴ See Hoodbhoy Chapter Five for details.

Bengali continues to map out the history of policy versus application until the year 2000. He notes that the same lassitude and incompetence and failure to implement policy characterised all of the governments until the time of writing. He ends with the comment that: “Philosophical pronouncements can not make up for a lack of political will.” The editorial in the same newspaper adds to this feeling by lamenting that in reality there is little to expect from a succession of governments that have demonstrated only an overwhelming will to support their own class interests.

Issues of Quality: Curricula, Pedagogy and Infrastructure

There appears to be a serious lack of quality education provided in the public school systems in Pakistan, which is a major reason why many commentators suggest parents increasingly send their children to madrasa and private schools, despite the high cost of the latter. Hoodbhoy (1998: 82) admits that:

Massive government and donor funding has expanded the primary and middle school education since 1979 but this is often in a most inefficient manner and has not been able to improve quality

Generally, the public schools are perceived by Pakistanis as providing poor quality education. The English newspapers run a seemingly endless number of articles and series on the state of education in the country, much of the material being devoted to the corruption and inefficiency and the subsequent lack of quality education being made available.

Several major points constitute the reality of this perception according to the literature on the subject: the secular/non-secular debate, irrelevant curriculum, poor teaching standards, poor physical infrastructure, lack of gender inclusiveness. This section will take a brief overview of each of the separate, but by no means unrelated, issues in an attempt to shed further light on how a public school system can be seen to be a barrier to national progress.

1. Curriculum issues

The battle between Islamic education and secular education is fought within the public school system. All the Five Year Plans prior to the military dictatorship of Zia, attempted, within varying degrees, to balance the two epistemologies. As has been noted elsewhere in this thesis, the difficulty inherent in according this oppositional binary a suitable, and generally acceptable, equilibrium can be explained in part by the ambiguous, and still unresolved, nature of what constituted the ideological state at its inception. In other words: To what degree is Pakistan secular or non-secular? Zia attempted to push the state into a truly fundamentalist position and failed, but what has ensued since that time is a heightened sense of tension between secularists and non-secularists and the role of either force in education.

The first Constitution of 1956 designated Pakistan as an Islamic state. According to *The News* (12 March, 2000):

Eight education policies in 50 years have based their curriculum objectives or goals on the *Curriculum Document of the National Bureau of Curriculum and Textbooks* of 1956 which states: “To develop in the child a balanced personality by acquiring knowledge of Islamic values, an understanding of the

ideological foundations of Pakistan and to encourage patriotism and love of country and mankind.

As an Islamic state, Pakistan has no ideological commitment to invest in a fully secular education system. The premise that Islam is fundamentally at odds with modernity ensures a continued tension between those groups in Pakistan, which are at variance with official policy or direction.

Islamiyat [religious instruction] is in all the schools. It is compulsory. What makes it more a problem in our public schools, even above having religion at all, is that we ask: whose religion? Sunni? Shia? What sect is represented?

When questioned further on this situation, during an interview, the headmistress of a private school noted that there was increasing conflict in Pakistan over religion in schools, for the ever present question is: What sect should control the content of that material?

How can we have a Sunni Government school¹⁰⁵? Or a Shia Government school? We can't, so whose [what sect's] influence comes through in each religious class? A child gets Shia or Sunni information. What about us in Sindh where it's Sufi? It's all too complicated and we have divisions and riots.

The religious content in the official curriculum is not the only contentious curriculum issue in Pakistani education. Adnan Sattar, in an article in the Karachi English daily *The Dawn* (23 October, 2000), corroborated my empirical data about political curricula content in the public school system¹⁰⁶. "The curricula lacks social relevance and aims at engineering conformist and 'politically correct' patterns of thought". Hoodbhoy offers further insight into curriculum issues:

¹⁰⁵ Sunni Islam is the major sect in Pakistan followed by Shia.

¹⁰⁶ All of those questioned in my research stated that the curriculum was politicised and dated.

By an act of Parliament, the curriculum of the entire country is uniform and no deviations are permitted....The curricula devised by its ‘experts’ often have the wrong emphases, contain outdated concepts, and do not provide for relevant and useful education. Instead the CW [Curriculum Wing] appears preoccupied with the propagation of ideological doctrines rather than the proper education of children...Ideologically imbued materials are not confined to Islamiat and Pakistan Studies courses: they pervade the entire syllabus, including Science, English, Urdu, Geography, Social Studies¹⁰⁷.

This widespread belief, that the curriculum in Pakistan is an ideological tool, is corroborated by the historian K.K Aziz¹⁰⁸ in his book *The Murder of History*:

Millions of young minds are being fed on a diet of lies, inaccurate facts, misrepresentations and blatant official propaganda. It is indeed high time that we began exploring marginalized histories and a pluralistic ethos of our land. Stripped of tolerance, our schooling has degenerated into a source of violence and fascism. Celebrating diversity is indispensable for the survival of pluralistic societies. Sadly, this kind of dialogue has systematically been avoided in this country, more so in educational institutions.

Despite the dilution of secular subjects, government schools are still the only affordable system to which the poor can send their children for a ‘modern’ education. It is also of importance when discussing the secular imperative of the Karachi Project, to note that Pakistan’s prevailing ideological hegemony incorporates the social construct to which the majority of the people adhere. Islam *is* their religion. Indeed, in discussing the non-secular nature of the education system, it is imperative to remember the cultural legitimacy of Pakistan’s religion. That there are problems interpreting that religion on a sectoral basis within education, should not mitigate against the fact that Islam is not only the official religion but is in fact the religion of

¹⁰⁷ “For example: the 1994 CW document for Social Studies for Class Five children requires that they be taught “Hindu-Muslim differences”; India’s evil designs on Pakistan; “India’s wars of aggression against Pakistan” and that they learn to make speeches on *jihad* and *shadadat*” (Hoodbhoy:1998: 11)

¹⁰⁸ K.K. Aziz: “The Murder of History”. No publication date or place of publication was provided with the extract from the book sent me by a Pakistani education official.

the masses. As such it is important to be mindful of Esposito's call for caution when discussing such issues as secularism in education for:

Secular presuppositions – which inform our academic disciplines and outlook on life, our Western worldview – have been a major obstacle to understanding and contributed to a tendency to reduce Islam to fundamentalism and fundamentalism to religious extremism. For much of the 1960's, the received wisdom among many, from development experts to theologians, could be summarised in the adage: "Every day in every way things are and will continue to get more and more secular/modern" (Esposito: quoted in Munoz: 1999: 105)

It is difficult to ascertain whether the increased emphasis on religion in secular subjects is a major cause of the increasing unpopularity of the government schools amongst the people. The growth of Islamism since the 1970's may, in fact, be a reflection of the people's desire for Islam's reinvigoration and a desire to have "more Islam" in the school system may reflect popular demand¹⁰⁹. This is not the venue for an in-depth analysis of this complex ideo-cultural debate; however, it is important to be mindful of the pressure on the national schools system, to be both a reflection of cultural values and a mechanism for "progress". Given the integrated system of beliefs in Islam, where there is literally no distinction between what is religious and non-religious, it can be seen as perhaps imposing too much upon the Islamic Republic's education system to demand that it be totally secular. Referring to the West's embracing of secularism, Esposito asserts that:

The separation of religion and politics overlooked the fact that most religious traditions were established and developed in historical, political, social, and economic contexts. Their doctrines and laws were conditioned by these contextTo that extent, a religion which does not seem to do so (a religion that mixes religion and politics) appears necessarily retrogressive, prone to religious extremism and fanaticism (ibid: 105).

¹⁰⁹ See for example: Sayyid (1997: pp. 31-52) *Thinking Islam-Rethinking Islam* for a discussion on this theme.

Given that this discussion is primarily focused on an interrogation of the Karachi Project's premise that modernisation is hindered by such an education system as that provided by the government schools, the inclusion of non-secular emphases in "traditionally secular" subjects could therefore be perceived as mitigating against the sort of modernisation that the Project has in mind for Pakistan.

Unlike madrasa, the government schools do teach what are supposedly secular subjects such as English, mathematics, science, and physics. This is the "modern" curriculum that is perhaps the draw card for parents, for it is in these areas that it is perceived the "reward" of paid employment will be found. There is much literature that discusses the draw of modern education in developing nations for its potential formal employment opportunities, and an explication of that situation need not detain us here. However, the situation in Pakistan, as it relates to the government schools, was put succinctly by an education official at the Sindh Ministry of Education, who explained, in an interview with me, that:

Parents [in those areas where both madrasa and public schools are available] will send maybe one or two of their children to the madrasa to give them a religious education for Allah and because it [the education] is free. Then they will send one or two to the Government school to get a modern education. This may be for working life purposes, for jobs. Maybe they will send the brightest one to the Government school.

On the other hand, a teacher in a public primary school in Karachi explained that:

Poor people don't often see the relevance of the public schools, especially in rural areas. Their children have to work and they see that the English¹¹⁰ is too hard to learn and thatthere is no relevance for them, which is why so many children do not come to these schools anyway. Or to any schools. Children

¹¹⁰ The Urdu requirement was relaxed after the death of Zia. Urdu still remains the major language of instruction in public schools.

have always worked in this culture. School is really just an elite concept to many rurals still these days especially when associated with the costs for poor families.

That the Pakistani curriculum is a national one, and compulsory in all public schools, is what various commentators note is one of the major problems facing innovation and change in the school system. The centralised bureaucracy is seen as being both a bottlenecked organisation and an ideological and political tool of the government, of which it is both part and function. Hoodbhoy (1998: 21) summarises what the various commentators assert is the problematic link between what is perceived as a low quality and irrelevant curriculum and a politicised and inefficient bureaucracy:

The curriculum is a federal affair supervised by the Federal Curriculum Wing (FCW)...The dominance of the FCW have prohibited change and innovation since the 1980s and 1990s and have been the cause of the continuous decline in educational standards. At present there is a lack of technical capacity to prepare, implement and analyse learning assessment, one of the main reasons that the public system (including the enormous foreign-funded donor inputs) cannot be properly evaluated on its most important impact: what do children actually learn in schools and does that knowledge they gain make them ready for participation in the twenty-first century?

The issue of what constitutes the apparent failings of the curricula used in the public school system is the subject for a complete thesis. That the curricula do not adequately reflect the needs and aspirations of the population is heralded as one of the main reasons why people struggle to send their children to madrasa and private schools. The huge increase in the number of private schools attests to this fact, for, as informants constantly reminded me during my research, the government schools are universally perceived as being dysfunctional.

It is also of importance, when discussing the secular imperative of the Karachi Project, to note that the prevailing ideological hegemony incorporates the social construct to which the majority of the people adhere. Islam *is* their religion. Indeed, in discussing the non-secular nature of the education system, it is imperative to remember the cultural legitimacy of Pakistan's ideological construction.

2. Teachers and pedagogy

The dismal picture portrayed by the literature on government schools, is continued in the issues of teachers and pedagogy. The Karachi Project members were adamant that public school teachers in Pakistan were badly trained products of the state's poorly run and under-financed teacher training institutes. Those members who either owned or operated private schools stated that they never hired public school teachers. The reasons given were that such teachers had been imbued with the state ideology; that the teachers were very poorly trained; and, as one member explained: "They have no idea about the world because they are from poor backgrounds themselves and also they are taught nothing by similar trainers in the institutions." All of the members said that they would hire only untrained people "with an education" who would then receive training "...or else we will have bad teaching, the bad habits from the training institutes which take only the very bad school leavers." One Project member asked: "Who would be a teacher in Pakistan except no hopers?" Warick and Reimers (1995: 29) conducted extensive research into teaching and teachers in Pakistan. Their conclusions of the situation are summarised as:

Among the greatest problems facing Pakistan's primary schools are the shortage, the low quality, and the poor morale of their teachers. The government has trouble recruiting teachers, especially for rural schools. Those

it does hire are not the best the country has to offer, often have little motivation to teach, and use teaching methods that promote little learning.

In every respect, the Warick and Reimer's study corroborated the position held by the Karachi Project members. For example, the Project members' assertions: that teachers are not only poorly trained but become teachers because there are so few other opportunities in the country, is corroborated by the study mentioned:

Many candidates, particularly men, choose teaching because it is the only job open to them. A district education officer said that his male teachers started with the army, then went to the police, the revenue department, and other government agencies. Only when they were turned down everywhere else did they come to him. A senior official in Punjab claimed that Pakistan "has told the teacher you are a little person, you have little status, and your salary is low (ibid).

One of the reasons cited by the Karachi Project members for the poor performance of children in schools was the heavy, and often brutal, punishment meted out to students. Warick and Reimers attest to this: "When over 11,00 grade 4 and grade 5 students were asked how often their teachers beat them in class, 83 percent said that they were punished some days, most days or every day" (ibid:36). Zia (*The News*, 12 March, 2000), in an article titled: "No drop in drop-out rates" states that physical punishment is a major reason cited for attrition:

The concept of a 'master' beating up children ruthlessly is familiar and recurrent as you talk to drop-outs or their parents. Many teachers make students perform domestic chores at their homes, and with no monitoring system in place in the public sector education, students opt out of this oppression. Teachers themselves are a product of this system and are often untrained.

Physical punishment was one of the main reasons for school attrition cited by Avalos (1987), in her study of primary schools in four Andean republics. Avalos

states that physical and psychological punishments are major causes of repetition and attrition in those Latin American public schools in which she carried out her study. Given the statistics for Pakistan's attrition and repetition rates, and those for the amount of physical punishment as disclosed by Warick and Reimers (1995), there is evidence of a causative relationship between punishment and attrition in Pakistan not dissimilar to that found in the Andean schools.

Perhaps the Karachi Project's most frequently made claim against the public schools was that teaching methods were mere reflections of the traditional mosque school pedagogy. Again, Warick and Reimer's study across Pakistan's rural and urban primary schools corroborates such charges:

Schools blended a climate of fear with teaching by rote memory. Classroom instruction and examinations required students to reproduce material from textbooks rather than show that they understood the material's meaning...Individual interpretation, criticism, and creative thought did not enter into that process...Visits to primary school classrooms gave vivid illustrations of the system's commitment to the exact repetition of study materials (ibid).

The government school, primary classroom observations I made in Karachi, corroborate Warick and Reimer's findings. The rooms were crowded and dark, and, although conducted in Urdu, a language I do not speak, it was evident that students were repeating long lessons after the teacher. At one girls' school in a working class area, my translator stated: "This is a good school...sticks are not used"¹¹¹. When you go to bad schools you will see children beaten for not repeating correctly."

Memorisation is an aspect of pedagogy long utilised in Islamic cultures. Chapter Five

¹¹¹ This was a public school in which the Karachi Project was attempting to implement reforms. It was very sensitive issue with the principal who opposed the reforms but had been asked to go ahead with them by education officials. The Project had managed to have beatings stopped and had attempted to have new materials and teaching methods implemented.

on madrasa education analysed the links between memorisation, pedagogy and social reproduction theory.

In stating that: “Teachers are a product of this [oppressive] system and are often untrained”, the journalist Zia introduces issues important to this discussion. Teachers themselves have learned to oppress members of their own social class, a situation that aids in the maintenance of a highly stratified social system. In this form of social reproduction, members of the same social class continue the oppression that is inimical in the feudalist¹¹² social system. In the Pakistan system, where teachers are either poorly trained or untrained, there is no hope of a progressive critical pedagogy being implemented into the public school system. Simply, this unequal society is aided in reproducing itself through the continued lack of teacher training and the absence of a critical pedagogy. It is not in the interests of the Pakistan’s ruling elites to invest in a change in education that would promote counter hegemony. In this it is pertinent to turn to Gramsci for clarification for:

Gramsci saw the acquisition by subordinate groups of a critical education as an essential prerequisite for the development of a counterhegemony. He considered education for reasons other than critical-mindedness as necessarily leading to incorporation into the existing hegemony (Holly: 1980: 318, quoted in Coxon: 1988: 31).

Devotion to an uncritical form of education, in which an irrelevant curriculum was presented through traditional rote learning and reinforced by punishment, was the reason the Karachi Project cited for there being little chance of modernisation emerging in Pakistan. Education could not become critical, for that would mean a

¹¹² See Chapter Seven for a definition and discussion of feudalism.

counter hegemony, which would mitigate against the entrenched powers of the ruling elites. As Coxon (1988:32) states:

Disciplined and rigorous study and instruction in the whole intellectual tradition in order to develop the power to think analytically and critically is not only the focus of Gramsci's educational theory, but also a crucial aspect of the political struggle against state power. An education system which prohibits access to the intellectual order denies the possibility of overcoming an inequitable social system (Coxon: 1988: 32).

In seeking an understanding of the links between the oppression of children and high rates of attrition, Avalos (1987: 146) offers meaningful insight through her research. From her study of student-teacher relationships, Avalos (ibid) posits that teachers have been inculcated to think as they do about students through a hegemonic process. In Avalos' study teachers told their students that they [the students] were hopeless, poor, unable to be taught effectively. Avalos calls this process the acceptance and maintenance of "practical ideologies" in which teachers see their students as socially inferior and subject to failure due to that low social status. By obscuring the real nature of the problems that exist to maintain the social iniquity, teachers can be seen as having been hegemonised into the culture, which needs such disequilibrium to exist:

Using the concept of "hegemony" in its Gramscian connotations (Gramsci: 1971) it might be possible to say that these conceptualisations of the reasons for failure are part of the dominant ideologies to which the teachers are subjected, both at the time of their training as well as through their unions and the inherited interpretative frames teachers receive from their equals or older peers (Avalos: 1987: 147).

