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# Syed Ross Masood and a Japanese Model for Education, Nationalism, and Modernity in Hyderabad

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## Abstract

Syed Ross Masood (1889–1937), grandson of the Muslim modernist Syed Ahmad Khan and former principal of Osmania University, traveled in 1922 from India to Japan as Director of Public Instruction for Hyderabad to assess Japan's educational system. In *Japan and Its Educational System*, a report published in 1923, Masood concluded that education had been key to Japan's rapid modernization and recommended that Hyderabad follow the country's model of modernization and educational reform: transmit Western knowledge through widespread vernacular education, and focus on the imperial tradition, freedom from foreign control, and patriotic nationalism. Masood sought to use mass vernacular education to create in Hyderabad a nationalist subject, loyal to the ruling Muslim dynasty, who absorbed modern scientific knowledge with its Western epistemic foundations but who remained untainted by Western norms. This study contextualizes and historicizes Masood's attempt to create in Hyderabad a new nationalist subject, focusing on his 1923 report about Japan.

**Keywords:** Japan; Hyderabad; vernacular education; modernization; nationalism; Osmania University

If it is thought that my eyes have been dazzled by the refulgent glory of Modern Japan, let that be put down to my sudden emergence from the gloom that surrounds us in India, rather than to any other cause. I went to Japan a cynic but have come back a firm believer in her political greatness.

—Syed Ross Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*<sup>1</sup>

Those who hate Japan will hate me for praising her so much but, then, you must remember that to an Asiatic like me she is the most wonderful country, for, of all the countries in Asia she alone has done something to show to the world that Asiatics need not remain the slaves of the Western nations for ever. I admire

<sup>1</sup>Syed Ross Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System: Being a Report Compiled for the Government of His Exalted Highness the Nizam* (Hyderabad, India: Government Central Press, 1923), iii.

Japan, I love Japan, I respect Japan, and I glory in her greatness even though it be purely materialistic greatness.

—Syed Ross Masood to E. M. Forster<sup>2</sup>

Educational reform was a critical component of modernity during the mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in South Asia, West Asia, and East Asia. Reformers believed that universal compulsory education, which aimed to produce a sense of national identity, was the foundation upon which a modernized military and government rested. Many attributed Japan's political, economic, and military successes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the educational reforms Japan instituted during the Meiji era (1868-1912).<sup>3</sup>

Syed Ross Masood (1889-1937) traveled in 1922 from the Indian princely state of Hyderabad to Japan in his capacity as Director of Public Instruction for Hyderabad.<sup>4</sup> Masood spent three and a half months in Japan. Basing himself in the port city of Yokohama, he traveled from there to Tokyo, as well as elsewhere in Kanagawa Prefecture, to study the Japanese educational system and learn what lessons it might hold for Hyderabad.<sup>5</sup> Masood was untroubled by the Western epistemic foundations of scientific knowledge in Japan, and he was deeply attracted to Japan's nationalist ideology and ostensible Japanese cultural integrity in the face of Westernization. In his report to Hyderabad, *Japan and Its Educational System* (1923), he praised Japan's modernization and concluded that education had been key to Japan's success. He recommended that Hyderabad follow a Japanese model of modernization and educational reform by transmitting Western knowledge through widespread vernacular education in an indigenous language, while emphasizing the imperial tradition, freedom from foreign control, and patriotic nationalism.

In this article, I argue that Masood attempted to create a new nationalist subject in Hyderabad through Japanese-style mass vernacular education in Urdu. This nationalist subject would be loyal to the ruling Muslim dynasty and absorb modern scientific knowledge, along with its Western epistemic foundations, but remain untainted by Western cultural norms. Through his 1923 report, Masood aimed both to

<sup>2</sup>Masood to E. M. Forster, letter 12, in E. M. Forster, Jalil Ahmed Kidwai, and Syed Ross Masood, *Forster-Masood Letters*, ed. Jalil Ahmad Kidwai (Karachi, Pakistan: Ross Masood Education and Culture Society of Pakistan, 1984), 113-14. The letter is incomplete and undated, but Masood closes with the remark, "Well, goodbye for the present, and expect my next letter from Hyderabad on the 21st Jan 1923."

<sup>3</sup>Renée Worringer, introduction to *The Islamic Middle East and Japan: Perceptions, Aspirations, and the Birth of Intra-Asian Modernity*, ed. Renée Worringer, Andras Hamori, and Bernard Lewis (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2007), 3. Meiji (October 23, 1868 to July 30, 1912) is the era name in Japan that corresponds to the reign of the Emperor Meiji.

<sup>4</sup>Masood was born on February 15, 1889, and died on July 30, 1937. He accepted the job of Director of Public Instruction for Hyderabad in 1916 and held the position from 1918 to 1928. See Forster, Kidwai, and Masood, *Forster-Masood Letters*, 173 (birth); 29-30 and 153 (death); 124; 192n36 (Director of Public Instruction). See also Syed Ross Masood, *Travels in Japan: Diary of an Exploring Mission*, ed. Jalil A. Kidwai (1922; repr., Karachi: Ross Masood Education and Culture Society of Pakistan, 1968), vii.

<sup>5</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, ii. The earliest Indian merchants in Japan based themselves in Yokohama and, beginning in the 1890s, also in Kobe. Nile Green, *Terrains of Exchange: Religious Economies of Global Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 235-79.

accommodate and to counter normative Western views about education and modernity. By situating key aspects of Masood's report in the context of contemporary ideas about Japan as a model of Asian modernity, vernacular education, the education of girls and women, and technologies of Western origin, I demonstrate how ideas about mass education and modernity traversed national and imperial borders within Asia.<sup>6</sup>

There are two primary reasons why it is important to understand Masood's advocacy of Japanese-style mass vernacular education. First, Masood's advocacy represents an important transition in reform rhetoric. He was both intellectual and biological heir to a tradition of Indian Muslim reformers pursuing modernization. His grandfather, Syed Ahmad Khan, and his father, Syed Mahmood, were both proponents of English-language education through institutions that reflected British institutional and curricular models, which they saw as key to the progress of Indian Muslims. In contrast, Syed Ross Masood advocated for mass vernacular education as necessary for the progress of Indians, including Indian Muslims.<sup>7</sup> Because Masood's vision of Muslim modernity and education differed markedly from that of both his father and his grandfather, his family legacy and intellectual genealogy traces an arc of transition over a century of Indian Muslim modernist and reformist thought.

Second, Masood's ideas held sway, and many of the recommendations in his report were realized in Hyderabad. He held several important positions in Hyderabad and beyond, including Director of Public Instruction for Hyderabad (1918-1928), principal of Osmania University (1919-1920), and vice chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University (1929-1934), and thus wielded influence over several important educational institutions in colonial India. Masood's tenure overlapped with various shifts in education in Hyderabad—namely expansion, vernacularization, and Urduization—during a period of accelerated growth in the field.

This article contributes to existing scholarship by documenting how Masood sought to bring Japan's nationalist education methods to Hyderabad. The effects of Meiji education on imperial expansion and the inculcation of militant nationalism in Japan have been well documented, and Indian nationalist ideologies and anti-colonial nationalisms have been robustly studied. However, there has been minimal attention paid to how education as a tool to foster nationalism was imported into colonial India from imperial Japan.

In this article, I historicize and contextualize Japan's modernizing educational reforms during an era of transition.<sup>8</sup> Japan's modernizing developments, including

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<sup>6</sup>Methodologically, this study moves beyond the limitations of both the Western-centric diffusionist model of global educational history—wherein ideas and practices are diffused or transmitted from certain locations (often in the West) to other locations (often not located in the West)—as well as the aggregative approach that aims for a comparative framework by aggregating discrete histories. See Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, "Towards a Global History of Education: Alternative Strategies," in *Connecting Histories of Education: Transnational and Cross-Cultural Exchanges in (Post)Colonial Education*, edited by Barnita Bagchi, Eckhardt Fuchs, and Kate Rousmaniere (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 27-40.

<sup>7</sup>Alan Guenther, "Justice Mahmood and English Education in India," *South Asia Research* 31, no. 1 (Feb. 2011), 45-67.

<sup>8</sup>Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

educational reform, were long and complex processes that began during the Tokugawa (1603-1867) period and continued during the Meiji (1868-1912) and Taisho (1912-1926) eras, and were the product of domestic Japanese factors as well as external forces and stimuli. I pay particular attention to the final decade or so of the Meiji era, from about 1900, through the Taisho period. In doing so, I consider Japan in the context of empires and emerging nation-states and follow the work of scholars of Japan such as Brian Platt, Mark Ravina, Harry Harootian, Michael R. Auslin, Douglas Howland, and Jason G. Karlin. Unlike these scholars, I pay close attention to how Japan sought to be perceived and was perceived in South Asia. In doing so, I engage with the substantially smaller field of scholars who have considered Japan in the context of Muslim constituencies across the globe, such as Raja Adal, Renée Worringer, Cemil Aydin, and Nile Green. This article contributes to their body of work by analyzing Syed Ross Masood's 1923 proposal as a case study of Muslim reform in a period of transition.

Despite Masood's own self-professed Anglophilia, his attempt to create a type of anti-colonial nationalist subject in Hyderabad—loyal to the ruling Muslim dynasty, who would absorb modern scientific knowledge but remain untainted by Western cultural norms—affirms Partha Chatterjee's typology of anti-colonial nationalism. Chatterjee's typology bifurcates “the world of social practices and institutions into two domains—the material and the spiritual,” with the material being the domain “of the economy and of statecraft, of science and technology, a domain where the West has proved its superiority and the East had succumbed,” and the spiritual domain being an “‘inner’ domain bearing the ‘essential’ marks of cultural identity,” whereby “the greater one's success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one's spiritual culture.”<sup>9</sup>

Given his objectives, it is not surprising that Masood turned to Japan for a model. In mid-nineteenth-century Japan, the phrase *tōyō dōtoku, seiyō gakugei* (Eastern ethics, Western technology) was coined by Sakuma Shozan (1811-1864), during the late Tokugawa era following the entry of Commodore Perry's black ships in Tokyo in 1853.<sup>10</sup> The phrase transformed during the Meiji period into *wakon yōsai* (Japanese spirit, Western learning) and circulated in Japan as a reaction to what was perceived as an overzealous adoption of Western notions of civilization and enlightenment premised on assumptions of Western superiority.<sup>11</sup> Thus the reforms of the Meiji Restoration were framed as simultaneously modern and ancient, Western and Japanese.<sup>12</sup> Although what, precisely, constituted the Japanese spirit was debated, the *wakon yōsai* approach to foreign knowledge and technological innovation suggested that the Japanese spirit and Western learning could be compatible and coexist in ways that did not imperil Japanese cultural and spiritual authenticity.

