In search of a non-Western education model

Syed Ross Masood of Hyderabad turns to Japan

Sushila Narsimhan, Ph.D
Professor (retd.) of Japanese Studies
Formerly, Department of East Asian Studies
University of Delhi, Delhi – 110007, India
<sushila@narsimhan.com>

Introduction

In mid-1850s, most Asian countries, including India and Japan were victims of European hegemony. Within fifty years, Japan was not only the sole surviving independent Asian country; it had also become a power to reckon with. Japan's example had showed that it was possible for the Asian societies to modernize. All that they needed to know was what features of Japanese culture accounted for Japan's success and might be adapted to their own societies? From the late-19th century onwards, aided by the emergence of new travel infrastructures, and regular direct shipping services between Yokohama and Bombay (1885), and Kobe and Calcutta (1911), several Indians travelled to Japan. Japan played an important role, consciously or unconsciously, in two ways: firstly, as an inspiration for India's national independence; and secondly, as a model for educational reforms and modernization. While the former abounds with rich literature, the latter is understudied and needs to be highlighted.

Japan however served as a working model mainly for the semi-autonomous 'princely' or 'native' states, collectively called the 'Princely India,' ruled by the local hereditary monarchs, and not for the directly-ruled provinces of British India where the former Hindu and Muslim indigenous modes of learning were already replaced by a new public system of British education. However, under the constant pressure of the British encroachment on the fringes of their states, several Princely States realized the need of empowering themselves through educational reforms. But, most of them, particularly the Muslim-ruled polities like Hyderabad, resented the English-language education and looked for an alternative – a non-Western model. How and when did the Indians come to know of Japan? What features of Japanese culture and education did they find attractive and suitable to their own societies?

The paper reviews how the remote island nation Japan, after its victory over a major European power Russia in 1905, came into instant limelight sparking a wave of euphoria among the anti-Western Asians. A fellow Asian nation's victory also triggered anti-imperialist sentiments in the non-Western world. It was in this Japan-suffused atmosphere that the ruler of the largest princely state of Hyderabad sent Syed Ross Masood to Japan in 1922 to study its educational system and derive lessons for empowering his dominions.

Based on Masood's observations as documented in his writings, the paper highlights those features of Japan's education system that Masood deemed relevant for Hyderabad, and probes whether Japan-inspired reforms had the desired results?

Indian awareness of Japan

Calcutta, the cosmopolitan port city and capital of British-held territories in South and Southeast Asia until 1911, was an important conduit for Indian knowledge of Japan. Bengal, on account of its several decades of exposure to the outside world, had established its own independent links with Japan. A number of periodicals and magazines published from Rajshahi, Dhaka, and Calcutta regularly carried articles about Japan. The Bengali

intellectuals had developed acute interest in Japan, whether as a locus of cultural exchange, or a place of political asylum in the early decades of twentieth century (Nile Green, 2013, p.425). Growing curiosity about Japan prompted a Calcutta-based literary society, *Banga Bhashanubad Sabha*,[1] to bring out a 230-page book titled *Jepan* in 1863. It was actually a Bengali translation of Commodore Perry's *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the Chinese Seas and Japan* by Madhusudan Mukhopadhyay. Four years later in 1867, a Lucknow-based publisher Munshi Nawal Kishor brought out *Tarikh-e Chin O Japan*, an Urdu translation of Laurence Oliphant's *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan, 1857-1859* by Frederick Nandy and Munshi Shiv Prasad. These were probably the earliest Japan-related books which did a pioneering work in introducing Japan to the Indian-readership.

Meiji ideal of development: *Wakon Yōsai*

A small Asian country Japan's ability to preserve its independence, modernize, and compete with the West showed the way in which the other Asian societies could consider the possibilities for their own future. This encouraged the Indian thinkers to reflect on what they could learn from the Japanese experience. The emergence of new industrial travel infrastructure and expansion of passenger shipping routes from European colonies in Asia to the treaty ports of China and Japan by the late-19th century brought the people of two countries within easier reach and direct contacts. The Indians, while probing into the secrets behind Japanese achievements, discovered that the most productive measure was their education system. Was it indigenous, or borrowed from the West, or based on a selective blend of both East and West?