In this process the social order is maintained through the actions that teachers take towards their students. In Pakistan, feudalism is a major social and political construct

that is maintained most effectively by the continued reproduction of the systems that support it. A well educated, critical, population would effectively end the dominance of the feudal class, a situation which is becoming more evident in such centres as Karachi, where the middle class contests the legitimacy of the political system that supports feudalism. Teachers in Pakistan are not from the wealthy classes; however they are the unconscious carriers of “a representation of a reality that obscures the nature of its problems” (Avalos:1987: 146), that is the social order which is maintained to both preserve and inculcate the dominant feudal ideology.

3. School infrastructure

The descriptions of the physical infrastructure of Pakistan’s government schools provide further evidence of a school system that does not always meet the needs of the majority of its citizens. One important aspect in this discussion on physical infrastructure, is the link made in the literature to the preponderance of irregularities surrounding school buildings, bureaucratic corruption and feudal landlords. This situation points to the relationship between the base social structure and its impact on educational provision.

Seventy five percent of Pakistan’s population is rural (Sreedhar: 1998: 3) and, for the most part, engaged in agriculture. The evidence from the literature shows clearly how the poor are denied schooling in rural areas where landlords are very powerful. “Eighty per cent of Pakistan’s primary schools are rural and twenty percent are urban.” (Warick and Reimers: 1995: 80). These figures do not mean that education is adequate or well provided for in rural areas. The literature is replete with facts and stories of how both urban and rural education is manipulated by powerful interests.

An article in *The Dawn* (13 December, 1997) titled “School buildings in rural areas under use by feudal lords” attests to illicit but common practices:

A survey carried out by *Dawn* revealed that at least 4,000 primary school buildings are being used by feudal lords as their *baithaks*¹¹³. Teachers in these schools are encouraged by the feudal lords not to take classes and the schools exist mostly on paper. Thousands of such schools have teachers who seldom take classes, but are paid salaries incurring colossal (sic) to the national exchequer. Interestingly, despite the fact that the government functionaries are aware of such schools and teachers, nothing has been done so far.... People in the Rawalpindi/Islamabad and adjoining rural areas complained that no government in Pakistan had sincerely worked for promotion of education among the middle and lower class of society. “The only education is for the elite class,” they contended.

Corruption within the education system, is a subject about which Pakistan’s newspapers provide much supporting evidence. One such manifestation of this occurrence is the “ghost schools”. These are schools with no teachers or students. Various informants told me that there this is a major problem – officials provide all the records and files and submit them for scrutiny and then receive the appropriate payments as if their school did in fact exist. This, I was informed, accounts for significant numbers of schools – ghost schools – that appear in public records. I was also informed that this occurs primarily in rural areas, where the local officials are easily bribed to ignore the practice for the benefit of the local “feudal lords”¹¹⁴. I also heard numerous stories of corruption in urban schools. Corruption in Pakistan, generally, is the subject of literally hundreds of articles on the world wide web. Transparency International, the world-wide watchdog on corruption, places Pakistan as the world’s seventy ninth most corrupt nation from a list on one hundred¹¹⁵.

¹¹³ Baithaks: offices, meeting places

¹¹⁴ The term “feudal lords” was used often both in interviews about this subject and in the press.

¹¹⁵ *Guardian Weekly*: 1 November, 2001

Pakistan has far more schools than it has permanent buildings to house them. Estimates of the numbers of “shelterless” schools range from 16,000 to 29,000. To many school officials, a shelterless school is one that ‘has no buildings’ and must operate “under a tree or in a field” (ibid). I witnessed such a school for primary-aged girls in Karachi. It was situated at the back of a huge vegetable market, in a very poor part of the city. Girls squatted on the ground chanting lessons under an insufficient awning. As it began to rain, the students and two teachers left the space and filtered off into the market area.

Hoodbhoy (1998) asserts that the situation in Pakistan that allows for such a continuance of practices, as described in this section on physical infrastructure and its relation to the socio-economic order, is one that is not easily rectified. Hoodbhoy again and again reduces the problems of education in the Islamic Republic to the absence of modernity and the prevalence of feudalism. Given the ubiquity of the problems associated with the physical infrastructure of the schooling system, let alone the issues already discussed in this chapter, what Hoodbhoy states is perhaps pertinent:

Given the class structure of our society and the persistence of feudalism, there are no easy solutions to the fundamental problem. Education cannot be freed from social inequities unless there is a social revolution – which is not on the horizon (ibid: 19).

Gender

The statistics throughout this chapter on the discrepancies between educational provision for boys and girls in primary government education, indicate the sheer

quantitative problem faced by the modernisers¹¹⁶ who call for equal participation of the sexes in education. The various components of education discussed in this chapter could each have a gender analysis applied to them. The limitations of this study are such that an in-depth analysis is not possible, given the depth and scope involved in the complex discussion of gender relations in the Islamic Republic.

Warrick and Reimers' study of education in Pakistan notes that:

Pakistan's education system has two critical problems related to gender: the shortage of primary schools for girls in rural areas and keeping well-qualified teachers from cities in rural schools (ibid:147).

The authors then proceed with numerous ideas about what might rectify these problems. For example, they note that:

Parents are undoubtedly more sensitive about sending their girls to schools. However, the government's own experiment with mosque schools shows that under the right conditions girls will attend schools (ibid: 148).

They also suggest such actions as increased rural allowances for female teachers, who are often the target of assault by men, as these would help to pay for increased security. While undoubtedly well meaning in their desire to see female participation in education increased, the authors miss the point on which factors mitigate against meaningful female participation in education. The authors' suggestions are mere window dressing and do not address the problem at its core. It is the combined ideological, social and cultural structure of Pakistan that allows for the oppression of women. Manshipouri (1999: 6) fixes the subjugation of

¹¹⁶ I refer here to the Karachi Project who advocate equal participation as part of their education reform programme.

women squarely within the structural condition of Pakistan's patriarchal society where: "Traditional, cultural and religious forces block political and legal equality for women. These forces also discriminate against women in socio-economic domains."

Moghissi (1999: 94) provides a further perspective on the issue of females in the Islamic world generally. This perspective is utterly pertinent to the situation in Pakistan, where no amount of tinkering with policy will undermine the deep constructs that maintain the oppression of women:

Many of the obstacles which prevail today in the Islamic world existed in the earlier stages of capitalist development in Europe. Women's exclusion from education, restrictions in employment, denial of female suffrage¹¹⁷, legally sanctioned marital rape and violence, lack of child custody and rigid gendered moral codes are obvious examples. To remove these obstacles, after much struggle by feminists and social reformers, has been a defining test for modernity. Many of the bourgeois reforms in the areas of education, health, working conditions, family legislation, and so forth, were not conceivable in pre-capitalist societies.

The next chapter will argue that Pakistan is characterised as being largely antagonistic to cultural and social change due, in large part, to the threat such changes pose to an entrenched feudal-industrial oligarchy. Moghissi's assertions are therefore pertinent to the situation of females in Pakistan for modernity is largely absent in that society. Given the omission of modernity and the ideological predominance of a conservative Islam, how can women achieve inclusion in society? The qualitative and

¹¹⁷ Although women have the vote in Pakistan there is a system, especially in rural areas, where votes are bought by feudal lords. In rural areas, especially in Baluchistan and NWF Provinces, women are often not permitted to vote by tribal lords: "The tribal elder's opposition to rural women's voting rights in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan reflects their deeply entrenched tribal hierarchy" (Manshipouri: 2000)

quantitative data presented in this chapter on gender related issues in education bears witness to this socio-cultural situation of dis-equilibrium.

The Under-valuing of Education in Pakistan

From the data and discussions in this chapter, there is little to recommend in regard to the government schools' ability to deliver a modern, efficient and equitable education system. The madrasa can also be included in this supposition. This brief discussion on the under-valuing of public education is included at this juncture in order to raise questions to which the following chapter will attempt to find solutions.

Hoodbhoy (1998:3) declares that: "Pakistan's education system doesn't work." He states that while, primarily, the social service institutions are poorly funded and badly run, not all of Pakistan's institutions are dysfunctional.

The defence industry, power, telecommunications, airlines, roads, railways, irrigation, provide examples [of functioning government utilities]...People with experience in development work are fairly impressed with Pakistan's economic indicators. But in the same breath they say that they have never seen an educational system as appallingly bad as ours. And so there is a real, not an imagined puzzle (ibid).

Hoodbhoy (ibid) also quotes the Pakistani scholar Nasar Jalil, who asserts that:

While the First Plan clearly recognized that economic development was a means to an end, ie. to provide a richer and fuller life for people, *it did not recognize the economic value of education* (Hoodbhoy's emphasis).

In this situation, Hoodbhoy recognizes that education is not perceived by Pakistan's rulers as vital and has never been accorded the protection and nurturing that other

institutions have received. As has been noted in this chapter, the First Five Year Plan's universal primary education and literacy programmes were not implemented. Rather, funds were re-allocated to higher education. This re-allocation was, I posit, for the education of a small elite group who would be trained in the services necessary to maintain the efficiency of "necessary institutions". This instance reflects the system of colonial education, where a minority were educated as functionaries of the colonial bureaucratic system. The implementation of a universal literacy and primary education system in 1947 would have been a major change in education policy and social thinking and, for ideological reasons, one which was no doubt contrary to the feudal interests that controlled the reins of power.

While stating that mass education has never been conceived of as a vital component in Pakistan's efforts to progress, Hoodbhoy does not make the link between power constructs and the continued lack of educational provision. In seeking an answer for the lack of education he states:

A given society develops and nurtures those institutions that it needs for its survival, increased prosperity, and future development. Once the need is established, there is a demand for the need to be fulfilled. This supposition readily explains why, in spite of general corruption and apathy and all else, Pakistani society has not allowed 'vital' institutions like WAPDA or PTC or PIA¹¹⁸ to deteriorate beyond a certain point (ibid).

Hoodbhoy states further, that the only education necessary is that needed for there to be a technical force, which can maintain rather than produce the technology that is used in its "functioning services". To this purpose there has always been a sizeable middle class which has bought its education in private schools, and which continues to

¹¹⁸ WAPDA: Water and Power Development Association; PTC: Pakistan Telecommunications; PIA: Pakistan International Airways

do so. Hoodbhoy terminates his discussion on the subject with the following statement: “Pakistan’s public education system fails because, in its present form, it is simply not valuable or important enough to the society” (ibid: 5).

It is the objective of the next chapter to seek a more in-depth analysis of the questions raised by this discussion, namely: To what extent are the madrasa and public school systems pressured by ideological and entrenched class forces to reproduce systems which mitigate against modernisation?

Conclusion

This thesis is based on a case that emerged from the Karachi Project’s assertions that modernisation was being held back by both madrasa and government school systems. Given the continued ideological commitment to Islam and the continuance of the political-ideological system that supports these state apparatuses, there is little chance of a counter hegemonic modernity occurring in Pakistan.

The battle against the perceived dysfunction of the government schools’ system is being fought by urban, Westernised, middle-class people, such as the members of the Karachi Project. This minority appears to have had little effect, except in small pockets of urban areas, which both reflect and cater to their own class interests. Their reformist excursions, into those areas characterised as being poor and non-secularised, have not, to date, met with significant changes. The majority of Pakistan’s population is barely touched by formal education of any type, let alone the secular, modern version selected by groups such as the Karachi Project as a ‘saviour’ for Pakistan’s

perceived woes. It appears that the promotion of modernity and modernisation, which is so linked with the incursion of secular Western thought, remains elusive, especially as the political and ideological powers have so much to lose should modernity and modernisation be implemented. There is also the salutary lesson learned from other Islamic nations, where modernity has not taken root due to the shallow roots of secularisation in those cultures. The full benefits of modernisation have subsequently been lacking in such societies. The Karachi Project is no doubt mindful of these precedents, which Esposito summarises from his experience of Muslim societies where he notes that:

The secularisation of processes and institutions did not easily translate into secularisation of minds and culture. While a minority accepted and implemented a Western secular worldview, the majority of most Muslim populations did not internalise a secular outlook and values (quoted in Manshipouri: 1999: 6).

Chapter Seven

Class and Education: The Explanation of Failure

Introduction

The failure of the Karachi Project's goals to promote modernisation through the school systems of Pakistan¹¹⁹ – let alone to promote significant pedagogic reforms within those systems – necessitates an explanation of failure. Given that empirical observations of the Project's reforms demonstrate failure in all but their own wealthy private schools, the question which emerges from this situation is: What macro issues contribute to the failure of the secular, progressive educational reforms which the Project believes should aid in the reform of education and society?

An in-depth analysis of the micro issues of the madrasa and government schools has already shed light on what are the perceived and real educational barriers to a modern society. That investigation validated the Karachi Project's premise that the two school systems do act as structural barriers to the sort of changes that the Project members desire. Emerging from the two micro issues of the madrasa and government schools are the macro issues that help explain why the school systems are ideological barriers to the Karachi Project reforms. The macro issues are: Pakistan's triumvirate

¹¹⁹ The Project's reforms have not succeeded in the one Government school in which state officials permitted the Project to 'trial' the reforms. The reforms have had only limited success in the large, poorer private schools, which rely on government curricula materials and state trained teachers. That the Project was not involved in many government schools and that the accusation of failure is based on that one example, does not hide the evidence that reforms are doomed by the deeper issues at play as Chapters Five and Six demonstrate.

class structure; the conundrum of issues involved in modernity, modernisation and anti-modernity in an Islamic republic; the historic oppositional binary of West / Islam. This chapter will concentrate on the first macro issue and Chapter Eight will investigate the second and third macro issues.

An analysis of Pakistan's dominant classes, which are intrinsically opposed to changes involving critical education and secular reforms, is vital in order to understand why the Karachi Project is involved in failure. It is the premise of this thesis that Pakistan's entrenched political elite attempts to maintain control of the country through the use of the state's ideological and repressive apparatuses. This power construct has as its base an ideology that runs counter to the philosophy of the Karachi Project. Education is a vital structural component of the state's ideological apparatuses and can be viewed as a tool for the political elite to reproduce itself. The education systems are used also as barriers to perceived counter-hegemonic forces by incorporating into their epistemology formulae that aid the dominant classes' process of hegemony over the subordinate classes. Since education is a component of the state, its transformation will, by necessity of self preservation, be controlled by the state or, more aptly, by the classes which utilise the state.

The Elites of Pakistan: Power and Coercion

1. Class

A class-based analysis of Pakistan society uncovers the formidable strengths of an hierarchical system based on the appropriation by various dominant economic classes of that which is produced by peasants and industrial workers. A definition of class for

the purposes of this thesis rests with the primary premise that: "... class is determined by position within the process of production. The relations of production, therefore are the main determinate of the social class structure" (James: 2000: 2). To 'reduce' class to an economist definition can be perceived to remove the complexities of influences such as religion and gender from what constitutes a class. Just as Islam can be reduced to a nodal of "it-ness" (Sayyid: 1997: 38), the structural component of class can be viewed at its root as economically defined through the basic Marxist premise. Neo-Marxists scholars are able to form coherent and defensible positions on how class is the sum of more than purely economic determinants, while not betraying the essential Marxist nature of their theories. Upon this economic base a richer definition can be drawn and trajectories followed just as with Islam where, from that essential "it-ness", a more elaborate definition is arguable.

This discussion accepts that, while religion and gender, for example, saturate a class in various ways, across distinct geographic areas and cultural spaces, they do not in themselves constitute the nature or base of class structure. Indeed, just as Poulantzas (1978) asserts that the state is the material space of the dominant class, which utilises that space for its own class interests, Islam can be viewed as a space which is utilised by the state (i.e. its dominant classes) for its own ideological purposes of domination.

This is the situation in Pakistan where various forms of Islam saturate various groups and classes while not defining a 'class' itself at the nodal point of what actually *constitutes* a class. There are wealthy Sunni and impoverished Sunni. Gender relations are also determined within these borders. Having stated that class is

determined by relations of production, and that cultural and biological issues appear subordinate, raises the question of how those factors do indeed saturate class, and provide classes with distinctive social and cultural appearances that appear not to be subordinate. Poulantzas views the accompanying constituents of what programmes class (gender, religion) as being not “simple additions to already existing relations of production....” but that these ideological and political constituents are

already present in the actual constitution of the relations of production [and] that they play the essential role in their reproduction; that is also why the process of production and exploitation involves reproduction of the relations of politico-ideological domination and subordination (ibid:26).

Thus, aspects of gender and religion that appear subordinated to the presence of the economic determinants of class are incorporated into those economic determinants that constitute class.