<sup>9</sup>Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 6; see also 26.

<sup>10</sup>Kenkichi Koizumi, “In Search of ‘Wakon’: The Cultural Dynamics of the Rise of Manufacturing Technology in Postwar Japan,” *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 1 (Jan. 2002), 29-49.

<sup>11</sup>Koizumi, “In Search of ‘Wakon.’”

<sup>12</sup>Mark Ravina, *To Stand with the Nations of the World: Japan's Meiji Restoration in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017),

Much was at stake for Japan in an era of transition from empire to nation-state. For Japan to be free of the burdens of extraterritoriality—the process in international law whereby a foreign individual or entity is exempted from the jurisdiction of local law—and safe from European domination, it had to be perceived as a civilized nation by the standards of European international law. Education was a cornerstone of this project of civilization and modernity in Japan. Japanese reformers and modernizers simultaneously worked within and against European-dominated definitions of modernity and progress, notions that non-European individuals and constituencies—such as individuals and governments and organizations in South Asia, East Asia, and the Middle East—both universalized and challenged.<sup>13</sup> In order to defy Western hegemony and imperialism, Japan had to successfully modernize according to Western norms of international law.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Muslim reformers shared this ambition to join the ranks of modern civilization as it was defined by European powers in order to secure more sovereignty and equality.

For Masood and other Muslim reformers, Japan was a model of Asian modernization that used Western technologies without ostensibly capitulating to Western cultural norms. Muslim reformers in South Asia and West Asia—including those in Iran and the Ottoman Empire—were galvanized by the combination of Japan's Meiji constitution (promulgated in February 1889) and Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Japan, a small Asian island nation with a constitution, defeated an empire without a constitution that was long considered a menacing imperial power on Iran's border. Husayn 'Ali Tajir Shirazi, an Iranian constitutionalist, composed the epic Persian poem *Mikadonama*, praising Japan and its victory in the Russo-Japanese War; the poem first appeared in 1906 in the influential weekly newspaper *Habl al-Matin*, published in Calcutta by Sayyed Jalal al-Din Mo'ayyed-al-Eslam Kashani. Zafar Ali Khan, writing in Urdu in Hyderabad, wrote a two-hundred-page play, "*Jang-e Rus u Japan*" (1905), about the Russo-Japanese War. Abdul Haq, a seminal figure in the Urdu language movement later known as "Baba-e Urdu," (Father of Urdu) wrote an introduction in the *Deccan Review*, the monthly journal that published the play. Abdul Haq was associated with both Masood and his grandfather Syed Ahmad Khan and their advocacy of the Urdu language.<sup>15</sup> For these reformers, Japan's 1905 victory was proof that Asia and Asians need not be subservient to European imperial domination.

Modernizing nations across the globe sought to utilize modern primary schools to build a modern citizenry and a modern nation. Raja Adal's argument—in the context of aesthetic education in Egypt and Japan from the mid-1800s through the 1940s—is congruent with Chatterjee's thesis regarding a bifurcation between the material domain and the inner domain. Both Japan and Egypt sought to establish a "national aesthetic . . . that could anchor their national identity in Japanese and Egyptian government schools," since schools could create or cement a national identity, which could in turn create the modern citizenry necessary for a

<sup>13</sup>Cemil Aydin, "Globalizing the Intellectual History of the Idea of the 'Muslim World,'" in *Global Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 159-86.

<sup>14</sup>Aydin, "Globalizing the Intellectual History of the Idea of the 'Muslim World,'" 166.

<sup>15</sup>John Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum: Indian Nationalism in a Muslim State, Hyderabad, 1850-1948* (PhD Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1998), 241-42; see also 180-255.

nation-state.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Masood sought to mobilize schools in Hyderabad to create a new nationalist subject, one loyal to the ruling Muslim dynasty in this non-Muslim-majority princely state.

### Syed Ross Masood and the Colonial Framework of Education in India

Syed Ross Masood began his tenure as Director of Public Instruction in 1916, two years after having left the Indian Education Service, embittered about discriminatory compensation practices that favored the British over Indians.<sup>17</sup> The princely state of Hyderabad, which was an autonomous state ruled by a Muslim dynasty, was subordinate yet sovereign within the broader rule of the British Raj.<sup>18</sup> Because the ruling Nizams of Hyderabad had been loyal to the British, the British tolerated the limited autonomy of Hyderabad and its cultivation of international networks.<sup>19</sup> Princely states were significant in terms of both geographical size and population: at the time of independence in 1947, there were over five hundred princely states, which collectively occupied almost 45 percent of Indian territory and accounted for 35 percent of the country's population.<sup>20</sup> Ultimately, the princely state of Hyderabad was integrated into India as the state of Hyderabad, the territories of which were reorganized further in 1956, 1960, and 2014.

As the grandson of the famed Muslim modernist and educator Syed Ahmad Khan and the son of the famed jurist Syed Mahmood, Masood was the heir to a legacy of Muslim modernists.<sup>21</sup> Both his father and grandfather were involved in conversations about the education of Indian Muslims and debates about why, whether, and to what extent Indian Muslims had fallen behind Hindus in terms of educational and professional achievement.<sup>22</sup> Synchronously, the notion of “the Muslim world” as a unified entity emerged around the 1820s, coalesced during the late 1870s and 1880s, and expanded throughout the period leading up to World War I.<sup>23</sup> The Indian Rebellion of 1857 against the British East India Company sharpened the critical focus on Indian Muslims, although Muslim-ruled Hyderabad did not join the rebellion. The racialized understanding of Islam and Muslims in civilizational terms as a race, along with related

<sup>16</sup>Raja Adal, *Beauty in the Age of Empire: Japan, Egypt, and the Global History of Aesthetic Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 5.

<sup>17</sup>Masood to E. M. Forster, from Bankipore, March 15, 1914, letter #11, in Forster, Kidwai, and Masood, *Forster-Masood Letters*, 192n36; also see 109-10; 210n34-36. Masood left his position in Hyderabad to serve as the vice chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University from February 1929 to October 1934. See <https://amu.ac.in/offices/public-relations-office/vice-chancellors>.

<sup>18</sup>Eric Lewis Beverley, *Hyderabad, British India, and the World: Muslim Networks and Minor Sovereignty, c. 1850-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 27.

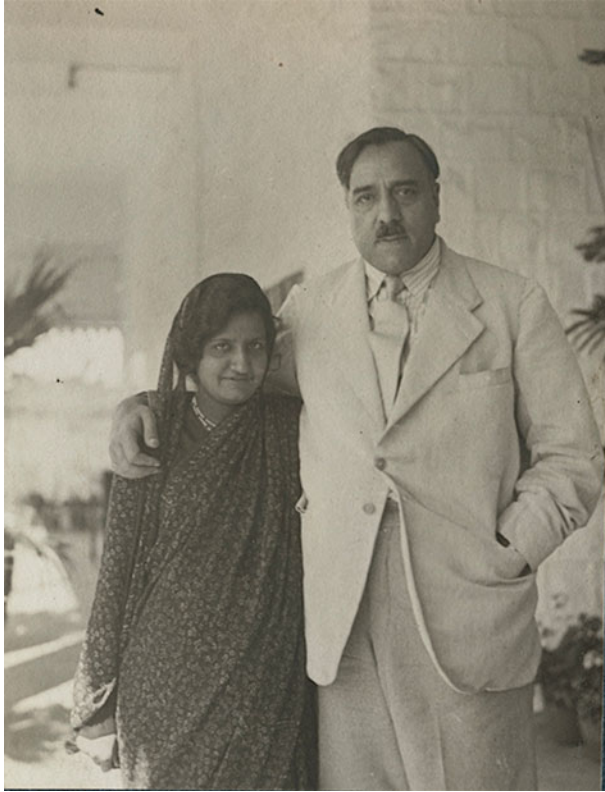
<sup>19</sup>Beverley, *Hyderabad, British India, and the World*, 6.

<sup>20</sup>Aya Ikegame, *Princely India Re-imagined: A Historical Anthropology of Mysore from 1799 to the Present* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2013), 2.

<sup>21</sup>Syed Mahmood, *A History of English Education in India: Its Rise, Development, Progress, Present Condition and Prospects, Being a Narrative of the Various Phases of Educational Policy and Measures Adopted under the British Rule from Its Beginning to the Present Period (1781 to 1893)* (Aligarh, India: M.A.O. College, 1895).

<sup>22</sup>Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 109-27.

<sup>23</sup>Cemil Aydin, *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).



**Figure 1.** Sir Syed Ross Masood and Lady Masood in a vintage snapshot print by Lady Ottoline Morrell. January-March 1935. Courtesy of the UK National Portrait Gallery Photographs Collection, image NPG Ax143765.

debates about Muslims' achievement, forms the broader but unstated context for Masood's assessment of Japan's educational system as a model for Hyderabad.

### Japan as a Model for Hyderabad

Despite Masood's perception of Japan as an Asian nation that did not sacrifice its cultural authenticity by capitulating to Western norms, Japan had in fact deliberately developed its modernizing reforms at least in part to meet standards of civilization and modernity according to Western international law. Competing ideologies within Meiji Japan, from nativists (invoking ancient Japanese norms) to progressive modernizers (invoking global norms, which were effectively Western norms), all harnessed the language of civilization during a period in which Japan sought to claim its place as a legitimate global power in a world of nation-states.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup>David L. Howell, "Civilization and Enlightenment: Markers of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan," in *The Teleology of the Modern Nation-State: Japan and China*, ed. Joshua Fogel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 117-37.