An intellectual-reformer from Bengal, Bhudev Mukhopadhyay (1827–1894),[2] was probably the first to note that while Japan had switched to Western system of education, it was being conducted in its own native language, rather than in English. Bhudev had never been to Japan but was aware of what was happening in the world, and in East Asia, particularly about Meiji Japan's swift rise and modernizing efforts. An ardent and a progressive nationalist, he was deeply concerned about the education of people in Bengal where he was the Director of Public Instructions. It was a period when most of his contemporaries in Asian countries, after their encounter with the West - whether in India, or in China, or in Japan, or elsewhere - were grappling with the competing values of both East and West. Bhudev was aware of the constraints that traditional ways of thinking had imposed on Indian minds, but that did not deter him from espousing the benefits of modern education. He was convinced that India would not be able to progress without embracing the Western knowledge. To enthuse his fellow-countrymen, he cited the example of Japan, which was also a tradition-bound society, but open to foreign borrowings. The Japanese had evolved a very pragmatic strategy by adopting a hybrid approach, subsumed in the phrase 'Japanese spirit, Western skill' (*wakon yōsai*), [3] while selecting foreign elements. The logic behind their strategy was that transition to a more 'modern' form of society could be more easily and effectively achieved when there is a mutually supporting combination of certain traditional values with those that are 'modern,' rather than an uncompromising antagonism between the two (Harumi Befu, 1971; Michio Morishima, 1982). Such an approach prepared them to retain what was distinctively native, while subsuming what was valuable in a foreign culture. The idea was to draw strength from a combination of both. Bhudev recommended a similar strategy to fellow Indians and learn from the Meiji ideal of development in order to bring about India's transformation (Hironaka Kazuhiko, 2003, p.18 n31; Krishna Kumar, 2005, p.159).

Princely States turn to Japan

During the British colonial rule from 1858 to 1947, the Indian sub-continent had two types of administrative systems: approximately ⅔ of the region was *British-ruled India* comprising of colonial provinces; and the remaining ⅓ was *Indian-ruled India* (Princely India) comprising of about 600 semi-autonomous 'princely' or 'native' states of various dimensions.

As mentioned earlier, Japan was seen as a working model mainly for the Princely India, and not for the whole country. This was because, in the directly-ruled provinces, the British had already introduced Western education. In the Princely States, education systems were less developed and were largely on indigenous methods, which varied from state to state as per their ethnic composition and needs, and the literacy levels were very low. In 1911, the Princely India had 4.6 per cent, and British India had 6.2 per cent literates. Although the religion of the ruler had no regional religious affiliation, the Muslim-ruled states had lower literacy on average than the Hindu-ruled states.[4] For instance, in the Nizam-ruled Hyderabad, even though Hindus constituted 85 per cent of the population, the overall literacy in 1911 as per the Census of India, was only 2.8 per cent.

After 1857, although the British had stopped the policy of annexation, they retained the right of intervention and deposing the ruler in case of misrule. The fear of British encroachment compelled the rulers towards the urgency of empowering themselves through educational and socio-economic reforms. While a few Hindu-ruled states, like Rajkot, Ajmer, Gwalior, and Indore, had set up English-style public schools and colleges on the models of Eton and Harrow; there were many, particularly the Muslim-ruled polities like Hyderabad and Rampur, resented the English-language education, which they felt was creating a class of elite *sahibs* and alienating them with their own culture and country. They looked for an alternative non-Western model.