2. Feudalism

Feudalism is at the core of Pakistan’s being. It is an inescapable factor in the literature on the subject of state and society in Pakistan. It is utterly evident when speaking to Pakistanis about the subject; it is obvious in the rural areas where a peasantry is seen engaged in supervised labour on huge estates. Those who hold feudal powers have a vested interest in maintaining that power through the economic, social and cultural systems peculiar to feudalism. It is an analysis of that system that this discussion will now turn to in order to portray how mass education, specifically a critical education, would undermine both feudal economics and the social and cultural structures which maintain them.

Abels (2000: 1) defines feudalism from a Marxist perspective: “Feudalism is a socio-economic system whose basic characteristic is the exploitation of peasant labour by lords.” Poulantzas (1978: 13) collapses the peasant/feudal system of production and that of the industrial workers’ relations into the same bracket of economics, by stating that workers, under both systems, have their product removed from them by a dominant class acting within “state violence”, by which he means production is removed by the dominant class, which itself constitutes the state, from those who produce it. Feudal and industrial modes of production are thus “two expressions of a single pattern of relations between State and economy under capitalism [and] traverse all the historical stages and phases of the modes of production.” In Pakistan an industrial working class exists primarily in urban areas. Wickham (1985: 168) notes that most societies have had, at some stage or another, the co-existence of a feudal class and a working class within that same society, and that: “...a single mode of production almost never defines a whole society (ie, social formation).” In Pakistan the rural class and the urban working class are both subject to the same dominant class for the major industrial families are also the major land-holding families (Islam:1999: 2).

Islam (ibid) ascertains there to be no more than 5,000 large landlords in Pakistan. However, given the huge rural population, they hold sway over millions of people. (Sreedhar:1998: 3) quotes statistics that show that 31 million acres of arable land are held by less than 5,000 landowners, while 11 million arable acres are held by “the millions of small landowners who hold between 5 and 25 acres.” In Punjab province:

only one per cent of land owners possess 26 per cent of the total cultivable land which is 26.6 million acres. Few from this class can actually be defined as

growers and tillers as they are all feudal lords employing landless farmers and keeping them as serfs (Sreedhar:1998 : 2).

The strength of feudal power is demonstrated in Pakistan's parliament.

In a National Assembly of 207 members, feudal landlords and tribal leaders currently hold 126 seats, almost three times the number won by businessmen and urban professionals (Sreedhar: 1998: 3).

The list of Pakistan's presidents and military dictators since 1947 attests to the domination of the political processes by the feudal/military/industrial families. Even when leaders are not from these families, they rely on such patronage to either achieve power or to maintain that power:

...Benazir Bhutto [was] herself a member of one of Sindh's best known feudal families. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, a non-feudal businessman, was elected largely by urban voters in 1997, but he needs feudal and rural support to stay in power...Sharif is acceptable to the feudals because he does not challenge them (Sreedhar:1998: 3).

The link between the near absence of modernity, which is what this thesis posits is a pre-condition for modernisation, and the rule of the feudal – industrial elite is not difficult to establish. Manshipouri asserts that this is the case for:

Pakistan continues to be predominantly agrarian, rural, and feudal society. The transregional alliance forged by feudals, generals, and bureaucrats has prevented the expansion of civil society (Manshipouri:1999: 5).

Manshipouri provides ample evidence of human rights violations in Pakistan to back his assertion that the triumvirate maintains power through repression in order to block the route to civil governance and modernity. Haniff cements the contention that attempts at modernity are thwarted by the dominant ideology for:

Democracy in Pakistan is only a pipe dream. None of the social, economic and cultural conditions considered to be necessary prerequisites for the evolution of a democratic system exists in the country. The high rate of illiteracy, a largely rural population steeped in medieval traditions, opportunistic leadership at the national level, and most of all, the tribal feudal social structure of the country are major obstacles to the implementation of democracy (Haniff:2001: 3).

The political implications here are that, without the will to support change from the controlling power, little chance of change can exist. The school systems, which support and promote inequality and subjugation to the dominant classes, are therefore maintained in the interests of those dominant classes. One of the most frequent statements in the liberal press, and amongst educators in Pakistan, is: “There is no political will for change”. The policies that are written for the benefit of the population are paper promises. The leaky vessel of Pakistan’s democracy is primarily supportive of the institutionalised powers and, thus, the human rights, which are associated with a truly democratic and representative Government, are absent in Pakistan. Manshipouri (1999: 9) asserts that a state that holds elections does not necessarily bring with them a democracy for:

The utility of democracy is different for each country, and formal democracy as defined by elections, is not synonymous with the protection of basic human rights, especially civil, economic, and religious rights. In the absence of leaders’ genuine commitment to civil liberties, elections so far have been of little value in directly promoting human rights. Several elections since 1988 in Pakistan have failed to curb the corruption....

Hoodbhoy (1998: 19) summarises succinctly the gloomy prognosis of the majority of publications on state and education in Pakistan and its relation to the feudal mindset:

Given the class structure of our society and the persistence of feudalism, there are no easy solutions to this fundamental problem [of unequal education provision amongst the classes]. Education cannot be freed from inequities unless there is a social revolution – which is not on the horizon.

3. The triumvirate: power consolidated

The feudals do not act alone in securing their power, precisely because they are part and parcel of the triumvirate of power sharing and support with the industrialists, the military and the bureaucracy. Islam (2000: 2) states that the triumvirate of the feudal class, the British-trained military and the civil service “constitute the three pillars of elitist power structure that has dominated Pakistan’s political and economic life for decades.” Manshipouri affirms this structure of co-dependence amongst the elite:

In Pakistan the civilian rulers have often relied on the military to preserve their power. Dominated by Punjabis and representing landed and industrial interests, the military regards its dominance of Pakistani politics as vital...Military and non-military governments have equally appealed to Islam in order to maintain their legitimacy and to uphold different political, economic, and class interests (Manshipouri:1999:4).

This nexus is supported by strong tribal, clan and family ties.

Matrimonial alliances with the military and the bureaucracy have given the landed families added clout. In Punjab, family connections have created a feudal-business nexus. By distributing land for favours, Pakistani military rulers such as Ayub Khan in the early 1960’s and Zia ul Huq in the 1970’s helped create a new set of landlords who are now as powerful as the older feudal families and have adopted their patterns of behaviour (Manshipouri:1999: 7).

At every point there is witness to collusion amongst the classes. Even apparently liberal and democratic leaders, such as Zulfikhar Bhutto, who championed socialism, resorted to class interests and aided the entry of feudals into his political party, while

avowing never to allow such rural notables increased access to political power (Talbot:1998: 218). Both Bhutto prime ministers championed the poor and then neglected them, while their rhetoric attempted to play all the class cards at once. The Bhuttos were supported by the feudal military factions so long as they stood by the interests of the landowners: “He [Bhutto] was prepared to risk the wrath of left-wing supporters when he exempted army officers’ holdings from March 1972 land reforms...” (Talbot:1998: 223). Sreedhar (1998: 4) states that it was ultimately due to land reform rhetoric that Bhutto was ousted in a military coup and replaced by Zia ul Huq, who determined that the feudal economy would remain intact and that the Islamisation process would divert attention from the simmering discontent about feudal practices (Almansoor:1999: 1).

Hoodbhoy (1998: 31) asserts that this consortium had its roots in pre-Independence Pakistan. He states that the strong association of the military, feudal, industrial, bureaucratic elites was cemented once Independence occurred:

In sum the bureaucracy and the military emerged as the most powerful groups from the turbulent waters of Pakistan’s politics during the first decade (1947-57)...During the first decade, the government adopted an economic policy which benefited the industrial-merchant groups and the landowners, while protecting the interests of the military through heavy government spending on defences.

Clearly Hoodbhoy does not take the position that Poulantzas would take on the issue of what constitutes government. When Hoodbhoy notes that the government adopted an economic policy that benefited the upper classes he does not signify that the government *is* the upper classes.

A review of how Pakistan was constructed returns the discussion to this fact, for it was the elite in so many ways that propelled the momentum towards Partition. That Islam had a homeland was pivotal to the construction of Pakistan as Chapter Four stressed; however, it was the land-owning classes who were wary of the Indian Congress's pledge to control feudalism, something that did occur in 1948 in the newly independent India when land holdings were slashed in size. The North West landholders saw the writing on the wall before Independence and took control of the Muslim League in an effort to secure independence. Through this process they sought to protect their lands from a Congress, which they perceived as being much stronger and egalitarian than the one they envisaged for Pakistan. As Chapter Four demonstrated, the Muslim League was an authoritarian allegiance of vested interest groups, which secured power through the rhetoric of Islamisation and violence. Contemporary Pakistan remains vested in this historical legacy.

Chapter Six stressed the role taken by Pakistan's first government, which emphasised both the industrialisation process and funding for education, which supported that economic drive. The industrial/feudal nexus promoted industrialisation and higher education to promote its own class interests. Throughout its short history, it has been evident that this nexus has controlled the economy. Lamb (1991: 10) brings into focus the disparity that was well established in Pakistan by the 1960's. Her observations draw attention to the prevalence of established themes from the country's past which can be linked to the contemporary situation for the small industrial class still dominates industrial production and the services.

In the years between 1958 and 1963 industrial production grew by 72 per cent and an annual average agricultural growth of 6.3 per cent. But the benefits were concentrated amongst the elite...Education received less than 1 per cent

of GDP...Twenty two families owned 66 per cent of the country's industry, 97 per cent of insurance, and 80 per cent of banking...The Planning Minister argued that a widening of income inequalities was necessary...in order to provide a larger cake which eventually everyone would get more of.

The statistics at the end of the twentieth century demonstrate an equally disproportionate concentration of wealth at the top and it appears that contemporary planning ministers' economic philosophies still reflect those of the 1960's. The most obvious example, to illustrate this point, is that no comprehensive tax reform has yet taken place in Pakistan. Feudal landholders pay little taxation, due to their manipulation of a system that sees Pakistan having one of the world's lowest tax bases, per head of population, in the world. Through their entrenched connections with all aspects of governance, the feudal families have resisted being other than minimally taxed (Islam: 1999; Sreedhar: 1998; Talbot: 1998).

The industrial base has continued to grow in Pakistan, primarily in urban areas, where some 40 per cent of the population now reside. But the 'modernisation' associated with industrialisation has not meant a change in the ideological commitment to class dominance based on relations of production. Moghissi's (1999: 54) contention that modernity (secularism, civil society, human rights, gender equity) are not necessarily linked to modernisation is relevant to the situation of contemporary Pakistan:

Modernisation in the Middle East, as in other parts of the 'Third World' has meant only economic growth, capital accumulation and industrialisation under the auspices of multi-national corporations, led by an authoritarian elite and serving the interests of a privileged minority.

The situation that ensues today, therefore, is one where historical inequalities have been maintained through competing ideologies so that the situation of contradictions between the classes is utterly apparent. Writing of her journey through Pakistan Christina Lamb states: “I never lost the initial sensation of how, instead of passing from one epoch to another, the centuries somehow co-existed there” (1991: 7). The level of harmonious co-existence is questionable, but the evidence of the historical legacies is always apparent to the observer.

4. The middle classes

This discussion has determined that classes are defined by their relationship to production. This is the base for class definitions in both Marxist and neo-Marxist discourse. James (2000: 2) raises the dilemma inherent in this position when discussion of the middle class arises for: “The phenomenon of the middle class poses a serious problem to the structurally determined view of class.” Given that there is an increasing middle class in Pakistan, and that this thesis focuses on their role in society, it is important to locate them, while being mindful of the Marxist definition of class.

Wright (quoted in James: 2000: 3) provides insight to this situation of where the middle class is situated, for he sees:

The new middle class as being both exploited and exploiter, in that they tend not to own their means of production, but may be able to extract surplus value from others either by simply being small employers themselves, or by owning certain ‘skill or organisational assets’.

The contradictory class position, inherent in this situation, raises the question as to what class in the two-tiered Marxist class structure the middle class is most identified with – and self identified with. This is important to the discussion on how the Pakistani oligarchy relates to the emergent middle class, for, in a basically non-democratic system, the state apparatuses necessitate a strong degree of complicity from all groups. The middle classes, as witnessed by the aspirations of the Karachi Project members, can pull at the strings of the dominant class's tolerance for change.

Given that in Asia, generally, there has emerged a sizeable middle class, which has contested the legitimacy of the ruling classes, the Pakistani oligarchy would be cognisant of methods of accommodation (or non-accommodation) for middle class demands and aspirations. However, given these differences the question that remains unanswered is: Does Pakistan's middle class actually constitute a class in itself or does it sit within a polity of either the dominant class or the subordinate class? This question is important in relation to education for in whose interests does this class operate? Does it demand better education for the lower class in order to facilitate its own economic advancement? Does it necessitate that universal literacy be implemented and that there be a critically educated mass in order to facilitate, in turn, an advancement of democracy, which may better suit its own class interests? These questions are many and varied, and would necessitate a tome in themselves, but they point in the direction of class consciousness and therefore to class identification.

Marxist theory would necessitate an analysis on class consciousness and class conflict in determining where a class is situated – or even if it can be determined as

being a class in itself given the two-tiered Marxist structure of class. James asserts that:

A structural determinist view does not give an adequate answer to several questions surrounding class conflict. Firstly, there is no indication how the middle classes fit in to this picture. There is no indication how a group with a 'contradictory class position' would act in this purely structural determination. The behaviour of the middle class would appear to be schizophrenic, as it takes structural attributes from different classes. Secondly, the description of the formation of class consciousness is very vague. It has been made clear that class consciousness is required for class conflict. Georg Lukacs explains that: 'for a class to be ripe for hegemony means that its interests and consciousness enable it to organise the whole society in accordance with those interests' (James: 2000: 3).

Poulantzas offers a way forward, in determining how this apparent class is constituted. "The process of production and exploitation is at the same time a process of reproduction of the relations of political and ideological domination and subordination" (quoted in James: 2000: 2). Poulantzas asserts that class struggle and class consciousness are inherent in the relations of production and that, as such, these struggles are simply a matter of the historical situation at any time or place. Therefore, the structural position of the class is determined by its economic position within the relations of production. Within this relation are the ideological and political positions of the class, which are both subsumed and conditioned by that economic position held by that class.

This discussion determined earlier that the Pakistani peasantry and working class were positioned within the class structure through the appropriation of the produce that came from their labour. It was also determined that they do not necessarily own the means of their production. If, therefore, the middle class is actually in control of both its production and its services and can buy and sell them, even under certain

limitations imposed by the state, then this situation necessarily separates this class from that one that has no control over either the means of production or the products it produces. Marx stated that the middle classes get stronger due to their ability to accumulate and control capital. The strength of the middle class can be found in their ability to both appropriate the produce of others and to profit from their own labours and to use that capital to accumulate further economic and, therefore political and ideological, power. Given this situation this class does constitute its own class; however, it is one that is more structurally, and therefore ideologically and politically, aligned to the dominant class than it is to the feudal/working class. This situation is supported by both Weber and Poulantzas, both of whom: "...accepted Marx's two-class model, but went further to include political and economic factors"¹²⁰. It is within this two-class model that sub strata of classes appear, which are so significantly aligned to the class with which they are most economically associated through the relations of production, that they can be said to constitute a predominant – but yet subservient – aspect of that dominant class.

The contention that the middle classes would be more easily accessible to hegemony from the top rather than the bottom of the social ladder due to a beneficial alignment of class consciousness is therefore evident due to this class proximity. A conflict arises here, however, as to the variations and distinctions in ideology and politics that are either beneficial or detrimental to the distinct interests of the middle and dominant class. There will be conflict inherent in the economic relations between these two associated groups and therefore associated ideological and political conflicts emerge. The dominant power, which controls the state and therefore the

¹²⁰ This quotation was taken from the Web. There was no author's name nor date affixed.

means to its own reproduction, must accept that it needs both the middle class's acquiescence and support, for which certain rewards are necessary to ensure that support. The industrial class – and the state itself – also require well-educated people who can work within their economic systems and so maintain the economic power bases, both private and public. This situation is one that is necessarily understood by the middle class, which, in turn, realises both its symbiotic position of subservience and its position of power. This class – or appendage – understands that it too can make demands upon the dominant class. In this situation a certain *modus vivendi* can be appreciated. If the state were truly oppressive and devoid of all tolerance, the state apparatuses would be constantly on full alert and there would be no spaces for the middle classes to operate their particular cultural and social and economic needs.

Poulantzas distinguishes his concept of state ideological and repressive agencies from that taken by Althusser in that the former does not propose that the dominant class can always rely on those agencies to instil its dictates through fear and force. This is pertinent when the relations between the middle class and the dominant class are considered in terms of state hegemony. With reference to Althusser's pessimism and the concept of the complete repression of the state through its apparatuses, Poulantzas asserts that:

With such a conception we clearly cannot understand the first thing about the state's peculiar role in the constitution of the relations of production: neither with respect to the transition from feudalism to capitalism and the so-called liberal stage of capitalism; nor *a fortiori* in the case of the present-day State, which intervenes at the very heart of the reproduction of capital. In short, the state also acts in a positive fashion, *creating, transforming and making* reality...(Poulantzas: 1978: 30)

The concessions made by the state to the Karachi Project, whose members are liberal, secular and middle class are consistent with the maintenance of the hegemony of the dominant class; its bid to both inculcate that class into its orbit and to maintain social stability. The concessions are those that defuse the pressure of reform. The private schools owned and run by the Karachi Project are free to pursue secular, Westernised education. The Project has been free to pursue its efforts in the private schools of the lower-middle class and the poorer schools in outlying suburbs of Karachi. The reforms have, however, been limited by the Government to one 'demonstration' school, despite constant pressure on government authorities for more of its schools in which to implement the reforms. The 'lower' the Karachi Project steps on the social ladder, the more obtrusive the state becomes in its allowances. When Karachi Project members state that they find the bureaucracy the major stumbling block to implementing reforms in government schools they refer therefore to imposed ideological barriers.