Hyderabad and Japan both developed their modern educational reforms partly in response to Western norms related to civilization and modernization, which were universalized as global norms. The British founded schools and universities in India beginning in 1835 to disseminate modern Western knowledge, and English-medium Western knowledge became synonymous with modern scientific knowledge among both the colonized and the colonizers, who expected Western knowledge to supersede indigenous modes of knowing.<sup>25</sup> Even in a princely state such as Hyderabad, the colonial framework of British-style English-medium education was an important aspect of imperial influence. In the next-largest princely state of Mysore, the education of the aristocrats was an important element of British control during the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> The seventh and final Nizam of Hyderabad and founder of Osmania University, Mir Osman Ali Khan (r. 1911-1948), received his education in English from a British tutor.<sup>27</sup> Masood himself was educated in English, first in India at Aligarh College (the predecessor of the institution that would later become Aligarh Muslim University) and later in England at Oxford, and he also sent both of his sons to study in England.<sup>28</sup> Masood's father, Syed Mahmood, studied at Cambridge University and trained as a barrister in London.

Education reform was key to proving Japan's appropriate degree of "civilization" as it left the Sino-dominated East Asian world order and entered the American- and Anglo-European-dominated global world order. Japan deliberately used Western technologies in education, the constitution, law, and industry at least in part to be perceived as successfully modernized according to Western and specifically British standards. Japan's attainment of an appropriate level of civilization became a prerequisite in 1872 for Japan to revise the Ansei Treaties, which Japan had signed with the US, Britain, Holland, Russia, and France in 1858. They were considered for decades the "unequal treaties," since they made provisions for extraterritoriality for foreigners on Japanese soil, prohibited the Japanese from setting their own tariff rates, and granted one-sided most-favored-nation (MFN) status to the Western signatories but not to the Japanese.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>25</sup>Seth, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India*.

<sup>26</sup>Ikegame, *Princely India Re-imagined*, esp. chap. 4.

<sup>27</sup>Tariq Rahman, *Language, Ideology and Power: Language-Learning among the Muslims of Pakistan and North India*, rev. ed. (New Delhi: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008), 195.

<sup>28</sup>Masood traveled in 1928 to England with his sons, Anwar (age thirteen) and Akbar (eleven), for them to commence their education in England. Masood then returned to India to begin his position as vice chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, leaving his sons in England under the guardianship of E. M. Forster. Forster, Kidwai, and Masood, *Forster-Masood Letters*, 123-24, 152.

<sup>29</sup>The Ansei Treaties were treaties of friendship and commerce (the individual names of each treaty differ) signed by the Tokugawa bakufu, or shogunate, in the final decade of Tokugawa rule before the Meiji period. These were, in chronological order, the treaty with the United States on July 29, 1858 (Ansei 5/6/19); Holland on August 18, 1858 (Ansei 5/7/10); Russia on August 19, 1858 (Ansei 5/7/11); Britain on August 26, 1858 (Ansei 5/7/18); and France on October 9, 1858 (Ansei 5/9/3). The Ansei (November 1854 through March 1860) was the era name during the period of the emperor Kōmei-tennō. The Japan-US Treaty of Amity and Commerce formed the template for the rest, which were all nearly identical trade treaties. Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).



This is not to deny the centuries of domestic development and competing priorities in Japan that culminated in the transformations of the Meiji period. However, it was by meeting American and Anglo-European standards of civilization that Japan received recognition from Western states as a modern nation and in turn escaped many of the demands encoded in their treaties. Put another way, American and Anglo-European standards of modernity effectively defined the rules of the nation-state and established global standards. Western models defined what a modern nation-state was, and in order to be taken seriously in the global arena, Japan engaged with the rules of what constituted a modern nation-state.<sup>30</sup>

To study Western modernization, Japan created the Iwakura Mission (1871-1873), a fifty-member embassy of statesmen and scholars, led by the statesman Iwakura Tomomi.<sup>31</sup> The Iwakura Mission traveled to twelve European countries and the US as both a diplomatic mission and a study tour of modernization in the West.<sup>32</sup> The Iwakura Mission was tasked with an ambiguous and even conflicting set of instructions about what its objectives were, which included preliminary renegotiation of the “unequal treaties” trade, MFN status, extraterritoriality, foreign settlements in Japan, and physical as well as legal boundaries between Japanese and foreigners. The Mission was also tasked with studying the educational, industrial, political, and military systems of other nations. Despite the ambiguity of its remit, the Iwakura Mission explicitly linked education, modernity, and Western norms of civilization.

Critically, during the Iwakura Mission’s visit to Britain in 1872, its members ceded to Britain the right to determine whether Japan was sufficiently civilized as a prerequisite for treaty revision.<sup>33</sup> Iwakura Tomomi stated during his first interview with British foreign secretary Lord Granville, “The policy of the Mikado and his Government is to endeavour to assimilate Japan as far as possible to the enlightened states of the West. . . . [The Embassy was] sent to England in order to study her institutions, and to observe all that constitutes English civilization, so as to adopt . . . whatever they may think suitable.”<sup>34</sup> This was matched by Lord Granville’s assessment that it was Britain’s right to determine when to renegotiate treaties with Japan based on Japan’s degree of perceived civilization: “The policy of the British Government was to yield the local authorities jurisdiction over British subjects in precise proportion to their advancement in enlightenment and civilization.”<sup>35</sup> The extent

<sup>30</sup>Mark Ravina, “State-Making in Global Context: Japan in a World of Nation-States,” in Fogel, *The Teleology of the Modern Nation-State*, 87-104.

<sup>31</sup>Iwakura was Iwakura Tomomi’s surname. Japanese names are written according to Japanese convention, with the surname first, followed by the given name. For Japanese authors of secondary sources published in English, names are written according to European convention, with given name first, followed by the surname.

<sup>32</sup>*The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-73: A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary’s Journey of Observation through the United States and Europe*, comp. Kume Kunitake, ed. Graham Healy and Chushichi Tsuzuki, 5 vols. (Chiba, Japan: Japan Documents, 2002).

<sup>33</sup>On the Iwakura Mission, see Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism*, 156-200.

<sup>34</sup>The quote is from an interview between Iwakura and Granville, November 22, 1872, in Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism*, 193-94.

<sup>35</sup>The quote is from an interview between Iwakura and Granville, November 27, 1872, in Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism*, 193-94.

to which Japan was civilized, according to British standards—which had been universalized as global standards—thus became a prerequisite for treaty renegotiation.

This language of enlightenment and civilization—although it was all flattery and geopolitical strategy—was also used during a meeting between Ito Hirobumi, a future prime minister but at that time an official in Japan's finance ministry, Mori Arinori, the Japanese ambassador to the US, and prominent US politicians, including President Ulysses S. Grant, and other American luminaries. Ito Hirobumi rather disingenuously claimed that Japan began its Meiji reforms based on American and European models in order to reach “the highest stage of civilization,” and that with the help and guidance of the US and its models, Japan would soon “stand among the first nations in its civilization and progress.”<sup>36</sup>

For Syed Ross Masood, Japan's eventual revision of the unequal treaties, especially on the issue of extraterritoriality, as well as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (*Nichi-Ei Dōmei*) (1902-1923), were proof of Japan's status as a modern nation. The third and final Anglo-Japanese Alliance treaty terminated in 1923, the same year that Masood published his report on Japan. Masood concluded that having attained the status of “one of the four Great Powers of the day,” the Japanese believed that their educational, military, and industrial successes were dependent upon a sense of nationalism created by the Japanese imperial tradition.<sup>37</sup>

For Masood and other Muslim reformers, specifically citing the Japanese model became a way to advocate for Western technologies and modernity as it was perceived during the 1920s without appearing to advocate for an unthinking replication of European standards. Japan presented a modernity that was not fully synonymous with Westernization and American and Anglo-European standards. To be “intelligible” in the modern world of nation-states, actors must present themselves in ways that are ontologically sound.<sup>38</sup> Being a nation-state in the upper echelons of hierarchical civilizations was also a defense against foreign “predation” in its various forms, something that Japan had learned with the Ansei Treaties of 1858.<sup>39</sup> For both Masood in Hyderabad and Japan during the Meiji and Taisho eras, complying with Western norms of modernity—which were effectively global standards—was the key to being seen as mature and intelligible in the modern world. This principle applied broadly, from education to trade to international relations. Japan had left the East Asian world order—a Sinocentric sphere, where territorial relations were governed by hierarchical, multilateral tribute relationships—in order to enter the international world order of nations and treaties, dominated by Western powers, since the two world orders were mutually incompatible.<sup>40</sup> In this framework, we can consider the external forces as well as the domestic forces that spurred Japan's modernization, since our understanding of the issue moves us away from questions of influence and replication and leads us instead to consider when, why, and how Meiji leaders viewed

<sup>36</sup>Ravina, *To Stand with the Nations of the World*, 3.

<sup>37</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 137.

<sup>38</sup>See Ravina, “State-Making in Global Context,” 90-91.

<sup>39</sup>Mark Ravina, *To Stand with the Nations of the World*, 7.

<sup>40</sup>Takeshi Hamashita, “Maritime Asia and Treaty Port Networks in the Era of Negotiation: Tribute and Treaties, 1800-1900,” in *China, East Asia and the Global Economy: Regional and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Linda Grove and Mark Selden (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2008), 85-113.

a nation-state as a necessity to be ontologically sound in the global world order.<sup>41</sup> In other words, Japan sought to be accepted within the new global world order, which necessitated becoming a nation-state in order to be ontologically sound. This external force existed simultaneously alongside domestic forces that drove Japan's modernization.

By historicizing Syed Ross Masood and his perception of Japan's Meiji and Taisho reforms in this way, we need not engage with the problematic question of cultural borrowing and whether nations were on the giving or receiving end of technologies and processes. Rather, we can consider "the ways in which Japan's adoption of 'Western' models was rooted not in efficiency, rationality, or efficacy, but in the quieter forces of conformity and social reproduction."<sup>42</sup> Moreover, conformity to new international norms existed alongside domestic pressures and priorities: the Meiji priority on achieving Western-style civilization and enlightenment was part of an attempt to reconfigure the Japanese concept of civilization after the collapse of the early modern political order in Japan and East Asia.<sup>43</sup> Education was a key pillar of modernity according to global standards, even as these standards were dominated by American and Anglo-European norms. Within these rules of what constituted modernity, Masood perceived Japan to be an Asian model of modernity and vernacular education that, if imported into Hyderabad, could translate into a non-Western model of modernity and education.