The flexibility of the dominant class has its ideological limitations. This is exemplified in the area of human rights and education: when the pressure on the dominant class becomes too great the system becomes repressive. The elasticity of hegemony is conditional on the class interests being met. For the middle classes there are borders, which they understand and work around, and, under the latent threat of state-repressive apparatuses, either pursue, in the knowledge that punishment will occur, or to which they defer. For the majority of the poor, that much further removed from the classes that control them than the middle class is from the dominant class, there are fewer avenues for appeal or escape. They are subordinated to the dominant class, precisely because they are in direct line to the production that

supports the economic (and therefore political and ideological) interests of that dominant class and its subsidiaries. The effect of this on educational provision, is that that fewer dispensations are awarded to the dominant ideology, for it is precisely in the class interests of the elite to maintain ignorance amongst the majority who are, in effect, a very cheap and subservient means of production.

Feudalism, Education, Power

The role of education in a society that can be characterised as having strong feudal influences is central to this discussion. In such an arena, it is evident that the education systems are open to the abuse of power by the dominant classes. This situation was established in the previous chapter, through the numerous examples of issues of gender, infrastructure, enrolments, curricula and other components in educational provision. Another aspect of the distorted educational provision provided in such a state – when formal education *is* actually provided or made accessible to the dominated classes – is that the education provided may not serve the best interests of the student but those of the class which provides it.

Lawler and Lankshear (1987) expose this situation in *Schooling, Literacy and Society*. The authors confine their diagnosis of the abuse of power by the dominant classes, to issues of literacy; however, an extrapolation to education generally provides an insight into how certain education does not necessarily benefit the class interests of those being educated. Thus, drawing from the narrower example of literacy, this discussion demonstrates how education in government schools, and madrasa in particular, primarily serves the interests of the class that provides it. To

this measure, Lankshear and Lawler (1987: 29) assert that: “The kind of literacy practised by subordinate groups may somehow actively undermine their own interests and/or positively promote those of the dominant group.”

This scenario is certainly a possibility in the case of the madrasa where the main pedagogical tool is the memorisation of sacred texts. How memorisation relates to the colonisation of the mind was discussed in Chapter Five. Chapter Five also raised a number of questions pertinent to this situation, the most important amongst them being: To what extent are the madrasa ideological institutions and how do they serve the interests of the state? Also: In what ways are madrasa barriers to modernity and therefore modernisation? The answers to these questions were attempted in this thesis but they are raised again at this juncture, for the question which emerges from them is in relation to class composition and education in Pakistan: Do madrasa address the needs of the students who attend them? Students at madrasa are predominantly poor and male and have no access to private schools, and often none to even government institutions. The question is therefore pertinent, for in the reproduction of class, madrasa and their ideology of submission appear to actively maintain non-modernity and, possibly, actively inculcate anti-modernity. Certainly, an education based on the memorisation of sacred texts will not easily promote an individual into a socio-economic class outside his own predominantly feudal or working-class situation. In this respect, religion can be seen to be acting for the state’s class-based ideology in order to reproduce and promote the status quo in Pakistan. Poulantzas’ contention that economic determinants subsume social and cultural determinants of class appears to be borne out in this analysis.

The majority of Pakistan's leaders have played the 'Islam' card in order to achieve their goals of class domination. This verifies the analysis that religion plays successfully to a population so thoroughly saturated in an ontological belief system, that they do not necessarily focus on the economic determinants that mask the social contradictions emanating from such a nexus. It may appear as a cliché, but what Marx stated rings true in contemporary Pakistan where: Religion is the opiate of the people.

The madrasa and government schools are both the ideological tools of the prevailing powers in Pakistan. These systems provide an education that is either steeped in an epistemology that runs counter to that which the Karachi Project envisages as being "modern", or they practice an inefficient education which also mitigates against a functioning, let alone progressive or liberating, pedagogy. It is worth quoting Lankshear and Lawler (1987: 29) at length on this subject for these authors provide further insight into how education can run counter to the class interests of the student. In this sense I posit that "literacy" is a metaphor for the general education practised in Pakistan's madrasa and government schools. I am also mindful that 60 per cent of Pakistan's population is not literate, which attests to the violation of human rights at the level where literacy is not even considered important. But, within the confines of the minority who do receive education in Pakistan, there is a need to see how that education is possibly constructed along dominant class interests:

There are two important points to be made here about literacy in relation to structural power. The first is that literacy has a potential role within attempts by subordinate groups to engage in political action aimed at resisting present inequalities of structural power (and their human consequences) and bringing

about structural change.... The significance of literacy here derives from the fact that existing patterns and consequences of unequal structural power are not inescapably fixed or 'given'. They prevail only so long as people continue to live within established social relations, practices and their supporting ideologies. Once people realise that structural relations (and associated practices) of unequal power are historical outcomes – that they are the consequences of how humans have organised social life – the possibility arises of consciously challenging and seeking to change these relations.... (Lankshear and Lawler: 1987: 29)

In *State and Civil Society in Pakistan* (1997), Iftikhar Malik summarises the links between the barriers imposed against critical education and those who impose them, for: “Modernisation is resisted because it means a surrender of power. The landed classes of Pakistan want to maintain the status quo because change will not go in their favour” (quoted in Islam: 1999: 2). This assertion adds emphasis to Lankshear and Lawler’s (1987: 29) summation of how educational arrangements reflect structured inequality of power.

Dominant groups have from time to time conspired with state support to provide subordinate groups with education for inferior (i.e. their own) literacy. Even where there is no such contrivance, it is possible to note ways in which the literacy of subordinate groups is rendered inferior to that of dominant groups by institutional arrangements.

This situation supports the evidence presented in the previous chapter: government schools without books, feudal lords who requisition schools, bureaucrats and officials who co-operate in corrupt practices which determine less funding for education – purposeful or non-contrivance? So entrenched is the dis-equilibrium imposed by a history of dominance by the Pakistani oligarchy that the question appears to support no real barrier between the two possibilities. The borders between the two are so foggy that separating them seems hardly a valid occupation. Simply, dis-equilibrium is entrenched. The very negative and hopeless situation this presents is one that is

reflected throughout the literature on the oligarchy and its historic links to the oppression of the masses in Pakistan. The ideological and repressive state apparatuses aid in this situation. For the peasant and working classes the state is more repressive. This summation includes the absence of education, for education is a human right and in the absence of such there is, by necessity, the charge that there is a deliberate policy of ignorance. Where the quality of education is inferior, the same accusation of state sanctioned repression can be applied.

Summary

The literature on the links between the dominant groups that constitute the dominant class, and how those groups have manipulated the nation's construction to protect and enhance their own power bases, would necessitate a tome in itself. The state-repressive and ideological agencies act in tandem in this well-oiled system, which, when focusing on educational provision for the majority, maintain their social status in part by depriving dominated groups of an education which might help liberate them from subservience. The Director of the Mahub ul Haq Centre for Human Development in Islamabad summarises the situation:

The neglect of Pakistan's human resources arises from a feudal society that places too low a value on the lives of ordinary people – except at election times. Education and serious, long term development projects are not on the radar screen of Pakistan's landowners (quoted in Islam: 1999: 3).

The barriers of class are one of the major explanations for the failure faced by the Karachi Project to its reforms, or their potential. The vested interests of this class-

based system mitigate against the breakdown of that system, which a modern progressive education system would surely aid in doing.

Chapter Eight

The Explanation of Failure: Modernity and Anti-modernity

Introduction

Emerging from the two micro issues of the madrasa and government schools are the macro issues, which help explain why those school systems are structural barriers to the types of reforms the Karachi Project desires. The three macro issues are: Pakistan's triumvirate of dominant class interests; the conundrum of issues involved in modernity, modernisation and anti-modernity in an Islamic culture; and the historic oppositional binary of West/Islam. This chapter analyses the second macro issue in a further attempt to locate the reasons for failure of the Karachi Project's reforms outside of their middle class milieu.

An analysis of the links between modernity, modernisation, and a society that is based on an ideology essentially oppositional to modernity (and to a lesser extent to modernisation) is vital, for it pinpoints where the fissures exist between philosophical underpinnings of the reforms and the society into which they are being inculcated without success. It has been proposed, throughout this thesis, that without modernity, modernisation cannot be successfully inculcated into Pakistan's social construct. When Moghissi (1999: 54) states that in the Middle East: "...we witness a grotesque modernisation without modernity, a lopsided change" she speaks for the situation in Pakistan which is indeed "lopsided".

Chapter Seven made clear the thesis that Pakistan's class structure was a barrier to modernity and modernisation in that the dominant class has economic reasons for the continued subjugation of the working and peasant class. The dominant class has an imperative to not only obstruct modern education, but to limit the effectiveness of even such basic educational necessities, for a modern state, as universal literacy. This analysis goes a long way to explain why there is such a poor and under-funded government education system in Pakistan. The role of Islam was largely absent in the discussion in Chapter Seven. The point made was that religion saturates a class but that class is the base of the social relations. This does not diminish the strength of Islam, for it is Islam that saturates the cultural spaces of Islamic society. In this discussion on modernity, modernisation, their links to education and reform and the ultimate failure of the Karachi Project's educational reforms, the analysis will concentrate on the link between Islam, Islamism and the antithetical notion to those two ideological positions of Western concepts of modernity.

Modernity, Modernisation and their Antithesis

This discussion posits that the base of modernity is democracy: representative government, civil liberties, human rights, and gender equity are some of the more evident aspects attributed to a common political understanding of what democracy is. The evolution of Western-style democracy is long and convoluted but has its roots in ancient Greek political thought and practice. The European Enlightenment, and subsequent political developments, established democracy – with all its limitations and fissures - as the pre-eminent political discourse in many societies. Democracy

has never been successfully established in Arab countries. It is largely absent as a form of political representation in most Muslim societies. Where it is present in these societies (Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan) it is, as Moghissi asserts, a “lopsided” reflection of the lopsided version of modernity and modernisation to which democracy is linked, and with which Islam has such fundamental problems incorporating into its epistemology.

The Karachi Project members speak of democracy, and how they desire that particular form of governance for Pakistan. What they mean by democracy appears to fit the description of a liberal, pluralist democracy, a model they see as being in evidence in the United States and Europe, where the members have, for the most part, received their tertiary education or where their own children reside and receive education. Kramer ¹²¹ asserts that:

... it is liberal, pluralist democracy that most Muslims and Islamists have in mind when they speak and write about ‘democracy’ and its suitability for an Islamic society, no matter whether they welcome it, cautiously or warmly, or openly reject it. (1999: 177)

Given that the Karachi Project members represent the group most likely to ‘welcome’ liberal democracy, they face various degrees of opposition from within Pakistan. On Kramer’s continuum of Muslims’ acceptance of liberal democracy there is, by necessity, a large part of that population who are not as welcoming to an epistemology as distinctive from core Islamic values as those inherent in liberal democracy. The battle over the inculcation of an education, which reflects the values of a liberal democracy, into state schools and madrasa in Pakistan illustrates this.

¹²¹ Kramer is quoted from her chapter in Munoz (Ed. 1999).

It is important to recognise that, at some levels, democracy and Islam are not necessarily antagonistic to each other's apparent epistemological and material claims on power. In *Jihad Vs. McWorld* (1996: 209) Barber provides insight into how the two have met throughout history and what the parameters of their mutual engagement have been.

...Islam is not first of all opposed to democracy but to modernisation, particularly as manifested in Westernization. Democracy has ancient antecedents and in its pre-modern and pre-liberal forms is not necessarily at odds either with fundamentalist Islam, nor with fundamentalist Christianity. The City of God for Christians and Muslims alike is constituted by brother believers who are equal in their filial posture vis-à-vis God.

This accommodation of democracy is, therefore, problematic for Islam, outside of the parameter of pre-modernity, and it is a modern version of democracy that has been globalising since the Enlightenment and which faces Islam with the burden of accommodation. Democracy, under the circumstances referred to by Barber, can accommodate religion because that democracy was limited by religion and the attendant temporal powers that would have held comprehensive representation at bay. Democracy's modern version, which has separated religion from state as a condition of its understanding of democracy, cannot easily accommodate religion, for involved in the modern version is the major factor of secularism.

Modernity is tantamount to secularism and is almost by definition corrupting to all religion, above all that religion that assumes the 'comprehensive and universal nature of the message of God as presented in the Quran' (Barber:1996: 210).

The historical accommodation of democracy in Islam, therefore, is one that is barely recognisable to the form of global democracy in the world today. The liberal democracy that has been highlighted in this discussion is barely the same political entity that Barber points to within the time frame discussed.

As has been mentioned on several occasions in this thesis, Islam has been expected to accommodate Western values and technology due to its encounter with the West. It is in this expectation, indeed in many respects this *need* to incorporate so much from the West, that Islam's antagonism is most exposed. Islam is diverse. There are many variations on what Islam means in its relations to the West. But essentially, in its effort of self protection from a dominant, global presence, the question which arises from the various Islams, and to various degrees, is the question: The West is opposed to encompassing Islamic principles or beliefs, why should Muslims therefore be expected to incorporate so much which is Western? As such, there is no a priori acceptance of this 'foreign' this 'other' culture. Each level of acceptance ("What do we as Muslims think of cable television, sleeveless dresses, the Pill?") and level of inculcation of Western culture is fraught, for within the multiple Islams are multiple responses.

Any attempt at finding solutions to this quandary, necessitates a thorough investigation into social, historical cultural ideological and developmental issues in relation to the subjects under discussion. While this thesis has attempted to analyse many of these issues, it remains a subject which is so broad that, as in any case study, there needs to be limitations set in order to case that which is most important to the issue. Essentially, what Muslims are being asked to do is to decide how much

Western influence is acceptable and what that influence will be. Is technical influence acceptable? Technical translates as the trappings of modernisation in the form of technology. This issue was discussed in Chapter Five, which found that the degree of acceptance varies from “little Islam” to “little Islam”. By and large, technical aspects of Westernisation have caused fewer problems for Muslims in their accommodation of the West’s influences. The Taliban approached the furthestmost region of the abnegation of modernisation¹²² – which is often associated with materialism, which, in turn, is associated with Westernisation. However, generally, technology is associated with modernisation and that has been more easily accommodated than modernity, which is linked with Western values. Chapter Five on madrasa education analysed the secular/non-secular debate and this discussion will not be repeated here, for it was established that secularisation runs counter to the very belief system, the core of what Islam is: the combination of the lived and the existential, which constitutes man’s experience and which cannot be divided, as in Cartesian thinking, between body and mind, or, in a more temporal sense, from the social, political and ontological.

Politics and Religion: The Politics of Indivisibility

What is of interest here, as it relates to modernity, democracy and the expectations of the Karachi Project, is the role played by the twin domains of religion and politics in governance. This issue is vital, for it impacts on why modernity cannot take root in Islamic societies. Islamic societies have never separated religion from politics. It is posited here that without such a separation there is no hope for secularisation.

¹²² This is particularly so with technology easily associated with morality – or lack of – such as television, the internet, cinema, books... It appears a contradiction that modern weaponry was apparently not considered immoral by the Taliban.

Without secular governance there is little hope for a truly democratic state representative of the issues that inform modernity. The explanations for the failure of the Karachi Project's reforms therefore have profound epistemological and ontological roots. An investigation into what constitutes the barrier to democracy, and therefore modernity and modernisation, is linked with Islam's apparent, but not surprising, inability to accommodate, at *its* nodal point, the very nodal point that constitutes Western political ideology – the separation of the rule of religion and politics, or more appropriately in the Islamic context, religion and politics.

I state 'apparent' inability because a contradiction, if not a paradox, arises when assuming, as most commentators do, that there can be no separation of religion and politics in Islam. This assumption is made because there is no distinction in Islam between religion and politics and therefore there is nothing to separate. There is only Islam. In *Muslim Politics* (1996: 47) Eickelman and Piscatori support the contention that Islam has not separated politics from religion:

Most discussions of Islam and politics assume that "Islam" makes no distinctions between the religious and political realms. Western scholarship – and to a significant extent, Muslim scholarship – emphasises the inseparability of the two by comparing Muslim with Christian political thought. Although the metaphor changed in the early and medieval Christian writings, the idea of a separation of powers remained constant: God's and Caesar's due, the pope's and the emperor's swords, the ecclesiastical sun and imperial moon. In Islamic thought, in contrast, the frame of reference has been the indivisibility of the whole: *din wa-dawla*, 'religion and state'.

Bernard Lewis, states: "There could be neither conflict nor co-operation, neither separation nor association between religion and politics, since the governing institution of Islam combined both functions" (1994: 4). Lewis does not provide insight in to how this system in Islam is distinguished from religio-political systems in

Europe, where a monarch ruled by Divine Right. What is of interest here, is not only Lewis' apparent oversight of the Islamic system, which is so intrinsically 'one' that it cannot be divided, but that such oversights amount to an acceptance of the continued ideological power of the rule of Islam as its own uncritical agent. Under such an aegis, no other form of rule is possible. This notion accounts for the equivocal political situation in Pakistan, where the foundational myths have constituted a political system that denies many of the "little Islams" a say in how governance is to be constituted. In essence, the disbelief that Islam is anything but a 'whole', which can in no way divide politics from religion, constitutes a state sanctioned theocracy. This situation, for example, defies the secularising agency of Turkish Kemalism, which, despite its difficulties, has maintained a nominally secular state for over sixty years. Indeed, the Kemalist State abolished the Caliphate in 1923. Huntington (1997: 210), in tracing the distinction between Western and Islamic approaches to governance back further, claims that: "...the Muslim concept of Islam is a way of life transcending and uniting religion and politics versus the Western Christian concept of the separate realms of God and Caesar."

Because the Karachi Project members are secular, it would be difficult for them to assert that the separation of politics and religion cannot occur in an Islamic society for the reason that they are ontologically constructed as indivisible. The separation of religion and politics in the West, which led inexorably to the greater definition of democracy and its maintenance by denying the claims of divine right to legitimise a ruler's dominance, has not occurred in Islamic countries. The question as to why not will be viewed shortly, but what is of further interest here is the point of how power is legitimised by rulers in Islamic cultures who use Islam to legitimate their rule.

Where the ruler maintains power due to his belief that he ¹²³ is a direct descendent of the Prophet (as in the case of Shia, who believes that rulers are descended from Muhammad, which is the case with the King of Morocco and his dynasty), the impetus is such that Islam remains the dominant discourse due to political will. This is, of course, made legitimate by a belief system. However, political will can be contested. And democracy does contest such claims. The French Monarchy discovered this in 1789. The Moroccan writer Mernissi (1999: 54) asserts:

As for the [Arab/Islamic] governments, there are some Muslim regimes that find their interests better protected if they have their legitimacy on cultural and symbolic grounds rather than on the democratic principles.

Moghissi (1998) claims that the anti-Orientalist mindset that avoids criticising the “local” (in this case the fear is of being labelled ‘Orientalist’), merely helps maintain systems of injustice which impinge on people’s human rights. To lay claim, therefore, that religion and politics cannot be separated in Islam because there *is* no possible distinction between them, is simply to support an epistemology which denies power sharing and maintains dominance through ontological claims, as was the case with the Divine Monarchs in Europe.

Eickelman and Piscatori (1996: 22-49) place emphasis on the fact that various rulers in Islamic societies rule with various degrees of religious legitimacy. Khomeini, who took the sharia as truth with himself as its interpreter, was at one extreme and the King of Morocco has the divine sanction of being a descendent of the Prophet. On the other hand, the Libyan ruler Qadhdhafi is a proclaimed secularist as is Iraq’s

¹²³ It is always a he; women cannot claim political power through direct descent from the Prophet. (Mernissi:1999: 23).

Saddam Hussein, who stated: “For the sake of religion, we should not name ourselves clergymen or mix religion and the state’s performance of its duties...”(Eickelman & Piscatori: 1996: 52). Both these secularist leaders are shown in Eickelman and Piscatori’s work to utilise Islam in order to manipulate political agendas. Pakistan’s Zia turned from quasi secularism to entrenched sharia within his time of power. The modern dictators’ divisions of religion and politics are only variants on traditional leadership, which fused politics and religion. The degree as to how much fusion occurs in the recipe is decided according to ideological needs and expediency.

Such ontological discourses are well nurtured in Islam’s ideological apparatuses such as the madrasa. The liberal, critical education system the Karachi Project proposes threatens such claims and is therefore stymied by the state apparatuses that support the religion/politics nexus.

For Muslims, Islam is not merely a system of belief and worship, a compartment of life distinct from other compartments, so to speak, which are the concern of non-religious authorities administering non-religious laws. It is rather the whole of life, and its rules include civil, criminal, and even what we would call constitutional law (Lewis: 1994: 4).

Eickelman and Piscatori (1996: 46) support this claim with Islamic scriptural evidence: “The view of indivisibility finds support in more than forty references in the Qur’an to the need to obey ‘God, his Prophet, and those of authority among you...’.” This is the system that the Karachi Project attempts to do battle with. It is a system that has demonstrated a very thorough hegemonic process since the advent of Islam, and one in which measures of punishment and coercion mix with measures of promise and reward to facilitate obedience and ‘submission’, which is Islam. An example of how the temporal/non-temporal fusion occurred in education where

religion *is* education was noted in Chapter Five; by the end of the tenth century madrasa had come under the power of the ruling elite and were forbidden to teach non- religious subjects. In relation to the separation of religion and politics and the implementation of democratic principles, the Moroccan writer Mernissi asks:

Who would be upset by a democratic state, or one aiming to be democratic, founded on a strong cultural identity both Arabic and Islamic, both following the path of historical normality – that is –the path of modernity – but also the path of the other great paths of our future, some of which exist today and some which will emerge? (Mernissi:1992:67)

Khomeini offers a contemporary response to Mernissi's quest for a "path of normality", as defined by modernity but set within an Islamic context:

As for those who consider Islam separate from government and politics, it must be said to these ignoramuses that the holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet contain more rules regarding government and politics than in other matters (cited in Eickelman and Piscatori: 1996: 49).

Khomeini's opposition to the Shah of Iran's secular and modernist reforms, especially those associated with education and women's rights, was sufficient to aid the growth of Islamism. Khomeini's Islamism affected the position of Islam in Pakistan and thus the subsequent position of education in that country.

Modernity; Democracy: Issues in the Clash

Muñoz (1999: 6) proposes that throughout the nineteenth century Arab and Islamic societies attempted to incorporate "the universal heritage of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution." He states that this presented a confusing and ambiguous situation for the populations of those cultures, a situation that was heavy with

hypocrisy, for they “had to endure the traumatic experience of being subjected to protracted colonial rule by Europe acting in its own mercantile interests, despite the fact that Europe was the firmest advocate of this heritage.” Muñoz traces how the first attempts at representative rule, of democracy, in Arab and Islamic societies were torpedoed by European powers in connivance with the most reactionary sectors of Islamic societies. The inculcation of modernity was therefore mitigated against by local dominant powers and their colonial overlords who saw change as dangerous to their respective commercial and class interests. According to Muñoz, the Muslim population was left confused and disenchanted, as their laws and culture, which had matured over thirteen hundred years, were not only being infiltrated with a distorted version of Western cultural and political values but their own values were being negated as traditional, medieval and obscurantist. The result of this dual occurrence was a resurgence of Islamic values and practice. “The re-assertion of cultural identity is in fact one of the key issues for today’s Islamist movements” (ibid: 7).

It is clear, then, that in contemporary Arab and Islamic societies, those Muslims intent on inculcating democracy in their societies, encounter considerable barriers. What those barriers are is essentially the discussion of this thesis. Central to the conundrum is the issue of religion. The question arises here, then, as to what is the relationship between religious lore, and the barrier of achieving a separation of religion and politics as occurred in the West’s democracies? The moderate path that Mernissi (1992) requests has not been achieved in any Islamic state, with the possible exception of Turkey, Malaysia and Indonesia, which are, notably, not proclaimed Islamic Republics. What, then, is behind this situation from a politico-religious view? How is religion so inculcated that modernity has been denied access across the

Islamic world? The questions are posed from the viewpoint of the Karachi Project members and Muslim writers such as Mernissi (1992) and Moghissi (1998) who contest the legitimacy of an ideology that denies its population access to representative power.

Kramer (1999) offers an important insight into this situation, for she places claims of epistemological legitimacy squarely within the confines of a system that, because it is ontologically constructed, views itself as beyond question. Kramer's contention that the legitimacy of the ontological is invoked through political expediency, is supported by the fact that Muslim rulers, and those accessing political power, scrutinise the scriptures for expedient interpretations. How hermeneutics ensure ideology is legitimised through such interpretations sheds light on how political Islam is maintained and how its hegemony is inculcated.

Kramer asserts that that Islamic discourse is divided between:

...the stable or essential (*al-thabit*) and the flexible or non-essential (*al-mutaghayyir*) elements of religion. Whereas the first are considered to have been defined, for all times and localities, by the divine will and word (*al-nass*) the latter have to be derived by human reason (though not autonomous reason freed from the restraints of faith) from the authoritative texts. They require a structural interpretation of revelation and tradition (Kramer: 1999: 177).

The distinction that arises between the two elements is that both are open for debate when deciding what is "essential and non-essential" – any conclusion is arbitrary and based on what political gain can be had from a decision made either way. A contemporary illustration of this situation comes quite readily from analysing the Taliban system of governance. Under Taliban jurisprudence, any Quranic lore can

not be seen as non-essential or open to interpretation. Thus, the road to modernity and modernisation is almost completely blocked, due to the particular hermeneutic stance taken by that particular political faction of Islam. Thus, for example, women in Afghanistan are denied the measures of freedom not only associated with the criteria of more secularised Muslim countries such as Syria, Iraq and Turkey, but against criteria set in less moderate Islamic societies such as Sudan and Saudi Arabia. The Taliban's denial of women's human rights is determined as being "essential" from a particular interpretation of the Koran. The hermeneutics of the "essentials" is seen therefore as political expediency, of power and control based on a scripture which can be interpreted to suit sectarian aspirations.

The Prophet Muhammad did not lay down specific rules and instructions for much of that which occurs in the governance of social relations. A comparison might be made between Marx's omissions of definition, such as that on what constitutes class and what constitutes a state. Generations of theorists have sought to interpret what Marx may have meant from the writings that surround those two concepts but which he never fully defined. Muhammad never categorised many of the social and ontological issues and concepts such as gender relations. To this measure Kramer asserts that:

To justify their [Islamic ideologues] distinctions, they revert to the concepts and categories of Islamic jurisprudence and reinterpret them to fit a context, and a purpose that is essentially political. The juridical category of the 'duties towards God' (encompassing by and large the area of cult and ritual) is said to constitute the stable domain, fixed beyond any questioning by God and His Prophet, whereas the 'social duties' towards God (covering anything else from financial transactions to political organisation, and from marriage to international relations) are part of the flexible elements that have to be adapted to the changing requirements of time and place in order to make Islam, as the

well known formula runs, truly relevant to all times and places (Kramer: 1999: 178).

The claim that different epochs and different locations place different interpretations on the scriptures, is important, not only because it provides an insight into how sectarian distinctions grew amongst Muslims, but because it shows how political power was determined from such interpretations. The interpretation of the scriptures is marked by what political arena the interpretation has to serve. For example, to what degree the imposition of *shari'a*, or Islamic lore, is imposed on a population depends on the political circumstances that prevail or are being encouraged to prevail. The “non-essentials” can be made “essential” by a careful re-reading of the scriptures. The following example testifies to how this impinges on people’s human rights: In May 2001 twenty-three Egyptian homosexuals were arrested for attending a gay disco in Cairo.

After a two month investigation they were tried before the State Security Court, against whose findings there is no appeal. In Egyptian law, which is based on the French penal code, homosexuality is neither a criminal nor a civil offence. To get around this, the men were charged with behaviour “threatening the security of the state”. As Islam is considered the basis of the Egyptian state’s security, the prosecutor invoked religion to frame charges of indulging in “sexual practices contemptuous of and contrary to Islam. The Government appears to be exploiting the issue of homosexuality to redeem a political pledge to the Muslim Brotherhood which has 17 MPs in parliament... (Roberts:2001:16)

Summary

Given the amount of literature written on the subject by Muslims, the appeal of democracy in Islamic societies cannot be denied. The barriers to such an event as a liberal democracy are also great, as the themes in this thesis have demonstrated. The

rise, since the 1970's, of fundamentalist Islam has testified to the desire, also, for governance distinct from that of Western-inspired democracy. Various commentators attribute the rise of Islamism to a reaction against the failure of democratic influences in Islamic states since the end of colonial rule. However, the failure of democracy in the post colonial period is due largely to the inherent barriers set within the Islamic social, political and ideological constructs. To this measure Huntington (1997: 114) asserts that:

With only occasional exceptions, liberal democrats were unable to achieve sustained popular support in Muslim societies, and even Islamic liberalism failed to establish roots. "In one Muslim society after another," Fouad Ajami observes, "to write of liberalism and of a national bourgeois tradition is to write obituaries of men who took on impossible odds and then failed"

This discussion has maintained that it is primarily due to reasons of political expediency that Islamic discourse is based on various interpretations of the Quran, which is the font of Islamic belief systems. The legitimacy of a religious system whose scriptures are infallible places enormous burdens on those who would challenge such a system. The political shift from the post colonial era of the 1950s and 1960s, when secularisation was occurring in Arab and Islamic societies, has been due to the failures of that movement to bring about sufficient social and political change. Since the 1970's, Islamism has been the pre-eminent discourse and, like the period of secularisation, Islam is both manipulated for and by the causes of such political shifts. Caught within this hegemonic system are individuals such as the members of the Karachi Project - the liberal bourgeoisie – who desire democratic change.

The general failure of modernity, and thus modernisation, in Islamic societies such as Pakistan, is also a reflection of the vastly different historical processes that have shaped these societies and made them so distinct from those in the West. Western and Islamic societies are very different. That Islam has had to incorporate so much of the West into its fabric, speaks much about the power relations between the two civilisations. Just as the Karachi Project members wish for more Western cultural and political influence, there are those in Pakistan who would wish for less. Such is the nature of the conflict between Islam/West. The continued mutual hostility between the two cultural and political entities is as old as their first encounter. An understanding of that history, the subject of the following section, provides the most comprehensive insight into why the Karachi Project reforms are doomed to failure within the wider Pakistani society.

Chapter Nine

Oppositional Binaries: the Historical legacy of Two Diverse Cultures

Introduction

It has been proposed in this thesis that the Karachi Project is destined for failure in its goal to have implemented its liberal, secular reforms in the education system of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The thesis has looked at two micro issues in an effort to explain why this is so. The first macro issue of class structure and composition went further in explaining why the reforms constitute a threat to major, vested interests. The second macro issue of the political and ontological aspect of Islam and its anti-modernity drew an awareness of the various positions taken by the many Islams to Western influence.

What this discussion now turns to is the encompassing picture, the metanarrative, which attempts to explain the micro and macro issues. This picture invokes the ‘clash of civilisations’, which the micro and macro issues both constitute and inform. The history of this clash adds light to how the Karachi Project is merely one aspect of a battle, a duel, which has existed for fifteen hundred years between two oppositional civilisations.

Civilisation: Binaries

The term civilisation needs clarifying. In this discussion, the reference is to the overarching way of life that people live within. Civilisation is the culture at large of a mass of people who have in common a collection of cultural characteristics. For example, while the United States of America and New Zealand may have various distinguishing cultural features these two geographic areas have multiple characteristics, which determine a cohesive set of values that can be stated as belonging to a shared civilisation. Simply, civilisation is the base of the cultures that share the same cultural characteristics. Wallerstein (quoted in Huntington: 1997: 41) defines civilisation as:

A particular concatenation of worldview, customs, structures, and culture (both material culture and high culture), which forms some kind of historical whole and which coexists (if not always simultaneously) with other varieties of this phenomenon.

Adding further clarification, Huntington (1997: 28) points to how civilisations are distinct from each other: “The philosophical assumptions, underlying values, social relations, customs, and overall outlooks on life differ significantly among civilisations.”

Added to this rich recipe for potential conflict, especially in the unique case of the two civilisations under discussion, the same author adds, with reference to the contemporary global situation, that: “The revitalization of religion throughout much of the world is reinforcing these cultural differences...”(ibid). The revitalization of religion in the Islamic world – as indeed in all cultures – comes, in part, as a reaction to the loss of cultural characteristics that are perceived to have been eroded by

Western influences. It is Islamism, perceived as a threat by the West (and many Muslim societies and their governments), which heightens the drama of the clash. However, Islamism is not only reactive, it is also pro-active. It would be to diminish the assertiveness and legitimacy of Islamism to relegate it to being merely reactive to Westernisation. Indeed, Islamism was in evidence at the very beginning of Islam and promoted jihad, which began the political and ideological nature of the first incursions from the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century. Islamism is the main tool of conquest today in the continuing global enterprise for territorial re-conquest (Kashmir, Palestine, Chechnya) and epistemological conquest. Of this global presence Eickelman and Piscatori (1996: 5) state:

Muslims everywhere both in Muslim majority countries and elsewhere are so increasingly aware of their global presence that individuals and groups in Europe, north America, Russia, and elsewhere have a heightened consciousness of forming part of a world community and use this awareness to amplify their voice and political strength. At times some Muslims resort to violence...

To speak of a 'clash of civilisations' is unpopular in some scholarly circles. It is difficult to understand why this might be so, given the historical evidence of mutual suspicion, animosity and outright conflict evident throughout the fifteen hundred years that Islam and Christianity (and its successor Westernism) have been in contact. Huntington (1997: 210) illustrates this shared hostility quantitatively in regards to military conflicts between the two civilisations:

The violent nature of these shifting relationships is reflected in the fact that 50 percent of wars involving pairs of states of different religions between 1820 and 1929 were wars between Muslims and Christians.