### Masood's 1923 Report

Masood's travels in Japan convinced him of several key issues: the necessity of vernacular education; the utility of harnessing all useful Western knowledge and technologies; the value of educating girls and women; and the efficiency of a centralized educational system. Education was key to avoiding or escaping "political and economic servitude" to more modernized nations.<sup>44</sup> Masood's proposals for Hyderabad were direct applications of Japanese models.

The implicit question underpinning Masood's report was how to develop a modern educational system for a modern bureaucracy and state that would not imperil the Muslim heritage of the Hyderabad's ruling Muslim dynasty and the elite. Public education and Hyderabad's bureaucracy were inextricably connected: participation in modern education was a prerequisite for employment in the modern bureaucracy. Hyderabad began to fund public education in the 1860s, with funding allocated for one primary school in each *tehsil* (township, or local administrative unit). Hyderabad invested less in public education than other princely states such as Baroda, Travancore, and Mysore—between 1890 and 1920, only 2-3 percent of Hyderabad's state budget was allocated to public education. During that same period, there were more private schools than there were public schools, although it was only in 1917 that the Nizam's government even started to identify, count, and study these private schools.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup>Ravina, "State-Making in Global Context," 91.

<sup>42</sup>Ravina, "State-Making in Global Context," 91.

<sup>43</sup>Howell, "Civilization and Enlightenment."

<sup>44</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 341.

<sup>45</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 148-79.

Consequently, Hyderabad lagged behind these other princely states like Baroda, Travancore, and Mysore in metrics like literacy. Baroda's modern bureaucracy developed around the same time as Hyderabad, but introduced compulsory education in 1907 for boys ages seven to twelve and girls ages seven to ten, and in 1931, it had a literacy rate of 21 percent, which was quadruple Hyderabad's rate.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, the prospects for Hyderabad seemed glum: in 1905, 0.6 percent of boys younger than ten years old attended school; only 3 percent of the adult population was literate, and there were only 2,300 schools for thirteen million people, according to the 1911 census.<sup>47</sup> While public education experienced a huge boom during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, those numbers are less impressive when we consider they were effectively starting from zero. In 1900, there were 753 schools for 11.5 million people—a ratio of one public school for every 15,000 people—and 2.5 percent of the school-age population attended school. Education was further limited by that fact that almost all schools that did exist were primary schools: in 1901, the government funded forty-seven middle schools, fifteen high schools, and three colleges.<sup>48</sup> Despite these challenges, Masood believed that increased attention to education would greatly benefit Hyderabad by increasing nationalism and increasing respect for imperial rule.

To address these problems, Masood pleaded for Hyderabad to adopt a course of modernization modeled on Japan's: one that adopted what was useful from Western technologies and transmitted Western knowledge in the vernacular through centralized, widespread education in primary, technical, vocational schools and advanced and higher education.<sup>49</sup> The first half of Masood's report was a summary of what he considered key features of Japan's history, religion, people, and modernization. The second half was a study of Japan's educational system, concluding with proposals for Hyderabad based on the Japanese model. Because Masood considered the imperial tradition, freedom from foreign control, and patriotic nationalism as Japan's defining characteristics that were foundational to Japan's modernization, he proposed that Hyderabad adopt these three tenets to further the princely state's modernization. Masood also believed that the samurai ethos and the diligence of women contributed to Japan's modernization success.

Masood pleaded for education funding from the Nizam and outlined his proposal for improving Hyderabad's educational system by importing the Japanese tenets that he considered crucial to Japan's successful modernization: the imperial tradition, freedom from foreign control, and patriotic nationalism.<sup>50</sup> While Masood claimed that achieving "homogeneity" through education was his goal for Hyderabad, he actually sought to create a modern nationalist subject.<sup>51</sup> The core tenets of Masood's nationalist identity for Hyderabad adapted from the Japanese model were "I. Loyalty to His

<sup>46</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 148-79.

<sup>47</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 243; see also 180-255.

<sup>48</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 148-79.

<sup>49</sup>While there was some overlap between technical and vocational schools, technical schools involved more theory than the primarily hands-on nature of vocational schools. For Japan and for Masood, advanced education, or post-secondary education, was distinct from the schooling in higher education institutions that granted university degrees.

<sup>50</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 340-69.

<sup>51</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 340-41.

Exalted Highness the Nizam. II. Love of the country. III. Knowledge of the official language.”<sup>52</sup> Sanjay Seth argues that when the British began founding and funding schools and universities in India in 1835 to disseminate modern Western knowledge, it was “not at all” their intention to “to create a new (colonial) subject—for instance, a rational, enlightened, and even ‘expressive’ subject.”<sup>53</sup> But for Masood, an English-educated member of the Indian elite, this was precisely his aim in 1923. He envisioned widespread vernacular education as having the potential to transform thought itself as well as the colonial subject, for the betterment of the individual, Hyderabad, and India.

### *Masood’s Proposals Regarding a Nationalism for Hyderabad Modeled on Japan*

Masood’s 1923 report aligned well with recent reforms and the Nizam’s desire to retain his autocracy and maintain the Muslim character of Hyderabad’s bureaucracy. Hyderabad—which had been ruled by a Muslim since 1724—was early to experiment with Urdu as a major language of administration despite being a non-Muslim and non-Urdu-majority princely state. Hyderabad was an important princely state: at the time of Indian independence in 1947, its population of over sixteen million was approximately 4 percent of India’s total population; Hyderabad city was the largest inland city, and the fourth largest city in India (behind Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras). The official language of Hyderabad had changed from Persian to Urdu in 1884.<sup>54</sup>

From the era of the first ruler, Nizam Mir Qamruddin Khan (r. 1724-1748), through the sixth ruler, Nizam Mir Mahboob Khan (r. 1869-1911), Persian had been the court language.<sup>55</sup> The administrative structure of Hyderabad transformed dramatically during the period of the sixth Nizam.<sup>56</sup> As a result of reforms that centralized and expanded Hyderabad’s administration, the Muslim minority that had previously held the military commands and the largest revenue-generating land holdings were now also beneficiaries of a modern bureaucracy and were preferentially recruited into the administrative apparatus.<sup>57</sup> By the time of Masood’s tenure under the reign of the seventh and final Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan, Urdu was used in administration, education, and the courts, despite ranking distantly behind other languages in the 1921 census.<sup>58</sup> At the time when Masood traveled to Japan in 1922, competency in Urdu had long been a requirement—in 1879 the

<sup>52</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 342.

<sup>53</sup>Seth, *Subject Lessons*, 27.

<sup>54</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 5

<sup>55</sup>Tariq Rahman, *From Hindi to Urdu: A Social and Political History* (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2011), 226-47 on Hyderabad and 247-60 on Kashmir.

<sup>56</sup>Salar Jung I, regent of Nizam VI from 1869 to 1883, instituted significant administrative reforms throughout his thirty-year tenure as minister and regent for the young Nizam. See Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 37-178.

<sup>57</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 133-47.

<sup>58</sup>According to that year’s census, the language distribution of the population of Hyderabad was 6,015,174 Telugu speakers, 3,394,858 Marathi speakers, 1,536,928 Kanarese speakers, and 1,290,866 Urdu speakers. Tariq Rahman, “The Teaching of Urdu in British India,” *Annual of Urdu Studies* 15 (2000), 50.

Government of North-Western Provinces and Oudh required the ability to read and write Urdu for all government service appointments with a modest monthly salary of ten rupees or more.<sup>59</sup>

The period of Masood's tenure as Director of Public Instruction, from 1916 to 1928, was one of particularly concentrated rule, because from 1916 to 1921, Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan did not appoint a prime minister. Instead, he assumed that role himself.<sup>60</sup> The 1920s were marked by momentous ideological debates, movements, and conflicts, including competing visions of Indian nationalism; the Khilafat movement and Pan-Islamist movements; increased sectarian organization and Hindu-Muslim conflict both in India and in Hyderabad; and attempts by the Nizam to retain his power.<sup>61</sup> Also, during that decade Hyderabadis increasingly demanded participation in governance, but the Nizam and his ministers squashed the idea of an elected legislature in the mid-1920s.<sup>62</sup> As a result of what the British perceived as the Nizam's inappropriate attempts to gain more power, he was reprimanded in person in 1919 for his "misrule," and threatened with removal as ruler.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, an Executive Council with ten ministers, each with his own portfolio, was formed in November 1919, which removed the Nizam from the daily workings of the bureaucracy.<sup>64</sup>

The Nizam's absolutist rule provides the context for why and how Syed Ross Masood proposed creating a new nationalist subject in Hyderabad at a time of ongoing debates about emerging nationalisms in India. Masood advocated using schools to inculcate loyalty to the Nizam, citing the success of the Educational Department of Japan in inculcating loyalty to the emperor and the effectiveness of the 1890 Japanese Imperial Rescript on Education as the basis for moral instruction.<sup>65</sup> He advocated creating in Hyderabad something akin to the 1890 Japanese Imperial Rescript on Education and the portraits of the Meiji emperor and empress that accompanied the displayed copy of the Imperial Rescript in all schools. In Japan, these were "looked upon as sacred objects," making the emperor both immanent and distant, sacred and respected.<sup>66</sup> Masood recommended that a photograph of the Nizam be sent to all schools under the purview of the Education Department, accompanied by a "a nicely printed copy of some message" from the Nizam "of encouragement for the students of these Dominions."<sup>67</sup> Additionally, he suggested the Education Department create and distribute primary school textbooks in which "special emphasis should be laid on the beneficence of the Royal House of Hyderabad."<sup>68</sup>

<sup>59</sup>Rahman, "The Teaching of Urdu in British India," 47; Rahman, *Language, Ideology and Power*, 228.

<sup>60</sup>Shamim Aleem, *Personnel Management in a Princely State* (New Delhi: Gitanjali Pub. House, c. 1985), 236-37, 37-38.