This section will investigate the history of that encounter. In so doing, the discussion will expose that at the epistemological, ontological, cultural, ideological and political levels, there is much evidence, which allows for such an honest descriptor as is implied by the term ‘clash of civilisations’.

A binary is composed of two parts. This discussion has designated this term as the descriptor of the conflict that is the West/Islam binary. It is of importance to clarify further what composes this dichotomous base. The base is composed of the religions that both civilisations share: both are monotheistic, both emanate from the same geographic location, and both share many of the scriptures, personages and prophets that constitute the respective faiths. The demographic base in the newly conquered lands of early Islam came primarily from Christian conversions. Many of the symbols and procedures in Islam were adopted from Christianity ¹²⁴. This is the base, the duality, of elements from which the binary is composed. The ensuing narrative, of how this base has become characterised by mutual hostility, constitutes the story of the oppositional binary that is Islam/West.

Before the discussion moves further into the investigation of what constitutes the opposition, it is important to clarify the terms ‘West’ and ‘Islam’ in terms of their being representative of civilisations. Lewis (1994) traces the advent of Islam, from its inception, to the present within the borders of Islam as a single polity; that is, despite the divergence in sects and other fragmentations, Islam is viewed as a political, cultural and ideological construct with a common base, a nodal point not dissimilar to that described by Sayyid: 1997: 38) as an “it-ness”. Lewis sees the

¹²⁴ See Dalrymple (1998) Chapter Four for a discussion on these influences.

commonality of the multiple Islams as “transcending both country and nation” which therefore constitutes, in effect, a civilisation. Lewis also traces Christendom, which was an entity defined by its allegiance to a single religion, to the current designation of ‘West’, by searching the historical shifts that have removed the appropriateness of the terms ‘Christendom’ or ‘Christianity’ as adequate descriptors.

West/Islam: Them/Us?

The discussion of ‘Islam and the West’ implies a ‘them’ and ‘us’ situation, something that is not popular in all areas of scholarship. It is important to lay bare the nature of contemporary scholarship that disallows a blunt appraisal of their being a ‘them’ and ‘us’. This categorisation is implied in a description such as ‘clash’, for a clash is between more than one element. This ‘them and us’, which is very much a fact of how the two civilisations have viewed each other over the centuries, is based on the reality of constant conflict, both ideological and military. Postmodernism has entered this fray and has subjected academia to a critical analysis of positions that point to the construction of such oppositional binaries as ‘them and us’. This has been an important intellectual exercise and has laid bare the negative aspects of how imagery and signifiers are manifested, for example, in the media, for purposes of propaganda. Unfortunately for postmodern discourse, the actuality of fifteen hundred years of blood and guts means that attempts to deny such an historical occurrence is primarily an act of faith. Since their first encounter, Islam and the West have demonstrated a very much ‘them and us’ position towards each other. Huntington (1997: 209), after a lengthy discussion on how history proves each ‘side’ has caused each other grief, states: “Each has been the other’s Other.”

Postmodernism is insistent that the West, through its engagement with Orientalism, has constructed Islam through a lens which is “essentialist, empiricist and historicist” (Sayyid:1997: 32). Munsen calls this criticism by Western academics, against those who do critique practices in Muslim societies, as “the Lawrence of academia syndrome”. This condition, Munson asserts:

Leads Western scholars to leap to the defence of any and all aspects of the societies they study, especially third world societies, even if this means defending conduct they would never tolerate in their own country and even if it means ignoring or criticizing intellectuals from the societies they study who condemn the very things they defend. (Munsen: quoted in Moghissi: 1999: 49)

The case of the Islam / West divide, which was produced by historical realities such as conquest and destruction, and claims of supremacy and truth, cannot be wished away for the sake of papering over what happens throughout centuries of fear and conflagration:

The negative fallout from events in Christian-Muslim history is reflected in the view of Islam that emerges from Western literature and thought...Fear and disdain, coupled with European ethnocentrism, produced distorted images of Islam and Muslims and dissuaded scholars from serious study of Islam’s contribution to Western thought. (Munsen: quoted in Moghissi: 1999: 49)

Surely there is evidence from this history to promote an understanding of how this supposed Eurocentrism was nurtured by outside forces. The rise of Eurocentrism may, in fact, have been a result of the Arabcentrism and Islamcentrism that stimulated and prolonged the conquests of Christendom for the first thousand years of Islam, when European areas found themselves entirely on the defensive. In the

above quote it would not be inappropriate to supplant the references to Eurocentrism for that which locates Islam in the same negative position.

To criticise scholars for their lack of academic knowledge and analysis, in not attempting to understand the enemy, may also be more an aspect of what constituted knowledge and its approach to reality in the pre-modernist era. Somerset asserts that:

Before 1110 I have found only one mention of the name of Mahomet in medieval literature outside Spain and southern Italy. But from the year 1120 everyone in the West had some picture of what Islam meant, and who Mahomet was. The picture was brilliantly clear, but it was not knowledge...Its authors luxuriated in ignorance of triumphant imagination... Somerset (quoted in Eposito: 1992: 43)

Such an accusation against knowledge, and what it constituted in that era, is beyond the scope of this analysis, other than to note that knowledge is subjective. In the eleventh century, Christian clerics, who constituted Western intelligentsia, still debated how many angles danced on the head of pin. In such circumstances, thorough, investigative, cross-cultural research can hardly have been expected. Demonizing the opposition was merely a reflection of the ontological and epistemological realities of the time.

Bloom and Blair (2000), in their book *Islam: A Thousand Years of Faith and Power*, apologise relentlessly for the fact that the West has painted Islam and its cultures in a bleak light – and that the West has constructed what these authors view as an artificial opposition. The authors never once mention that Islam conquered the original area of Christian settlement through force. Rather, they insist that when

Islam arrived in the Fertile Crescent, the Muslims peacefully accommodated the Christians. This simply defies historical realities, a description of which will be included below. The book opens with:

To most Americans at the end of the second millennium, the word 'Islam' evokes a range of negative images.... News reports from Jerusalem and Grozny hint that the Muslims there are somehow essentially different from 'us'... In reality, Islam, which is only half a dozen centuries younger than Christianity, created a long and brilliant civilisation... (Bloom and Blair (2000 1),

In constructing a palatable discourse for the American public, the authors ask the reader to direct attention away from why stereotypical and negative images emerge by concentrating on a "brilliant civilisation". The fact that Islam produced a brilliant civilisation is not under dispute. However, to obfuscate the essential differences between Muslims fighting Zionists in Palestine and Russian atheists in Chechnya, is to negate the very presence of the distinctions that cause conflict in the first place. Surely, the Chechnyan Islamist and the Hamas nationalist (and the general Muslim public in those societies, who largely support them) would be insulted to think that they were not indeed 'different'. Not only are the distinctions evident between the two mentioned Islamic populations, but when contrasted against those characteristics that constitute the general American public, the contrasts are indeed startling. The fight for continuing the distinctions of culture, ideology, religion, ethnicity is integral to the clash of civilisations. This is *why* there is a clash. It is about maintaining and expanding cultural specificity in the continuing, dual role represented by these two universalist and globalising civilisations.

Much has been written by anti-orientalists, such as Edward Said, about how the West has constructed the image of the 'Orient'. Chapter One involved a discussion on the various aspects of Orientalism and anti-Orientalism. The current discussion will briefly note how that debate offers an insight into the conundrum of the "conflict of civilisations". What is important is that the scholarship that supports the insistence that there is some kind of neutral area – or space in which commonalities provide for the two civilisations to coexist – does not take heed of the far greater space that is informed by distinctions. There is an irony inherent in the debate promoted by those who see distinctions as some form of racism, or a deliberate construction to undermine legitimate cultural and ideological expression. Those same critics are surely those who propose reverence of the local. In this two-way bet, what is lost is recognition of the enormous distinctions that exist between groups and cultures and which are nurtured for their distinctions. Down the slippery slope that proposes such concepts, runs the contention that even terms such as 'groups' and 'cultures' (and certainly 'civilisations') are statements too grand, for they speak of metanarratives. Observations of the evidence suggests otherwise. There are huge differences to the way the two civilisations approach, for example, issues of ontological persuasion, human rights, political discourse, wealth distribution, gender relations and sexuality issues. This is not a matter of judgement but of fact.

Edward Said is correct in his analysis of Orientalism, when he asserts that the West has contributed to the animosity by promoting exaggerated distinctions. But they are genuine distinctions, upon which distortions and exaggerations can be promoted for reasons of furthering the mutual antagonisms that bred them. Stereotypes are effective weapons. The culture of Islam has similarly totalised and

essentialised Westerners. For example, Muslims have traditionally divided the world into *Dar-al Islam* and *Dar al-Harb*, the abode of peace and the abode of war (Huntington:1997: 32). This depiction – usually negative – of the West is an aspect of the oppositional binary which does exist. Both parties construct Orientalist and Occidental positions as an aspect of this antagonism. This is tribal war: revenge and counter-revenge. It is the essence of the “Jihad vs. McDonald’s” scenario. Charges of essentialism, empiricism and historicism can be levelled against both sides of the divide. Orientalism and Occidentalism are merely one of the weapons in the arsenal of war, an aspect of the ideological battle that supports the military one. Both parties have been equally engaged, at various periods of the clash, since the Prophet emerged with his ideology in the mid-seventh century and confronted Christianity.

Throughout this history, there has existed the space in which positive cultural exchange and interrelationship has occurred. However, those spaces in which peace may have reigned have been embittered by previous existential and spatial incursions. The continual fear and threat of similar future incursions from both sides has not diminished the mutual suspicions of each other’s ultimate goals. When Said asserts that both sides must look more deeply at the issues that separate them, he is asking for a more constructive approach, in order to solve the problems that continue this antagonism. In the following statement he is not so much suggesting that there are no distinctions between the two civilisations. Rather, he suggests that those differences need appraisal and re-evaluation, in order to avoid the perpetual discombobulation that has been evidenced throughout their shared histories:

‘Islam’ and ‘the West’ are simply inadequate as banners to follow blindly. Some will run behind them, but for future generations to condemn themselves to prolonged war and suffering without so much as a critical pause, without looking at independent histories of injustices and oppression, without trying for common emancipation and mutual enlightenment seems far more wilful than necessary (Said:2001: 1).

Given that these two related monotheistic religions emerged from the same small contested geographic region, it is not without cause that commentators choose to analyse the ample evidence of the distinctions and conflicts that have engaged the two civilisations throughout that history. The following sections will look closely at several of these distinctions in order to clarify what specifically leads to the clash.

Ontological Distinctions

An analysis of the ontological dimension is the most appropriate place to start, in accounting for the occurrence of this civilisational clash which has had such profound effects on world history. Lewis provides a detailed analysis of this phenomenon, with the most important aspect being the attribution of absolute truth being claimed by each faith as their prerogative: “The idea that there is a single truth for all mankind, and that it is the duty of those who possess it to share it with others, begins with the advent of Christianity and reappears with the rise of Islam” (1994: 5). Unlike the Jews and the Persians, who had also established universalist religions but did not actually attempt, in any sustained manner, to universalise them, both Christianity and Islam did actively promote their respective religions.

Both shared this new and almost unprecedented idea that they were the unique possessors of the whole of God’s truth. They also shared, or rather disputed, a common territory – southwest Asia, northern Africa, and Mediterranean Europe (Lewis:1994: 5).

Islam, as has been noted frequently in this thesis, does not differentiate the temporal from the divine, for both are fused and denote what it means to be a Muslim: Islam both transcends and unites the political and the religious so that they become a way of life. Christianity separated the political from the religious into the realms of God and Caesar. This separation, of course, was not as distinct in some epochs and some locations as it was in others. However, the separation of temporal and spiritual authority is a major theme in Western civilisation; one that has provided for a variant political system to that in Islamic areas. The separation of God and Caesar led, ultimately to secularism, and the complete separation of religion and politics, a system completely distinct to that which constitutes governance in Islamic societies.

Of further profound importance in the explanation of the occurrence of the oppositional binary with reference to religion, is the fact that Islam and Christianity were not concurrent but consecutive religions (Lewis: 1994: 6). Christianity was an established religion in the border areas of the Arabian Peninsula, from which Islam emerged in the seventh century. The abrupt arrival of a new religion in Christendom soon destabilised the entire region. Crucial to this was the perception by Muslims that they were the new truth. Muhammad had promoted himself as the final Prophet. Inherent in this dictum was the assumption that the prophets of Judaism and Christianity had been superseded and, thus, the spiritual validity of both Judaism and Christianity was lessened. “For prophets and preachers, for jurists and theologians, there was obviously a crucial difference between a previous and a subsequent religion” (Lewis: 1994: 6). For Muslims, Christianity was an abrogated religion that

should be abandoned in order to follow God's final revelation. For Christians, Islam was a heresy.

In terms of Islam as a superseding religion in Christian areas, it is often stated in the literature that Islam was tolerant towards Christians. Being fellow 'People of the Book' hides the doctrinal distinctions between Islam and Christianity – and for that matter the distinctions between Islam and the religion of the Jews. For the most part, the literature glosses over the doctrinal differences by placing them within the catch-all, "People of the Book". Frequently, the literature states that Muslims were obliged to honour those people who adhered to a scripture and who were fellow monotheists. But what is not distinguished from Islam and Christianity are the huge doctrinal differences such as: "the Trinity, the son-ship and divinity of Christ, which in their [Muslim] eyes were blasphemous absurdities, and are explicitly rejected by the Qur'an (5: 75-76 and 112: 1-4)" (Lewis: 1994: 6).

The supposed level of religious tolerance under the newly inspired religion, which used military conquest as its means of dispersal, needs to be closely examined by history. The new Islamic rulers of the areas that had hitherto been Christian, but which came under control of Islamic forces, are often stated to have been lenient on their subjects. They were, for example, forced merely to pay taxes not imposed on those who converted to Islam. This amounts to a serious attempt to impose a system not conducive to the pursuit of one's beliefs. That Christians were supposedly not placed under the sword, as was the case with 'pagans and idolaters', does little to mitigate against a case of Islam conjuring the trick of 'consent plus force'. Under such an hegemonic system, it is little wonder that conversions were so spectacular

within the first century of the subjugation of Christian areas. In light of Lewis's assertion below that Christians were viewed as the group most likely to confront Islam with resistance, the Islamic counter to such resistance must indicate that tolerance was always relative.

To the east and to the south of Islam, in Asia and in Africa, there were pagans and idolaters, teachable barbarians who, having no serious religion of their own, were seen as natural recruits to the Islamic faith and realm. Only in one area, in Christendom, did Islam encounter sustained resistance, from a genuine and rival faith embodied for a while in a rival polity. This gave the jihad against Christendom a special character, for it was in these lands that Muslims saw the greatest opportunity and the greatest danger (ibid.).

Islamic Colonisation

Some Westerners, including President Bill Clinton, have argued that the West does not have problems with Islam but only with violent Islamist extremists. Fourteen hundred years of history demonstrate otherwise (Huntington: 1997: 209)

The fact that the West and Islam have been at war with each other for a longer period than either has been with any other entity or civilisation, points directly at a relationship deeply divided by mistrust. As Huntington implies, the mistrust is one on which history can elucidate for both verification and understanding.

The shared history of the two civilisations spans a period in time too great to do justice to in this chapter, on the many levels that such an investigation requires for a comprehensive analysis. This discussion will limit itself to an analysis of the colonisation process that occurred between the two entities. This brief analysis will shed light on why an historic and continuing encounter with colonialist practices has led to a thick layer of suspicion and mutual hostility.

The fact that the Eastern Mediterranean had not only been Christian for five hundred years before the Islamic invasion, but that it was the centre of the Christian world, at a time when Europe was non-Christian, is not frequently discussed in the literature on the expansion of Islam. Bloom and Blair (2000) sweep aside such considerations, as if the creation of new foundational myths to accommodate for twenty-first century sensibilities is more important. Lewis (1994) concentrates on the initial Islamic incursion into European territories and glosses over the point of initial contact. This is a similar omission made by other writers who, by ignoring the fact that the Eastern Mediterranean was the Christian world, lessen the importance behind the subsequent Crusades and the subject of re-conquest. In so doing, they attribute to Europe an importance that surpasses that of the point of initial contact with Islam.

Dalrymple (1998), however, concentrates his investigation on the aspect of Christianity in that area. He quotes, from the time of the pre-Islamic invasion, early seventh century Christian monk and traveller Saint John Moschos. Moschos identifies the entire area from modern-day Greece and Turkey through to the Levant and Syria and Egypt, as being, for the exception of some remaining pagan communities, totally Christian. Of this situation Dalrymple writes:

But what is perhaps more surprising about the Eastern Mediterranean as it emerges from the pages of Moschos is the fact that it was Christian at all. In the popular imagination, the Levant passes from a classical past to an Islamic present with hardly a break. It is easy to forget that for over three hundred years – from the age of Constantine in the early fourth century to the rise of Islam in the early seventh century – the Eastern Mediterranean world was almost entirely Christian (Dalrymple:1998: 26).