<sup>61</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 351-403.

<sup>62</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 317-18; see also more generally 317-50.

<sup>63</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 317-18; see also more generally 317-50. The Nizam, sensing that the Khilafat movement threatened his own authority, banned political meetings in September 1921.

<sup>64</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 317-18; see also more generally 317-50.

<sup>65</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 342-45.

<sup>66</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 344.

<sup>67</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 345.

<sup>68</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 345.

Masood proposed using education to foster a role for the Nizam akin to that of the Japanese emperor as a way to enforce the Nizam's autocracy while simultaneously expanding vernacular education, modernizing the state, and leaving the Muslim identity of the state bureaucracy untouched. Masood argued emphatically that Urdu vernacular education and Osmania University were secular ideals untethered to a Muslim identity or heritage. While that may be true, Urdu vernacular education certainly did not threaten the Muslim character of the state's bureaucracy, and contemporary critics reasonably suggested that it only enhanced it. Adopting the Japanese system for educational administration and education reform would, Masood argued, allow the Nizam to maintain central control over educational and bureaucratic appointments while simultaneously modernizing the state through vernacular education. Masood believed that such reforms would help develop a strong love of country in Hyderabad.

### *Masood's Proposals Regarding Love of Country, Nationalism, and the Imperial Model*

To develop a love of the country among the populace, Masood advocated "moral instruction" in schools, something that was instituted in Japan with the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education and was synonymous with patriotic nationalism. He proposed using textbooks to inculcate "love of country," and "impart that moral instruction which is so urgently needed in the schools of our country."<sup>69</sup>

Masood considered the imperial tradition, freedom from foreign control, and national patriotism as the central features of Japan's modernization.<sup>70</sup> He accepted at face value the mythology of the Japanese imperial tradition, which had been aggressively emphasized during the Meiji Restoration to create a Japanese nationalist identity that could serve as a decisive break from centuries of feudal Tokugawa Shogunate rule.<sup>71</sup> However, as Ravina and others have demonstrated, Tokugawa structures, policies, ideologies, and expectations shaped the Meiji era that followed, and there is no clean demarcation between those two periods in terms of ideologies and structures.<sup>72</sup>

The patriotic indoctrination in schools and the militant nationalist emperor worship that accelerated during the late Meiji and Taisho periods—later vehemently criticized within Japan for advancing Japan's militarism—were precisely what Masood found impressive in 1922.<sup>73</sup> For him, militarized nationalist zeal and emperor worship were crystallized in what may be an apocryphal story about a schoolboy who died in a school fire. According to the story, as his school burned down, the boy cut open his abdomen and inserted the school's official photograph of the Meiji emperor into his body to preserve it from the flames.<sup>74</sup> Masood believed Japanese

<sup>69</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 346.

<sup>70</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 4, 13.

<sup>71</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 21-22.

<sup>72</sup>Mark Ravina, *Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

<sup>73</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 4-5.

<sup>74</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 6.

nationalism, epitomized in the person of the emperor, could be replicated in Hyderabad and its Nizam.<sup>75</sup>

Masood was not alone in the perception that Japanese mass education successfully created militant patriotic nationalism. In the Ottoman Empire, multiple generations of graduates of the German-influenced War College saw militarism as key to salvaging the Ottoman Empire and viewed Japan as a model. After Japan's 1905 victory in the Russo-Japanese War and the 1908 Constitutional (or "Young Turk") Revolution, the idea spread that Japan would serve as a model for Ottoman modernization, and two War College staff officers authored a five-volumed study called *1904-1905 Rus-Japan Seferi* (The Russo-Japanese Campaign of 1904-1905).<sup>76</sup> In their view, Japan's model of universal education was closely linked with military training and patriotism.<sup>77</sup> Universal education was the foundation on which a nation could establish a strong national identity and develop the type of militarist nationalism that the Ottoman officers envisioned was necessary for the survival of the Ottoman Empire. Between 1905 and World War I, the Arabic-language Salafi press in Arab countries portrayed Japan as patriotic, which the Salafi authors attributed to Japan's educational policies.<sup>78</sup> In the US, too, the idea took hold that Japan's program of physical education was integral to its physical, spiritual, military, and political strength. Consequently, the Japanese, "while a diminutive race, possess the greatest endurance of any people on earth."<sup>79</sup>

Freedom from foreign control was the second feature that Masood considered a defining characteristic of Japan. He discussed at great length how Japan established an isolationist foreign policy in the early-to-mid seventeenth century, when the shoguns expelled or limited the activities of Christians.<sup>80</sup> Masood wrote admiringly of Japan's territorial and political integrity, claiming that "a nation, possessing the tremendous patriotism of the Japanese, can never suffer the moral and political degradation . . . of allowing itself to be conquered or subjugated by people of an alien race."<sup>81</sup>

National patriotism was the third quality that Masood found essential to Japan's modernization. He saw that nationalism pervaded adult women and men as well

<sup>75</sup>Although Japan increasingly became militarized in the 1920s, *rikkensei* (constitutional system) was the term applied to the new Meiji political structures during the Meiji period itself, emphasizing the Meiji Constitution. *Tennōsei*, or an emperor system, was a term that would only be coined later, in the 1930s, and was later abolished by the US occupation and the post-WWII Japanese government because it had advanced Japanese militarism and imperial expansion. See Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the late Meiji Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 41, 281.

<sup>76</sup>Major Osman Senai graduated from the War College in 1895, and Captain Ali Fuad (Erden) graduated in 1904; both were regular contributors to the military press in the years after the 1908 Young Turk/Constitutional Revolution. Handan Nezir Akmeşe, "The Japanese Nation in Arms: A Role Model for Militarist Nationalism in the Ottoman Army, 1905-1914," in *The Islamic Middle East and Japan*, 63-89.

<sup>77</sup>Akmeşe, "The Japanese Nation in Arms."

<sup>78</sup>Thomas Eich, "Pan-Islamism and 'Yellow Peril': Geo-strategic Concepts in Salafi Writings before World War I," in *The Islamic Middle East and Japan*, 121-35.

<sup>79</sup>H. Irving Hancock (1868-1922), *Japanese physical training: The system of exercise, diet and general mode of living that has made the Mikado's people the healthiest, strongest, and happiest men and women in the world* (New York: Putnam, 1904), v.

<sup>80</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 28-63.

<sup>81</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 9.



as children, and deemed education a critical strategy for inculcating a high degree of nationalism. He noted approvingly that the purposes of middle schools, high schools, and universities included the mission of inculcating “national spirit” and a nationalist ethos.<sup>82</sup> Masood’s idealization of militant nationalism extended to women—he characterized the suicides of widows during the Russo-Japanese War as the ultimate “heroic” nationalist sacrifice, because the only sons of widows were precluded from enlisting in the military.<sup>83</sup>

Masood believed that the samurai tradition fed into Japan’s militant patriotism, which was in turn critical to Japan’s victory in the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War. Japan’s victory in the war overturned long-held assumptions about Western racial, military, and cultural superiority and “instilled fresh hope into Asia, by showing her that there was no reason why she should continue to accept, as eternal the aggressive domination of the White Races.”<sup>84</sup> Masood’s lengthy descriptions of the actions of military heroes like Commander Hirose Takeo and Captain Yashiro Rokurō reveal his understanding of Japanese nationalism. Masood praised both men for their heroism in war and connected their militant patriotism to the inculcation of nationalism in Japanese schools.

### *Masood’s Proposals for Urdu Vernacular Education, Female Education, and Western Technologies*

Before Syed Ross Masood traveled to Japan, he was unconvinced of the newly emerging project of higher education in Urdu.<sup>85</sup> However, after visiting Japan, Masood argued that without mass vernacular education, India could not progress apace with modernity, because “so long as modern thought and modern science” were “locked up in a foreign language,” modernization and economic development were stunted.<sup>86</sup>

After traveling to Japan, Masood proposed Urdu vernacular education alongside the establishment of English as a compulsory language. For Masood, Japan’s modernization was indissolubly tied to universal compulsory vernacular education for boys and girls. As he testified to the Father Blatter Commission’s committee on university reform in Bombay on October 4, 1924, regarding vernacular education, “I had doubts of my own, but all these doubts have been entirely removed after my visit to Japan.”<sup>87</sup>

<sup>82</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 234, regarding “national morality and to the development of a sound national spirit” in middle schools for boys; 264 on fostering the “spirit of national morality” in high schools for boys; 267-68 on the nationalist mission to pay deep attention “to the formation of character, and the nurture of the national spirit” in universities.

<sup>83</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 9.

<sup>84</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 132.

<sup>85</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, 186.

<sup>86</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 84.

<sup>87</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, 186. The commission to explore university reform in India was led by and named for Ethelbert Blatter, S.J. (1877-1934), the Swiss born Jesuit and botanist, who taught botany at St. Xavier’s College in Bombay from 1903-1908, before returning to England and Europe and then ultimately back to Bombay in 1915. He remained in India until his death in 1934. “Obituary: Ethelbert Blatter, S.J. (1877-1934),” in *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London*, Volume 147, Issue 1 (October 1935): 159.