This observation is vital in understanding the rift between Islam and Christianity, for, essentially, Islam was a conquering force, whose religion, both informed by and constituent of the concept of jihad, spurred conquest into Christendom. By the ninth century, there was a very real fear throughout Europe that what had occurred in both Iberia and the Balkans by the end of the eighth century, would happen to Europe as a whole. Europeans understood perfectly that being “People of the Book” would not protect them from being incorporated into the Islamic Empire and, ultimately, from being converted, or worse.

It is therefore specious to constantly draw a picture of an accommodating Islam in its newly conquered territories, for Christians and Byzantines suffered under that implementation of a new discourse and ideology. Christians did not choose to be conquered by Muslims. That being fellow “Peoples of the Book” somehow mitigated against the impact of being conquered, is to suggest that people are not concerned about their governance, so long as not too many restrictions are placed on their faith. The proposition that Muslims were protectors of Christians, is evidence for the claim that foundational myths have been constructed from such obfuscations. Such myths have been largely accepted in modern Western literature, under the weak and predominantly false justifications that Christians were not put to the sword but merely taxed. The Maronites of the Levant, for example, did not settle in remote regions of the Lebanese mountains for any other reason than to seek geographic isolation from a dominant power. Their “Book” was ultimately the wrong one and did not protect them from conquest. It is patronising, therefore, to state, as the literature does, that the “other” “Book” provided sanctity and protection. This is evidenced by Islamic hegemony throughout the vast conquered areas of Christian and Pagan lands, which

meant that in the lands that they dominated, Christians became, first a subject people and, then a minority, due to coercion and conversion and the links that exist between the two.

The European experience of fear of domination was legitimised by the reality of invasion and conquering Islamic armies. The clash of civilisations, which has its roots in a universalist religion from Arabia confronting a universalist religion from the Levant, was based, initially, on the colonial objectives of one religion applying its ideology through coercion upon that of “the Other”. On this historical occurrence Esposito writes that:

The success of Muslim armies and missionaries was experienced as a force which seemed to come out of nowhere to challenge the very existence and foundations of Christendom. Although Muslims were initially a minority in the conquered territories, in time they became a majority, owing largely to mass conversions of local Christians. In addition, those who remained Christian were Arabized, adopting Arabic language and culture. The response of Western Christendom was, with few exceptions, defensive and belligerent (Esposito:1992: 36).

Given this onslaught and the Arabization of Christian culture, it remains curious that Esposito would assert that what remained left of Christendom and Byzantium by the eleventh century, would be anything but a justifiably traumatised civilisation. Esposito appears to not fully comprehend the very real condition of fear of subjugation and what that fear results in for:

Ancient theological affinities went unnoticed as the Christian West, Religion and politics, faced the onslaught of an enemy which it found easier to demonize and to dismiss as barbarian and infidel than to understand (Esposito:1992: 36).

As this discussion noted earlier, the similarities between the two civilisations, such as “ancient theological affinities”, were justifiably insufficient to construct an objective academic approach to analyse a conquering army. Given that the eleventh century was hardly a period known for such academic enterprise, or that people, when confronted by an enemy resort to academic objectivity as a means of defence, it is surprising to hear Esposito make such claims about Christians in that period.

Counter Offensive: The Crusades

The Crusades offer the first significant example of European resistance to Islamic power or, indeed, of any Christian resistance since the seventh century rise of Islamic militancy. What an analysis of the Crusades identifies, therefore, is the beginning of a new era in West/Islam antagonism. After some five hundred years of Islamic supremacy, in which Christendom and Byzantium lost vast areas of territory and faced continued threats from further losses, Christian forces gathered for their own offensive. There are many interpretations as to the motivations for the Crusades. Arab chroniclers assert that the Christian invasions were nothing more than wars of imperialism. Writing about Arab impressions of the march on the Levant by the Franks¹²⁵, Lewis (1994: 84) notes there was no comprehension that this was a war of re-conquest. The Crusades are viewed simply as a war of economic and territorial imperialism in which religion plays no part. From these chronicles it does appear, however, that the Arabs had little idea of what constituted European society at that period in time. The incomprehension of what motivated the European incursions appears to be a reflection of this ignorance. Just as the Europeans were unable to

¹²⁵ All Westerners were referred to in Arabic as Franj.

separate the finer distinctions of a shared intellectual history, the Arab response to the Crusaders was to demonise them as ‘Franj’ and infidels and cannibals.

The Crusades, which are named from the Latin for ‘the Cross’, describe the eight military expeditions that occurred between the eleventh and the thirteenth century. According to Esposito (ibid)

The Crusades were initiated by Pope Urban II’s response to Emperor Alexius’s plea. In 1095 Urban called for the liberation of the Holy land from the infidel, appealing to an already established tradition of holy war. To the Pope, the call for the defence of the faith and Jerusalem provided an ideal opportunity to gain recognition for papal authority and its role in legitimating temporal rulers, and to reunite the eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin) churches.

Other historians assert that the primary reason for the Crusades were economic. In securing the trade routes from the East, the victors would secure the wealth of that area. From the end of the Middle Ages, there was growing wealth in Europe, which meant that there was more need for trade and commodities with non-European locations. The Levant’s wealth provided for that. In the ensuing drive for wealth and trade, war resulted, under the guise of a religious crusade. What this thesis posits is that religion was the main motivation for the Crusades. Just as Islamic imperialism in the seventh century benefited economically from conquest, there was the expectation of economic benefits on behalf of the Europeans in their conquest of the Levant. This subsidiary factor was not the prime motivation for the re-conquest.

The European “People of the Book” did indeed have one major literary device, which had so strongly influenced their civilisation – the Bible. In the Bible, all geographical and cultural references are located in that area known symbolically as

The Holy Land. In a non-secular society, such as Europe in the late Middle Ages, there would have been no lack of recognition that Jerusalem was the spatial and spiritual centre for Christian civilisation. Therefore, five hundred years of occupation by Arabs, of what were perceived to be Christian lands, would not have diminished the European's sense of loss.

That it took five hundred years to reach the point of re-conquest, speaks more of the economic and political situation having strengthened in Europe as it emerged from the Middle Ages, than it does of lack of concern or interest in the cultural roots of its civilisation. Time is of no essence in the memory of those colonised. This situation can, for example, be evidenced in contemporary times, through an analysis of Zionism and the counter claims of Palestinians. Three hundred years of British occupation of India did nothing to lessen claims on that area by local people. In terms of the Crusades, what is of importance is the significance of religion, for, in essence, Christendom's spiritual centre had been colonised by an oppositional religion. On both sides, being the holder of the Truth was the mainstay of each side's respective convictions. Muslims would have asked: How can Islam not be the legitimate holder of the territory divinely bestowed through the fact that Islam is the successor of the previous, incomplete faiths? And, conversely, how could that religion, which had been declared obsolete by its supposed successor, relinquish the burden of revenge and re-conquest against such an impostor, a heretic? Esposito (1999: 38) states with remarkable accuracy that: "... it is less a case of what happened in the Crusades than how they are remembered." For whatever reason the Crusades occurred, they are remembered as part of the continual cycle of revenge and counter-revenge in the collective consciousness of the two civilisations.

The construction of “Other”, as previously noted, is an aspect of this warfare and it is important to see how Occidentalism occurred in the Crusades, in order to bear witness to this continuation. During one crusade, a Franj chronicler is quoted as having written: “In Mar’arra our troops boiled pagan adults in cooking-pots; they impaled children on spits and devoured them grilled” (Lewis:1994:39). The translator of the Arab chronicles adds further:

The inhabitants of towns and villages near Ma’arra would never read this confession by the Frankish chronicler Radulph of Caen, but they would never forget what they had seen and heard. The memory of these atrocities, preserved and transmitted by local poets and oral traditions, shaped an image of the Franj that would not easily fade (Lewis:1994:39).

Memory as wrapped and nurtured to aid the collective consciousness is as deeply embedded in the Arab psyche as it is in the Christian/Western experience of constructing the ‘Other’. From the same Arab source we learn that:

The chronicler Usamah Ibn Munqidh born in the neighbouring city of Shayzar three years before these events one day would write: “All those who are well informed about the Franj saw them as beasts superior in courage and fighting ardour but in nothing else, just as animals are superior in strength and aggression.” (Lewis:1994:39).

In the construction of Occidentalism the Arab literature portrays the Western invaders as beasts. What is of importance to this discussion is that the differences between West / Islam are real in the minds of those who believe in them. The fear, loathing, contempt for the invaders, whatever their purpose, was recorded by those being importuned against. The translator of the Arab chronicles notes to this effect:

This unkind assessment [that the Franj were cannibals] accurately reflects the impression made by the Franj upon their arrival in Syria: they aroused a mixture of fear and contempt, quite understandable on the part of an Arab nation which, while far superior in culture, had lost all combative spirit. The Turks would never forget the cannibalism of the Occidentals. Throughout their epic literature, the Franj are invariably described as anthropophagi (Lewis:1994:39).

The Crusades aided in the construction of the oppositional binary as much in the imagination of the West as in that of its opponents.

Continuing Colonialism

The reality of colonisation is a major theme in accounting for the continued hostility between West/Islam. The encounter between the two competing universal religions has been characterised by the twists and turns of the mutual colonial enterprise. The strength of both colonial systems has been demonstrated throughout this history. For the first thousand years, Muslims were pre-eminently more successful at the colonial enterprise than the West. Indeed, in that period, the West was on the defensive. Not only had Christendom observed the loss of its spiritual centre in the Levant within the first hundred years of Islam but: “For almost a thousand years from the first Moorish landing in Spain to the second Turkish siege of Vienna Europe was under constant threat from Islam” (Lewis: 1994: 9)¹²⁶. Constantinople, the religious citadel of Byzantium, had been conquered by Muslims in 1453 and this heralded the rise of the Ottoman Empire, which for the next five hundred years was the “scourge of Christendom”. Until the early twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire controlled those areas that had been formally Christian and in which lived sizeable Christian minorities, who constantly sought the assistance of the

¹²⁶ Turkish armies laid siege to Vienna in 1529 and 1683.

Europeans. The negative image of Islam was thus perpetuated in the collective mind of the West by the condition of the remaining Middle East Christians. With each European incursion, Muslims bore witness to what they perceived as colonial adventurism for the sake – or excuse – of protecting infidels.

The retrieval of lost territories by the West began after the last siege of Vienna in 1682. The Muslim Tartars, who had controlled much of Russia and the Crimea, were defeated in the eighteenth century. This period marks the beginning of what Muslims view as the loss of their territories. Turkey, seat of the omnipotent Ottoman Empire, from whence both the sieges of Vienna had been launched, had turned from being the “scourge of Europe” to the “sick man of Europe” (Sayyid: 1997: 11) by the beginning of the twentieth century. In this seemingly endless seesaw of conquest and reconquest, all of which contributed to the construction of the oppositional binary, Muslims increasingly perceived themselves to be the losers. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the internal conflicts in Islamic societies over cultural imperialism – secularism, modernism, modernisation – had begun in earnest. The literature from Islamic sources is replete, with critics of Westernisation saying their culture was being polluted and compromised by Western values.

A variant form of Western colonialism in Arab and Turkish territories did not largely begin in earnest until after the First World War, with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, although Arab areas certainly knew Western imperialism through such occupations as that of Egypt by Napoleon. India had, of course, experienced three hundred years of occupation by this time. It would be difficult to argue that this new round of European and American imperialism was motivated by religion as it was

in the Crusades. Western expansionist ambitions for economic and territorial gains appeared as the final revenge of history in the minds of Arab and Islamic people: “By 1920 only four Muslim countries – Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Afghanistan – remained independent of some form of non-Muslim rule” (Huntington: 1997: 210).

The cultural and intellectual colonialism, which both proceeded and accompanied the direct colonisation of Islamic territories, is the other major negative factor in the collective mind of Islam. Secularism is certainly the most problematic of all of the Western influences that have challenged the supremacy of the Islam which, as has been frequently stated in this thesis, holds as its basic premise the infallibility and incontestability of God. The rearguard reaction of the adherents of Islam to Western influence has been thoroughly investigated in this thesis. Secularism, democracy, modernity, modernisation are all issues integral to Western thought and practice. Direct Western colonialism aided in the imposition (some Muslims would say implementation) of these modern forms of governance and culture. As direct colonial rule came to an end in the post-World War Two era, the form and nature of such influences has been severely tested by the strengthening of local cultural and political responses. The rise of Islamism in the post-colonial era is attributed, by many commentators from both Western and Islamic societies, as the main reason for this resurgence of Islam.

Indeed, the assumption that Western colonialism has been somehow terminated in a post-colonial era is an issue almost too lame to debate. The evidence is everywhere that, through globalisation, Western culture saturates every space that does not defend its own integral assumptions of what is ‘best practice’ within that culture. Western

economic imperialism, which supports corrupt and non-representative regimes such as those in Saudi Arabia and that in pre-revolutionary Iran, point to continued motivation for Arab and Islamic resistance.

The conflict in Palestine is the litmus for Muslims (and millions of non-Muslims), who perceive that Zionism and its Western allies continue with their territorial encroachment. As stated previously, time is of no essence for those people colonised. Three civilisations, all of whom feel that they have been colonised in the same geographical space, now contest for supremacy. Christianity/West sides with Judaism/Zionism. In this solidarity, the oppositional conflict has been extended with the advent of the establishment of the Western backed Zionist enterprise in Palestine, which amounts, perhaps, to the singularly most potent signifier of the divide since the capture by Muslims of Constantinople in 1453.

Islam feels threatened. The West feels threatened. Each has a global agenda. There is no end in sight to the oppositional binary that has its very base in the clash of civilisations.

Summary

What has been of major importance in this discussion, is the relation of history to the evidence of an oppositional binary between Islam and the West. How the severe and continuing drama of the opposition is continued, through the contemporary rendition of issues, is merely a reflection of the issues that were formulated with the advent of the initial encounter in the seventh century. Action and re-action. The

primary issue is religion and its ideological manifestation in the political. The conquest of the mind has been associated, by both parties, with the conquest of the territory. In this situation, over some 1,500 years, the world has been trapped in a continuing drama with few thematic changes or distinctions. Occidentalism and Orientalism are weapons employed to aid the fight in the obvious divide. After 1,500 years of encounter, the same two enemies remain the same two enemies.

The position of the Karachi Project in this macrocosm of the Islam /West oppositional binary is evident. It sits precariously within the Western camp, for it signifies a culture alien to the very essence of Islam. Islam is not persuaded to relinquish its epistemological and ontological base. The question from Muslims is simple: And why should it? The modernity project – it is a project – is a globalising one just as Islam and Islamism are globalising agents. How much tolerance each can support in each other's territories is subject to local factors and conditions, but the levels of tolerance are not great in either society. When the French ban Islamic women from wearing headscarves in French schools, this is viewed by Muslims (and many non-Muslims) as opposition to Islam. When a Western woman is chastised in Kuwait for wearing a sleeveless dress, as this author witnessed in 1983, we know that a similar prejudice exists against what is 'normal' in the West. 'Normal things' – a head scarf, a sleeveless dress – become signifiers. What they signify is what the Karachi Project signifies to the vested powers in Pakistan: a point of opposition to the central thesis of a culture, a way of life, a civilisation. The interpretation of both the secular and the non-secular 'scriptures' of West/Islam are rendered according to the variant political discourse of the times.

Within the macrocosm of West/Islam, the Karachi Project signifies that which is Western. As this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, the issues that separate the Karachi Project from the base of Pakistan's interpretation of Islam are signifiers of the Western dimension of the binary that has been constructed by two mammothly different discourses over a period of 1,500 years, a binary that naturally spells failure for the success of the Karachi Project.

Conclusion

What I sought to promote in this thesis was an understanding of a small NGO in Karachi working towards the implementation of what I considered to be very Western approaches to education. The members of the Karachi Project insisted that their educational reforms were necessary to ameliorate the inadequate education available to the children of Pakistan. They also stated that it was this poor educational provision that was a barrier to modernisation in Pakistan. The identification by the members of such structural barriers to the implementation of modernisation in Pakistan, meant that in this thesis I needed to interrogate those issues impacting on the barriers as part of a case study.

The Karachi Project members were well aware that, not only are the madrasa and the government school systems barriers to the modernisation of the state, but that there are numerous other such barriers, including the state itself. The Project members stated that, because they were educators and concerned with educational reform, they were restricted to the domain of education in their efforts to see change implemented. However, many of the Project members also worked for human rights organisations, women's groups and other NGO's, which were concerned with various aspects of social and political reform within the Islamic Republic. The members were therefore able to articulate lateral areas that were intrinsically associated with their major concern: the implementation of modernisation in Pakistan through the amelioration of poor educational provision.