The third pillar of Masood's proposals—after loyalty to the Nizam and love of the country—was the promotion of “knowledge of the official language,” which he considered Urdu. He declared, “What I have seen in Japan has convinced me that the secret of her rapid intellectual progress is to be found in the fact that there it was the Japanese language that was made the medium of instruction from the very beginning.”<sup>88</sup> Masood identified six reasons supporting vernacular education: First, only through vernacular education could knowledge be efficiently transmitted to the masses.<sup>89</sup> While Hyderabad had several vernaculars, Masood advocated for Urdu as the official language of education on the basis that it “has been our official language for a considerable time and which, therefore, is the only language that may be said to be universally known within our State.”<sup>90</sup> Second, the “absurdity” of refusing to use the vernacular for higher education was self-evident.<sup>91</sup> Third, it was imperative that education make learning and thinking “as natural as possible.”<sup>92</sup> Fourth, establishing a common vernacular was necessary to achieve unity between the educated and the uneducated alike.<sup>93</sup> Fifth, vernacular education could resolve gender inequities: it was overwhelmingly boys and men who were educated in English, while girls—if they were educated at all—were generally educated at home in vernacular languages, so the use of English exacerbated those inequities. The sixth and final reason was to increase the industrial productivity of Hyderabad, which must include girls, women, and all social classes.<sup>94</sup>

Masood declared that “our country is doomed” if, like himself, Indians were educated in English and provided with knowledge of technical terms in English and French but could not communicate their knowledge in the vernacular.<sup>95</sup> At the 1924 Father Blatter Commission, Masood offered himself as an example: although he knew English, French and Urdu, he could not explain the theory of immunization when asked by his own mother, who knew no English, “Can you explain to me the principle of inoculation against plague?” He responded, “I am extremely sorry, it is not possible for me to explain to you in my mother tongue Pasteur's theory of Bacilli, and it is impossible for you to understand it if I use the French or the English terms.”<sup>96</sup> This was a far cry from the 1882 testimony of Masood's grandfather, Syed Ahmad Khan, to the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee that “as long as our community does not, by means of English education, become familiar with the exactness of thought and unlearn the looseness of expression, our language cannot be the means of high mental and moral training.”<sup>97</sup> By this point, Sayyid Ahmad Khan had become disappointed by the limitations of vernacular

<sup>88</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 346.

<sup>89</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 347.

<sup>90</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 348.

<sup>91</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 352, 349.

<sup>92</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 352.

<sup>93</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 352-53.

<sup>94</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 354.

<sup>95</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, 186.

<sup>96</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, 186.

<sup>97</sup>India Education Commission, *Report by the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee, with Evidence Taken before the Committee, and Memorials Addressed to the Education Commission* (Calcutta, India: The Superintendent of Government Printing, 1884), 291.

education and instead advocated English as the language of scholarship, promoting mastery of English as a primary goal of education.<sup>98</sup> Unlike his grandfather, Masood believed that for vernacular education to succeed, the Urdu language itself had to be revitalized, which included coining new terms for Western concepts.

Masood argued that had vernacular education and mass translation into Urdu been adopted earlier in India, then “the cultural position of India in every realm of human intellectual activity would not have been as low as it is to-day.”<sup>99</sup> He lamented that India had not engaged in a mass translation movement, as Japan had.<sup>100</sup> He argued that Urdu was closer to English than was Japanese, which he found inscrutable, and the radical linguistic dissimilarities of Japanese from Western languages meant that if the Japanese could successfully pursue a mass translation movement from Dutch, English, French, and German into Japanese, then given sufficient financial and logistical means in Hyderabad, it should be an easier task to accomplish a similar translation movement into Urdu.<sup>101</sup>

Hyderabad and Japan faced different but related obstacles in translating foreign concepts and technologies into the vernacular. Urdu is a Hindustani language heavily inflected by Persian and Arabic; as a consequence, many Urdu words have their linguistic origins in Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian. Urdu is principally written in Nasta’liq Persian phonetic script, written from right to left. Persian is a phonetic alphabet, and therefore the challenge for Masood was not how to convey new words in script, but rather how to coin new words in Urdu. Choosing the base of each new Urdu word, by drawing on either Arabic or Persian or Sanskrit, was fraught with ideological and political meaning.

Multiple vernaculars across Hyderabad compounded the problem of how to implement vernacular education. When Syed Ahmad Khan had proposed a vernacular university before ultimately founding Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (which later became Aligarh Muslim University) in 1875, there had similarly been debate in the 1860s about which language would serve as the vernacular.<sup>102</sup> When pressed at the 1924 Father Blatter Commission about the difficulty of establishing Urdu as the vernacular language for education, Masood argued that Urdu vernacular education at Osmania University was “purely a secular idea.” After all, he pointed out, Urdu was not a religious language limited to Muslims. It was spoken “from Peshawar to Patna,” with Hindus also having Urdu as a mother tongue.<sup>103</sup> These features positioned Urdu as a secular language to be used by Hindus and Muslims in a united India.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>98</sup>David Lelyveld, *Aligarh’s First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 206-7.

<sup>99</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 83

<sup>100</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 185.

<sup>101</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 178-79.

<sup>102</sup>Lelyveld, *Aligarh’s First Generation*, 97-98.

<sup>103</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, 186; Masood, “National Education: Bold Experiment at Osmania University,” in *Khayaban-e-Masood: A Collection of Writings, Speeches, etc., on and by Nawab Masood Jung Sir Syed Ross Masood*, ed. Jalil Ahmad Kidwai (Karachi, Pakistan: Ross Masood Education and Cultural Society of Pakistan, 1970), 29. Both publications reprint the oral evidence given by Masood before the Father Blatter Commission, Bombay, India, October 4, 1924.

<sup>104</sup>Kavita Saraswathi Datla, *The Language of Secular Islam: Urdu Nationalism and Colonial India* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2013), 9.

Language standardization movements, such as those that occurred in India and Japan, reflected the political belief that speech unity was necessary for a modern nation. For Japan, the challenge was to unify regional dialects and the formality of written Japanese into a cohesive unified national language that was comprehensible to all. The Japanese had to coin new terms in order to incorporate and integrate foreign knowledge into Japanese, just as Masood needed to do with Urdu. However, in coining new terms, the Japanese language itself was relatively elastic and dynamic: even domains (political units, of which there were over 260) of the Tokugawa period reinforced regional linguistic diversity in the form of dialects. The existence of dialects across the many domains reflected the reality of a non-unified Japan. It was only once Japan presented itself as a unified nation state during the Meiji period that having a unified national language comprehensible to all Japanese became a pressing issue. Although classical written Japanese and Chinese were both unsuited to coining new terms for modern scientific knowledge, spoken colloquial Japanese—despite the difficulties posed by regional dialects—was up to the task. The *genbun itchi* movement, spanning the late Tokugawa and Meiji eras, sought to remove the medieval formalities of written Japanese to more accurately reflect modern standardized spoken Japanese, which the Meiji government sought to create out of Japanese linguistic diversity. However, beyond the complicating factors of linguistic diversity, the translation of Western political concepts into Japanese involved a dual challenge: on a linguistic level, the challenge was how to translate, create, and coin new words and concepts; and on a social level, the challenge was how these new concepts and words were used in conversations how about these ideas and policies would be implemented in Japan.<sup>105</sup> Japanese language standardization movements were ultimately successful, their success both necessitated and aided by the deployment and teaching of standard Japanese through universal compulsory education.<sup>106</sup> For Masood in Hyderabad, even after choosing Urdu as the preferred vernacular, the challenge remained of coining new terms from their linguistic bases in Arabic, Persia, or Sanskrit, with their attendant ideological, cultural, or historical implications.

In addition to recommending mass vernacular education generally, Masood's report advocated for the education of women. Modernization, gender inequities, and vernacular education were intricately linked during this period. India's boys and men were educated in English while women, generally without access to an equivalent education, were not part of a modernizing world because "the language through which the men have imbibed their ideas [was] entirely different from the language spoken by the women."<sup>107</sup> By the late nineteenth century in India, the broader argument that education would make for better wives and mothers had become prevalent, but it also spurred anxiety about another anticipated outcome: that because modern education had a Westernizing effect, educated women would become "desexed" and "denationalized" and thus would no longer embody a quintessential

<sup>105</sup>Douglas R. Howland, *Translating the West: Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002).

<sup>106</sup>Nanette Twine, "The Genbunitchi Movement: Its Origin, Development, and Conclusion," *Monumenta Nipponica* 33, no. 3 (Autumn 1978), 333-56.

<sup>107</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 354.



**Figure 2.** Syed Ross Masood, age four, at his bismillah ceremony during the eighth annual Muhammadan Educational Conference held at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in 1893. Syed Ahmad Khan holds his grandson Syed Ross Masood in his lap and is seated to the immediate right of Syed Mahmood, Masood's father. Source: Jalil A. Kidwai, ed., *Shu'lah-yi mustaj'il, ya'nī Navāb Mas'ūd Jang Dāktar Sar Sayyid Rās Mas'ūd* (Karachi, Pakistan: Rās Mas'ūd Ejūkeshnal ainḍ Calcar Sosā'tī āf Pākistān, 1982), 20, OCLC Number/Unique Identifier: 81271863.

Indianness.<sup>108</sup> In Japan, the argument that education defeminized girls also was prevalent during roughly the same period, in the Meiji and Taisho eras.<sup>109</sup>

Although Masood's observations about Japanese women in his travelogue could be negative and petty (he sometimes used terms such as “ungainly,” “flippant and mean,” and wrote that “neither the men nor the women seem to have either physical or intellectual dignity”), in his official report, he praised Japanese women as “perhaps the most perfect product of culture,” who, like the men, were ardent in their nationalistic patriotism.<sup>110</sup> Masood attributed the “freedom of thought and movement” of Japanese women to the lack of a tradition of *purdah*, or seclusion.<sup>111</sup> This contrasted with the views of his grandfather, who had insisted on *purdah* and argued that only practical education was necessary for girls and women.<sup>112</sup>

While he remained silent on the defeminizing effects of education, Masood claimed that the assurance of “domestic happiness and the interests of family

<sup>108</sup>Seth, *Subject Lessons*, 129–58. On Indian nationalism, modernity, and the “new woman” in late 19<sup>th</sup> century India, see Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, 116–34 and 135–57.

<sup>109</sup>Jason G. Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan: Modernity, Loss, and the Doing of History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), 177–234.

<sup>110</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, 9; Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 14–15.

<sup>111</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 15.

<sup>112</sup>David Lelyveld, “Sayyid Ahmad's Problems with Women,” in *Hidden Histories: Religion and Reform in South Asia*, ed. Syed Akbar Hyder and Manu Belur Bhagavan (Delhi: Primus Books, 2018), 98.

concord” demanded vernacular education.<sup>113</sup> He argued that since females had fewer educational opportunities, they should have access to vernacular books to enhance their work as mothers and future mothers.<sup>114</sup> He believed that domestic harmony required modern women, who could think like men, which could only be achieved at scale through vernacular education. On gender inequities, Masood referred to the aforementioned incident in which he couldn’t explain the concept of immunization to his mother in their native language. It made him realize the extent of her lack of access to concepts that educated Indian men understood through their knowledge of English and the absence of these concepts in Urdu. As Masood lamented in his 1923 report, “How many men are there in our country, who can explain even to the most intelligent of their female relatives, if the latter do not know the English language, such elementary facts of science as the theory of inoculation against plague?”<sup>115</sup> Only vernacular education could bridge the gap.

Masood was not the first to support female education in Hyderabad. Muhib Husain (1849-1929), an Urdu journalist in Hyderabad who had a colorful career in publishing for forty years, addressed women’s education and cited Japan as an example of a modernization success predicated on mass education. Muhib Husain, like Masood, criticized *purdah*, and restructured and relaunched his journal *Mu’allim-e Shafiq* (1880-1885)—which he had initially established with the intention of creating a better informed cadre of mostly Muslim bureaucrats—as *Mu’allim-e Niswan* (Women’s Guide) (1892-1901), with the express purpose of advocating for women’s education. Women subscribers were offered a half-price discount for an annual subscription, and it became one of the earliest Urdu-language periodicals in India devoted to women’s issues. Muhib Husain advocated universal compulsory elementary education, which Japan had famously established, as the bedrock for progress. He praised Japan as a successful model of modernization in which military and economic success was predicated on a national policy of mass education.<sup>116</sup> Muhib Husain argued that Hyderabad could similarly improve its economic status through mass education, writing in November 1904 that “the war between Japan and Russia has shown to the world that every nation can become powerful through education no matter how small the country and few the people.”<sup>117</sup>

Masood’s report shows little evidence that he was aware of the extent of Japan’s shortcomings when it came to female education. Although girls were included in Meiji compulsory primary education, they generally stayed in school for shorter amounts of time than boys, and few higher education opportunities existed for them. School enrollment did not equal school attendance. Despite the seemingly impressive increase from less than 30 percent of children enrolled in new schools in 1873 to over 95 percent by the end of the Meiji period, many children, especially

<sup>113</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 353.

<sup>114</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 353-54.

<sup>115</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 354.

<sup>116</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 180-255.

<sup>117</sup>Roosa, *The Quandary of the Qaum*, 241; see also 180-255. In 1906, at the age of fifty-eight Muhib Husain abruptly ended his career, selling his library in 1909; completely stopped writing about politics; and became a follower of the Sufi Pir Shahn Muhammad Siddiqi.

girls, quit school after only one or two years; very few children received schooling for many years.<sup>118</sup> On February 2, 1899 (Meiji 32), Japan promulgated the *Kōtō jokakkō rei* (Girls Higher School Order), which established secondary education for girls beyond the compulsory six years of education.<sup>119</sup> However, increased educational opportunities for females did not translate into widespread access or long-term education. Masood noted that the only institution of higher education for women was *Nippon Joshi Daigakko* (Japan Women's University, founded in 1901). Masood claimed that the lack of higher education for women in Japan was “bound to be only temporary,” as economic pressures, including competition with America, and the industrial potential of women would necessitate the further education of girls and women.<sup>120</sup>

In addition to recommending vernacular education, and the education of females, Masood urged Hyderabad to emulate Japan in its acquisition of Western knowledge and technologies. He admired the fact that Japan adopted from the West only what was useful without uncritically accepting Western standards of civilization, as India had.<sup>121</sup> He praised the Japanese for evolving “a system of their own which, whilst aiming at retaining the good points of all the others, cannot be said to be a copy of any one of them.”<sup>122</sup> Masood focused on only the Meiji-era reforms, but in late Tokugawa Japan—despite the official ban on travel abroad—the domains had sent individuals abroad to acquire Western languages, technologies, and knowledge. In addition to importing and translating Western ideas, Japan had for centuries been part of a dynamic, multi-directional, and multi-layered Sinocentric East Asian world order. Masood neglected to recognize that what he observed in Japan in 1922 was the result of centuries of domestic transformation and acquisition of foreign technologies and knowledge.

Masood lauded Japan's hiring of foreigners as a way to acquire Western technologies and using foreign technologies. This included employing the English for their expertise in railways, telegraphs, and the Navy; hiring the French and then later the Prussians (following the Prussian victory over France in 1871) to remodel the Army; enlisting the aid of French lawyers for the modeling Japan's new laws on the Code of Napoleon; using Germany as the model of medicine, public sanitation, and science; using England and the US as models of commercial methods; using American and then German models for education when introducing compulsory education in 1872; and adopting the Gregorian calendar in 1873. Universal military conscription and the 1876 prohibition on wearing swords (until then a unique privilege of the samurai class) positioned Japan as a modern nation according to the norms of international law.<sup>123</sup> In Japan's institutions of technical education, foreign knowledge was nativized.<sup>124</sup> Despite the use of Western advisers and Western technologies, Japan

<sup>118</sup>Brian Platt, *Burning and Building: Schooling and State Formation in Japan, 1750-1890* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), 247-54.

<sup>119</sup>White paper published by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology: [https://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/hakusho/html/others/detail/1317627.htm](https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/others/detail/1317627.htm).

<sup>120</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 285.

<sup>121</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 187.

<sup>122</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 188.

<sup>123</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 125-27.

<sup>124</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 314-39.

was not pulled into the Western orbit in a role of perpetual dependency. Japan learned from foreign advisers quickly and then dispensed with them. As Masood noted approvingly, Japan opened its first railway line in 1872, and, over three short years between 1877 and 1880, the Japanese Railway Department went from employing 120 English engineers, drivers, and foremen to employing only three foreign advisers.<sup>125</sup>

### *Masood's Proposals for Education, Efficiency, and Economic Development*

Masood repeatedly cited Japan as an example of education advancing industrial progress through technical institutions, and proposed that Hyderabad follow suit.<sup>126</sup> Primary education, he argued, should have a practical dimension, with agricultural components in rural areas and industrial components in urban areas. This would entail the establishment of technical schools; staffing rural schools with teachers who knew agriculture; and equipping agricultural schools with both school buildings and land. Such a program would convey agricultural knowledge and thereby make Hyderabad more productive, while simultaneously convincing parents in agricultural areas of the merits of schools, which would teach both academic and practical agricultural content.<sup>127</sup> Urban primary schools needed to include practical industrial content, and be staffed with faculty trained at the Osmania Technical School, which was opened in 1923 in connection with Hyderabad's Mint Workshop.<sup>128</sup> Beyond primary schools, Hyderabad needed to create technical and vocational schools to teach local industries, since Japanese industrial development was predicated on education.<sup>129</sup> Masood proposed establishing a business school in Hyderabad city, with business correspondence occurring in English and Urdu.<sup>130</sup>

Masood advocated improving both teacher training schools and the supervision of teachers. Masood had previously submitted a proposal for a "Training College" to the Faculty of Education at Osmania University, which he again recommended be accepted and used as a teacher training school.<sup>131</sup> He recommended replicating the Japanese system of full-time school inspectors who assessed not the students but rather the schools and the teachers and the educational systems.<sup>132</sup>

Modernization required public hygiene and public health education, which Hyderabad lacked.<sup>133</sup> Masood found it "humiliating" that, "whereas in Japan it was the people themselves who first pressed the acceptance of Western sanitation and science on their Government," the British had to force public hygiene on Indians.<sup>134</sup> Japan successfully deployed "visual instruction," often in the form of public lectures held in public parks on quotidian topics such as pediatric oral hygiene, which

<sup>125</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 318.

<sup>126</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 319, 314-39.

<sup>127</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 362-63.

<sup>128</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 363.

<sup>129</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 366-67.

<sup>130</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 368.

<sup>131</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 363-66.

<sup>132</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 363-64.

<sup>133</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 368-69.

<sup>134</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 82.



Masood attended in Japan and found compelling and attended by thousands.<sup>135</sup> Masood recommended that the Education Department partner with the Medical Department to establish a similar system, since visual education was particularly suited to a population with low literacy rates.<sup>136</sup>

Masood also cited the Japanese example for sending public servants abroad, and recommended Hyderabad do the same.<sup>137</sup> He wrote that Hyderabad should send some of the best employees of the Educational Department and other government departments abroad annually to learn the best practices in “advanced foreign countries,” which he later qualified as the US or Europe, in addition to the Education Department maintaining its current scholarship programs for sending students abroad.<sup>138</sup>

### The Legacy of Masood’s Recommendations for Reform in Hyderabad

Masood was not the first to recommend vernacular education in Hyderabad, nor was he the first to consider Urdu as its vernacular language. The Nizam of Hyderabad, Osman Ali Khan, had issued a *firman* (decree) for the establishment of Osmania University in the city on April 26, 1917, following the advice of government secretary Sir Akbar Hydari, who recommended the establishment of an Urdu-medium university.<sup>139</sup> Masood had supported Hydari’s proposal for a new Urdu-medium university, and he participated in the curriculum committee during the planning stages of the university.<sup>140</sup> The Nizam issued the royal charter for the establishment of Osmania University on September 26, 1918, with the requirement that Urdu would be the medium of instruction in all of the arts and sciences and that knowledge of English would be compulsory. When Osmania University was formally established on October 5, 1918, Hyderabad became the first princely state to establish a vernacular university.<sup>141</sup>

Masood had held the post of principal of Osmania University from 1919 to 1920, and in his 1923 report, he requested expanded remits for the Osmania University Press and the Translation Bureau at Osmania University to implement his proposals for expanded vernacular education and the printing of books in Urdu independent of their use in schools. Masood proposed to increase the circulation of books printed in Urdu for girls, women, the working classes, and those not attending schools. He requested that Osmania University Press increase its staff and then be divided into two separate departments: one to print Osmania University textbooks, and the

<sup>135</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 368-69.

<sup>136</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 368-69.

<sup>137</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 364-65.

<sup>138</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 364-66.

<sup>139</sup>Shamsul Alam, “Educational Administration,” in *Developments in Administration under H.E.H. the Nizam VII*, ed. Shamim Aleem and M. A. Aleem (Hyderabad, India: Osmania University Press, 1984), 108-29.