This meant that, beyond the two most important barriers - the madrasa and the government schools - there was much evidence from the Project members of other barriers or issues which informed the structures of madrasa and government schools. In analysing the data for this thesis, I was able to confirm that the Project members had indeed alerted me to the issues which saturated the schooling systems under investigation: Islam, social class structure, legacies of Pakistani history (most notably the Partition and the associated foundational myths). The micro issues of the madrasa and government schools were interrogated and an investigation of the issues that had emerged from them further elucidated the members' proposition regarding the barriers to modernisation. In this way, I attempted to construct a picture of what constituted education in the Islamic Republic and how that education acted as a barrier to the modernisation so desired by the members of the Project.

This investigation led me to a fuller recognition that no structure is a structure unto itself, for lateral issues emerge constantly from the data. However, in a case study there is the need to 'case' in order to maintain the parameters, before the case expands beyond the necessary limitations imposed on any piece of investigative work. The metaphor of the stone hitting the water was therefore an apt one, for the ripples had to be confined. In this there were limitations set within the thesis. In interrogating the Project members' position on what constituted the barriers to modernisation, I had to look directly at those issues they isolated. Then I needed to look at the lateral issues that emerged from those major issues. In this way, the list of issues, which impacted on what were perceived as the barriers to modernisation, grew exponentially, but were limited to those which were most important to the central issues.

The utilisation of grounded theory meant that I theorised the issues from the data. This approach was important to ensure that there was an emphasis on locating the theory as closely as possible to the base of the issues themselves, rather than imposing a theory upon the data. In extricating theory from data, I needed to be aware that the Karachi Project members – whose opinions constituted much of the data – were supplying information that then needed to be interrogated. In this dual role there was the need to penetrate the issues to seek an analysis beyond that which the members supplied - in other words, to test the member's opinions for their validity.

The thesis is composed of two parts. Constructing the thesis in two parts seemed the most appropriate way of bringing together the two main elements in the thesis. In such a way each could contribute to the whole. I felt that the ways in which they interact would be clear while at the same time allowing for a precise demarcation between the aims specific to each part. Part One concentrates on the background, construction and rationale of the thesis. To this effect, Chapter One establishes the base of the thesis, for in it I outlined the thesis as a whole and established where the work would lead. In this objective was the inclusion of the research path. I stated that the thesis had its origins in the consultancy I conducted for the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The consultancy was for an evaluation of a curriculum innovation promoted by the Project in various Karachi schools, both private and government. Ultimately, the thesis did not incorporate any of the original evaluation. In fact, I was concerned to distance myself from discussing the consultancy at all, for both commercial and personal reasons. For these reasons I have not endeavoured to include in this thesis matters of what New Zealand's aid agenda is, or might be. Chapter One therefore outlined how my research path had

soon diverged from the objectives of the consultancy to that of the doctoral research that focused on quite a different subject. Where echoes of the consultancy arise in the thesis, they are in connection to how my research evolved from a 'simple' curriculum evaluation to a doctoral-level case study of an education NGO.

I felt it important, also, to locate my personal story as it linked to the subject of the thesis. This was important to me personally, in that in 1996, while researching Papua New Guinea education, I had been accused by several Pacific Island doctoral students studying in New Zealand, of investigating 'their' culture. In their opinion Papua New Guinea was necessarily 'other' to me and, therefore, not a subject I should be involved in. Although I sought to shake off this accusation, as one that did not deserve the time or distress that I had in fact afforded it, I felt it necessary to apply some of the lessons I learned from such an unfortunate instance. My association with the areas that I wished to investigate came, therefore, not so much as a presentation of my credentials, but as a warning to those who might again shake their finger at me for investigating the 'other'. It was of concern to me to let the reader know how I arrived at a position to be investigating the subject under discussion. Obviously, the researcher is the most important person in the thesis as there would be no thesis without him or her. To piece together the issues that constitute a case it is best to be informed about who is charged with such a duty. I have no belief that there is an objective truth nor any interest in attempting to state that this thesis can be objective. We are, as individuals, constructed to think in certain ways, and in an area as vast as that of Islam, the West, and the issues which emanate from those constructs, there is the need to see where the writer has been influenced by life and his approaches to it.

Chapter Two added further to the research path. It sought to illuminate how the case study evolved and what actually constitutes a case study. I had originally been using that term loosely and without a sufficiently deep understanding of the complexities that it involves. Singular to this concern, was the fact that cases must be ‘cased’ and it is in the work of Ragin and Baker (1992) that this pragmatism was most useful. How grounded theory operates within research was also uncovered in this Chapter. The need to move from bottom up to seek theory, to interrogate the data in order to find the ‘message’, was of the utmost importance to me personally. I recognised the importance of seeking meaning from the data, of sifting theory from it, rather than taking the opposite approach. Grounded theory allows for questions that might otherwise not be posited. In terms of my research approach, the main questions were: What emerges from data? How am I, as an individual conditioned by ideas and experiences and opinions, able to be sufficiently objective in order to find new meaning in data? How can existing theories be utilised while at the same time attempting to achieve some degree of originality? The seminal work of Glaser and Strauss (1974) aided me in understanding the issues behind these questions.

Chapter Three presented the data. This was primarily a record of conversations and dialogues conducted with people in Karachi. It was from this record of interviews that much of the theorising emanated. When, for example, the headmistress of a large English-medium private school, for working-class and lower-middle-class girls, said that she defied Zia ul Haq’s demand for Urdu in schools, I immediately saw a number of theoretical configurations. However, these immediate suppositions had to be the most rigorously tested. I did this in order to assure myself that my own sense of drama and personal politics were not conceiving of darker

conspiracy theories – or more diminutive ones - to explain the headmistress’s reaction to a dictator’s edicts. How was I to view the head’s assertion that she achieved her goal by “scheduling very long English classes”? I answered that question through returning to the concept of triangulation whereby the investigator views an issue from various angles before going further with a theoretical analysis to explain it. This led me, for example, to ask many people the same question about Zia’s educational policies and how educators in ‘modern’ schools attended to them.

I was always mindful, while both collecting the data and analysing it, of the sentiment expressed in Chapter Two in the quote from Graham Greene’s fiction work *The Heart of the Matter*. In this novel a man has committed suicide. The death, after a month of investigation, has been reduced “to a case” with nothing more personal contained in it than that which might be found “in a psychology textbook”. Greene rails against this impersonalisation of the personal. The case of my thesis of real people facing real issues such as the headmistress, was not going to be reduced to a tome, something dried up and impersonal.

During that same interview with the headmistress, a woman knocked on the door and was asked to enter. The woman, dressed in a bright, red business suit, silk blouse, and high heels, and abundantly made up, signified to me a picture of ‘Western, wealthy, modern’. The headmistress introduced the woman as a manager in an international pharmaceutical company. The manager had come for a visit to “her old school” as the headmistress said. When the manager had left us, I was informed that she was from a lower-middle-class family, but that she had “worked very hard” and had “achieved the nearly impossible for a poor girl”. From further discussion, I

learned that generally women in Karachi have more opportunities than women in most other parts of Pakistan. I also learned that the headmistress thought that people who worked hard could break through class barriers. Where, then, was I to place such considerations in my theorising? Was the manager's story merely the 'luck' of the individual? As I later walked through the huge schoolyard, and saw the hundreds of young females playing sports, I asked myself such questions.

How was I to incorporate the experience in the headmistress' office? Was that important? Was the walk through the schoolyard, watching the girls play sport, relevant? I knew that in neighbouring Afghanistan women were not permitted to walk outside unaccompanied by a male relative, let alone play sport. I had been informed that the Taliban were influential in Pakistani politics and that Pakistan was only one of three countries that recognised their government. How was I to view such issues?

Ethnographic research aided me through this situation. In particular, it was the work of Beatrice Avalos who advanced my understanding of such research methodology. I had taken her book to Pakistan with me and I read it again, for inspiration on how participant observation, and attention to the wider social spectra, would aid a case study. In such ways I was able to improve my understanding of the 'bigger picture'.

The rationale for what Part Two means to the thesis is provided in its Introduction. In this section the micro and macro issues are presented and analysed. The micro issues were presented by the Karachi Project as to why modernisation could not take place in Pakistan. It is from the interrogation of the madrasa and the government

schools that the lateral issues emerge. These, in turn, each necessitate a chapter, in order to analyse their significance in regard to the claims of the Project members about the two school systems.

Chapter Four is the first of the chapters in Part Two and is an analysis of the history of Pakistan, from the mid-nineteenth century to Partition in 1948. The Project members had alerted me to the significance of historical details from their discussions on how Pakistan was composed of such a complex population, one that had been brought together through an historical moment called The Partition. It was also through an interrogation of the two school systems that I began to realise the need for an appraisal of the recent history of the nation, in order to shed light on why the schools were so constructed. Many questions arose: How could history explain the reasons for such state ideological apparatuses, which acted as barriers to modernisation? What was the base of the nation's intellectual and ontological foundations and how had they been constructed through history? What effects, if any, were they to have on education?

I had been alerted to one particular aspect of history by Project members, who asserted that at Partition they or their families had fled from India. The members were all Mohajirs and, as such, felt that they existed within a variation of "What it meant to be a Pakistani" - as one member noted. An investigation into what constructs a Pakistani was therefore necessary. How did being an immigrant, a refugee from India, impinge on what it meant to be a Pakistani in 1997? How did this therefore impinge on the way education was perceived? Did being a Mohajir mean that Pakistan's schools were somehow inferior for this group of largely middle-class,

cosmopolitan people? If this were the case, then how did modernisation - their view of it - fit into the need for educational reforms?

Chapters Five and Six investigated the madrasa and the government schools respectively, in an attempt to understand the various questions involved in the Project members' opinions. These were the two major micro issues and this investigation asked the researcher to delve deeply into what constituted each educational entity. What epistemology supported these apparatuses? How did they affix ideologically to what the Pakistani state had constructed for them or had, in itself, been constructed around? The interrogation sought to uncover if the Project members' opinions on these schools being barriers to modernisation held validity. The questions and issues they raised did indeed point to their being barriers to the sort of society – a liberal democracy – that these Western educated Mohajir Pakistanis desired.

Chapter Seven analysed how the class system in the Islamic Republic mitigated against the reform of the government schools. The Karachi Project had never sought to make reforms in the madrasa. This they perceived to be impossible, an oxymoronic situation: a liberal madrasa. government schools, they sought to reform but could not. The subsequent question was: Why not? I often heard the term 'feudal'. I began to associate this rather quaint term – one that I had hitherto associated only with medieval Europe – to the class structure in Pakistan. A deeper investigation into feudalism in Pakistan led me to an understanding of why reforms in schools might fail. From the data based on interviews where this term kept reappearing, I soon saw that my ignorance about the social construction of Pakistan had dismissed the idea that feudalism might exist. A search of the world wide web under "Pakistan

feudalism” recorded some 350 hits. Modernisation and Pakistan seemed oxymoronic also, for how could a society, which was based on feudal practice (or certainly its rural society where seventy percent of its population resides), institute a modern education system that would lead in a linear direction to modernisation? Indeed, did the Project members see their cause as a linear one? Did progress just happen once the structures for its development were in place? Did the belief that this projection could occur through the reform of education mean that the Project members were living a fantasy, given the reality of the class structure and the ideological and repressive state apparatuses that supported them? It became increasingly clear, as I reached this stage in the thesis, that the Project was indeed one involved in failure.

Ragin and Baker (1992) state, in their book on case studies, that the researcher often understands what he is searching for only after he has found it. This paradox amounts to ‘finding out’ a major point at a late stage in the work. Strauss and Glaser’s conception of grounded theory supports this, for if one is searching data upon which to build theory that process can only be cumulative. As sensible and as clear as this seems now, it was a surprise, a pleasant one, to find, as I sifted through the data and interrogated the literature for clues and answers, that there was a moment when the issues come together. It was in this respect, that at Chapter Six I began to appreciate more fully the interconnection of structural barriers that met to obstruct the reforms. By Chapter Seven, with the investigation of the class system and its relation to education, I had reached a milestone, in that I saw how structural barriers of class composition and attitudes to reform meant that the Project was indeed involved in failure. The essence of grounded theory had become alive to me as I proceeded from issue to issue through the data.

Chapter Eight was concerned again with the question of religion, a subject which is inescapable in discussing what contributes to the construction of Pakistani society and its responses to education. In Chapter One, I had noted that Islam was the focus of the thesis in explaining how modernity, and therefore modernisation, were unable to be implemented as anything other than the “lopsided” version Moghissi’s much quoted citation insists is the case in Pakistan. This chapter therefore returned to issues that set about explaining how the schools under discussion were locked out of the modernisation process – let alone being tools for its implementation – precisely because the ideological construction of Pakistan is within Islam. How is religion manipulated to enforce a continued link within this equation? Should there even be a discontinuation entertained, considering that Islam and its various interpretations are the preserve of Muslims? I therefore attempted to understand how Islam negated the accusations of ‘outsiders’ who accused it of being “obscurantist, historicist and essentialist” all characteristics normally applied to an Orientalist account of Islam. In this effort I relied primarily on the Moroccan writer Mernissi, whose book, *Islam and Democracy* (1998), along with Moghissi’s publication, so aptly reflects the aspirations for democracy (as opposed to theocracy) of the Karachi Project members. Such writers, all from Islamic societies, decried such Orientalist charges. Moghissi is most adamant in such polemics, for she states unequivocally, that to uncritically allow for the ‘local’ is to allow for the continued oppression of women. Within her equation is the role of women in education in Pakistan.

The final chapter was intended to place the themes of the thesis within an historical perspective, one that would advance an understanding of the oppositional binary.

This chapter sets the ‘Big Picture’, the metanarrative, for it is within this framework of there being an oppositional binary between West/Islam that the best understanding of why the Project reforms will not easily succeed can be viewed. The chapter argues that the religion that promotes Islamism, which is the political element of Islam, is profoundly anti-modern. The project of Islam, which is based on the universalisation of its ideology, is contingent on the belief that it succeeded Christianity and made that religion irrelevant by being its successor. There is, therefore, no rationale or legitimisation needed other than that Islam is Truth, the final word from the final prophet. Similarly, the scriptural legitimisation of Truth is not able to be contested. The infallibility of the Quran has not been contested as severely as the commensurate scriptures in Christianity have been. Christianity merged into ‘the West’ because, from the eighteenth century onwards, it was largely demoted from its seat of authority. This has never happened in Islam. The chapter does not state that there is a need for Islam to follow the West in this. This is the prerogative of Islam. But what is promoted in the final chapter is the idea, that without secularising there can be no substantial promotion of modernity, which impacts on the goals of the Karachi Project. As has often been stated in this work, there is no subsequent chance of a functioning and fully representative democracy if there is no modernity. A major assertion in this chapter is that the majority of “little Islams” have not promoted secularisation. The subsequent question, which is one possibly posed by the majority of Muslims, is: Why should Muslims promote a concept which stripped the West of its religion and spirituality?

An understanding of the shared history of Islam/West, through the particular lens that captures the focus of colonialism, is where this chapter attempts to locate the

reason for the high level of continued hostility and resentment so evident between the two civilisations. Neither party is innocent of colonising the other's territories and attempting to colonise its minds. Chapter Nine asserts that the constant mutual suspicion and conflict since the two civilisations met, is the main reason why there is such an emphasis by both civilisations on self protection. Self protection, to Muslims means remaining faithful to the Prophet's injunctions, without the antithetical and corrosive influences of Western thought on its epistemology. To this measure, the interpretations of the Quran remain in the area that mitigates against the inclusion of the discourse that constitutes contemporary Western civilisation: modernity.

This thesis has determined that the Karachi Project is destined to fail. The picture drawn to explain this apparent failure dominates the landscape with its bleakness for the goals of the Karachi Project.

Epilogue

The drama of September 11 has not featured in this thesis for two reasons. The first is quite pragmatic: the thesis was largely constructed when the events of that day, and those in the subsequent months, occurred. The second reason is that September 11 is merely another act in the long drama of the West/Islam conflict. I leave the evidence of this assertion to the two players at the forefront of this current round of antagonism. The United States President George W. Bush, stated that the USA was now involved in a war of revenge when he declared that he would embark the nation on a “new Crusade”. This statement was later modified, then annulled, for political reasons. But the President had uttered the word “Crusade” spontaneously in the way any God-fearing Christian, or nationalist, or concerned citizen may have done after such events on American soil¹²⁷. As the final chapter asserted, the Crusades are a potent symbol in both Western and Islamic history and they run deep in the psyches of each civilisation. Time has not healed the rifts and fissures which caused them. The further assertion is made here that the various motivations for the Crusades and counter-Crusades have never been terminated. The most obvious contemporary Western manifestation of the Crusades is the support for Zionist aspirations in Palestine.

The other major contemporary protagonist in this continuing cycle of mutual hatred is Osama bin Laden, who announced in a taped message, in late December 2001, that the September 11 attacks were in response to the American support of

¹²⁷ I am basing this assertion on the assumption that George W. Bush had an understanding of the Crusades.

Israel. Bin Laden stated: “It is very clear that the West in general, spearheaded by America, holds an indescribable amount of Crusader loathing for Islam...” His words hold as much deep significance for Muslims universally as those spontaneous words of George W. Bush do for the West.

Nothing has changed over the 1,500 years that the two civilisations have grown to hate each other. Within this scenario, in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, itself so filled with the necessary contradictions and paradoxes of history, exists the Karachi Project with its precarious agenda of modernity and modernisation.

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