<sup>140</sup>Vasant K. Bawa, *The Last Nizam: The Life and Times of Mir Osman Ali Khan*. 2nd ed. (Hyderabad, India: Centre for Deccan Studies, 2010), 101; Shamsul Alam, “Educational Administration.”

<sup>141</sup>Datla, *The Language of Secular Islam*, 51-52. See also Osmania University’s own narrative of its history at <https://www.osmania.ac.in/aboutus-originandhistory.php>; Mohd. Akbar Ali Khan, “Osmania as an Idea of the University,” in *Developments in Administration under H.E.H. the Nizam VII*, 130-48.

other to print books in Urdu for a general audience.<sup>142</sup> Masood anticipated that the department of Osmania University Press that was devoted to publication of popular materials would soon become self-supporting.<sup>143</sup> In a related move, he asked that the Translation Bureau at Osmania University be enlarged and then divided into two separate sections: one to translate the books required for Osmania University students; the other to translate books into Urdu for the broader market.<sup>144</sup>

After his trip to Japan, and in his role as Director of Public Instruction for Hyderabad State, Masood applied his experience in developing Osmania University. Building on his report's recommendations regarding the acquisition of Western knowledge, he recruited and appointed E. E. Speight, an Englishman whom he met in 1922 at Tokyo Imperial University, as head of the Department of English Language and Literature at Osmania University.<sup>145</sup> Additionally, during his tenure, Osmania University developed further as a vernacular institution.

Ultimately, developing Osmania University as a vernacular institution involved a massive project of translating content from other languages—particularly English, Arabic, and Persian—into Urdu, which necessitated transforming the Urdu language itself.<sup>146</sup> In the case of Osmania University's Bureau for Translations and Compilations, the majority of publications were translations—not original works—of English to Urdu, and during the 1920s those involved with the Translation Bureau had a vision of Urdu as the language of a united India that could challenge the place that English held in higher education in India. By 1937, the year of Masood's death, Osmania's Translation Bureau had coined 40,724 new technical terms in Urdu and translated 176 books.<sup>147</sup> By 1948, when Hyderabad was accessioned into an independent India, the Translation Bureau had translated about 500 books and coined almost 100,000 new terms.<sup>148</sup>

The legacy of Masood's recommendations for vernacular education in Urdu can be seen in the developments of the 1940s. When the government of Hyderabad ordered in 1941 that a common exam would exist for all students beginning in 1944, it effectively demanded that all secondary schools and higher education be conducted in Urdu. Although there was considerable domestic resistance to this proposal, the British did not impede the Nizam's policy to conduct exams in Urdu. Ultimately, Urdu lost its primacy with Hyderabad's absorption into India. Moreover, Osmania University was not the only institute of higher education to advocate for Urdu-medium instruction: the Jamia Islamia also taught most but not all subjects in Urdu but, unlike Osmania University, its founding vision was not anchored in vernacular Urdu-medium instruction.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>142</sup>Masood, *Travels in Japan*, vii; Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 359-60, 363-66.

<sup>143</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 359-60.

<sup>144</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 360.

<sup>145</sup>On E. E. Speight, see Masood, "National Education: Bold Experiment at Osmania University," in *Khayaban-e-Masood*, 108; Forster, Kidwai, and Masood, *Forster-Masood Letters*, 185.

<sup>146</sup>Datla, *The Language of Secular Islam*, 56-81.

<sup>147</sup>Rahman, *Language, Ideology and Power*, 232.

<sup>148</sup>Shamsul Alam, "Educational Administration," 116.

<sup>149</sup>Rahman, *Language, Ideology and Power*, 231-38.

Vernacularization received a boost from Osmania University's Urdu-medium instruction, but also occurred independently of it. Support for vernacular education extended beyond Hyderabad, as evidenced by a letter from the Indian polymath Rabindranath Tagore to Sir Akbar Hydari, the bureaucrat who recommended establishing an Urdu-medium institution that ultimately became Osmania University: "I have long been waiting for the day when freed from the shackles of a foreign language, our education becomes naturally accessible to all our people."<sup>150</sup> The rise of vernacular education at Osmania boosted the efforts of reformers beyond the borders of Hyderabad who also advocated for vernacular education.

Urdu remained the medium of instruction at Osmania University until 1949 when, following Hyderabad's accession into India, the medium of instruction changed to English.<sup>151</sup> In 1947, the original 1918 Royal Charter for Osmania University was revised, with the new royal charter promulgated on December 8, 1947; this effectively transformed Osmania University—which had hitherto been part Hyderabad as a Department of Government under royal charter—into an autonomous institution with administrative and financial autonomy. Three major changes contained in the new charter affected the vision and the pragmatics of the university: Urdu was no longer the medium of instruction, as it was replaced by Hindustani in both Urdu and Devanagari scripts; regional languages, such as Telugu, Marathi, and Kannada, were permitted; and certain subjects adopted English-medium instruction.<sup>152</sup>

Masood's recommendations for Urdu vernacularization came at a particularly salient moment, as the project of Osmania University was gaining pace and now had become the signature institution of higher education in Hyderabad. Osmania had extensive influence on education throughout Hyderabad: primary and secondary education pivoted to the vernacular, and by 1935, nine colleges were affiliated with Osmania and followed its precedent of Urdu-medium instruction.<sup>153</sup>

Masood's recommendations for primary and secondary education were also realized during his tenure in Hyderabad. During the 1920s and 1930s, educational expansion occurred alongside the Urduization of education, as the number of schools and the number of enrolled students increased in Hyderabad. Primary and secondary education in Hyderabad was reorganized in 1920-1921, which included more vernacularization, and English became a compulsory subject in all secondary schools. Although there were only 24 high schools with 7,316 students in 1917-1918, by 1934-1935 there were 84 high schools with 28,525 students. Middle schools also increased from 87 schools with 18,323 students to 130 schools with 41,318 students during the same period. Primary schools increased from 3,091 schools with 155,045 students to 4,368 schools with 273,097 students. Schooling for girls. Schooling for girls, while it remained abysmal, did increase during the same period, from 14,597 female students in primary and secondary schooling in 1910-1911, to 23,979 in 1917-1918,

<sup>150</sup>Shamsul Alam, "Educational Administration," 115.

<sup>151</sup>Abdul Ali, *Seventeen Years in Osmania University* (Madras, India: Printed at the Diocesan Press, 1968), 45.

<sup>152</sup>Khan, "Osmania as an Idea of the University."

<sup>153</sup>Nizam College remained an English medium institution that was affiliated with Madras University until 1946, when it changed its affiliation to Osmania University (but with the provision that it remain an English medium instruction). See Shamsul Alam, "Educational Administration."

and to 12,230 female students in 1947-1948. From the establishment of Osmania University to the accession of Hyderabad into India thirty years later, the number of students at all levels had increased: students in primary schools increased from 155,045 to 397,668; students in lower secondary schools increased from 18,323 to 58,200; high school students increased from 7,316 to 55,437; and college students increased from 260 to 6,261.<sup>154</sup>

## Conclusions

In the semi-autonomous princely state of Hyderabad in India, Masood stated repeatedly that “homogeneity” through education was his goal for Hyderabad, but his actual aim was to use mass vernacular education in Urdu to create a nationalist subject loyal to the Nizam.<sup>155</sup> As Director of Public Instruction, Masood sought to use education to create what Chatterjee argues is the nationalist project of creating a “modern” national culture that is nevertheless not Western.<sup>156</sup> In Hyderabad, there was the added imperative to leave intact the Muslim character of the bureaucracy and ruling elite in this non-Muslim-majority princely state.

Masood’s 1923 report represents an important node in inter-Asian networks of communication and exchange focused on models of non-Western modernization and vernacular education. It was an impassioned plea for Hyderabad to adopt a Japanese course of modernization through education—to absorb what was useful from Western technologies and transmit it in the vernacular through centralized widespread education, coupled with a focus on the imperial tradition, freedom from foreign control, and patriotic nationalism. Masood wrote stinging of his disappointment with India’s approach to education and modernization; whereas Japan spread knowledge acquired from abroad through the vernacular, in India only the elite acquired an education, and they were contemptuous of the uneducated, whom they “despised . . . as ignorant.”<sup>157</sup>

Japan held a paradoxical appeal for Syed Ross Masood and other Muslim reformers. On the one hand, Japan was a non-Christian Asian nation that emerged victorious in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 after instituting educational and other reforms during the Meiji era, following its earlier humiliation related to the 1858 unequal treaties with the US, Britain, Holland, Russia, and France. Modernizing Japan appeared to retain some essential untainted “Japaneseness,” free from the stain of cultural capitulation to Western norms. Yet it was precisely these norms and definitions of civilization—universalized as global standards in an era of nation-states—that Japan appealed to as it left the Sino-dominated East Asian world order for the mutually incompatible global world order dominated by the West.

Masood’s recommendations were all premised on a commitment to vernacularization, whereas his father and grandfather had both ultimately argued that English-medium education was the best way to further the standing of Indian Muslims. Convinced by what he witnessed in Japan in 1922, Masood attempted to

<sup>154</sup>Shamsul Alam, “Educational Administration.”

<sup>155</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 340.

<sup>156</sup>Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, 6.

<sup>157</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 83.

create a new nationalist subject in Hyderabad through mass vernacular education in Urdu. During his lifetime, Masood saw many of the reforms he had proposed come to fruition in Hyderabad.

Masood, a self-professed Anglophile who stated that “the larger the number of Indians that go to Europe, the better it is for the country,” both celebrated the Western aspects of Japan’s education while also applauding that Japan did not unthinkingly mimic Western civilization, a phenomenon that, he lamented, occurred in India.<sup>158</sup> Holding Japan as an Asian model of modernization was a way to advocate for Western technologies while simultaneously maintaining what Chatterjee termed “one’s spiritual culture,” untainted and pure.<sup>159</sup> For a Muslim reformer such as Masood, imperial Japan was a tenable model for a nationalist subject in non-Muslim-majority Hyderabad, loyal to the ruling Muslim dynasty and created through a modern vernacular educational system that spread modern scientific knowledge with its Western epistemic foundations.

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<sup>158</sup>Masood, *Japan and Its Educational System*, 365.

<sup>159</sup>Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, 6.