The 'Japan Moment' in India

An event that made Japan an indisputable example of non-Western success was its victory over a major white power Russia in 1905. Japan had been a model of reform since the mid-1890s, as reflected in the writings of Indian reformers and intellectuals. But, from 1905 onwards, the references to Japan changed both in quantity and in quality. It was the first successful Asian challenge to white colonialism, something that was unimaginable until then. It stirred the imaginations of Asian anti-imperialists as a proof of the vulnerability of Europe's empires, and at the same time of an 'Asian awakening.' Swayed by this Asian outreach, the Japanese concept of *Tōyō* [East], which had hitherto been confined to Japan and China, now extended beyond the Chinese cultural zone to include India, and finally all of Asia (Cemil Aydin, 2007, pp.73-74). The vernacular newspapers and writings all across Asia - in China, Vietnam, India, Turkey, Iran, and Egypt, were full with accolades for Japan's daring feat. The Muslim newspapers celebrated it as a victory of the downtrodden eastern peoples over the invincible West. The poets in Egypt, Turkey and Persia wrote odes to the Japanese nation and the Emperor (Selçuk Esenbel, 2004, p.1140). After 1905, the Asian states increasingly saw Japan, rather than Europe, as the successful model for their self-strengthening efforts.

In India, the event coincided with vigorous and revolutionary forms of freedom struggle, and *swadeshi* fervour driving patriotic Indians to boycott European goods and promote indigenous products. An educationist Sarala Devi Ghoshal (1872–1945)[5] started a *Jujutsu*

(Japanese martial arts) school in Calcutta in 1904 to make the young Indians brave and self-reliant. A group of eminent educationists formed an *Association for the Advancement of Scientific and Industrial Education of India* in 1904, and for technical education sent students to Japan, instead of European countries (Subrata Kumar Das, 2016). The *Japan Weekly Mail* (February 23, 1907) reported that there were some fifty Indian students enrolled currently in Japanese colleges. The mood was suffused with 'Japan moment' as evident from a spate of writings in Urdu, such as Gauri Prasada's *Tarikh-e-Japan* [History of Japan]; Muhammad Ibrahim, *Jang-e Rusu-Japan* [The war of Russia and Japan]; Muhammad Fazl Husayn, *Mukammil Mukhabarat-e-Rusu-Japan* [Comprehensive news on Russia and Japan]; a stage-drama *Jang-e Roos wo Japan* [The war of Russia and Japan] by Zafar Ali Khan (1873–1956); and a narrative of the war in verse form, *Mikado-nama*, [The story of Japanese Emperor] by Mirza Husyan Ali Shirazi (1862-1932) in Persian language with 58 illustrations.

Hyderabad looks to Japan

The years 1905-1920s were marked by growing anti-Western sentiments which intensified on account of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1920s. Incensed by the shabby treatment meted out to Ottoman Khalīfah, the Muslims looked beyond their familiar zone, directing their gaze towards the distant East where a small country had taken the world by surprise. This was Japan - a fellow 'Eastern' (*mashriqi*) nation, whom they turned to for both consolation and inspiration. Even though Japan had nothing to do with the Islamic tradition, rejection of Western hegemony had been a powerful theme since the Meiji Restoration (1868), and Japan instantly filled the space in the anti-imperialist imagination of the Muslims. If Japan could do it, they could also do it. And, a common ingredient that bound them with the Japanese was their Asian identity.

Nile Green's study, based on the Urdu accounts of Japan written by Ottoman, Egyptian, Iranian, Central Asian, and Malay Muslims, points to a trans-Islamic gaze at Japan between the Russo-Japanese War and the Second World War. The Indian Muslims' turn to Japan, Green contends, was part of this wider trans-Islamic gaze (Nile Green, August 2013, p.616). This enigmatic historical connection between Japan and the Muslims, however, is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice here is to say that in the decades that followed the Russo-Japanese War, there were several factors working in various forms, and at various levels and stages which brought the Muslims closer to the Japanese (Selçuk Esenbel, October 2004). And, the Hyderabad State, being a key node in the network of Muslim intellectuals and activists, became a rallying point for the Islamic Asia. A state of bejewelled fortunes, it was the largest in terms of size, revenue, and population, and enjoyed a fair degree of autonomy, more than the other Princely States. It was also a desirable destination for migrants from the far reaches of the subcontinent, from Afghanistan, the Middle East and even Southeast Asia.[6] Despite the fact that Hindus constituted 85 per cent of Hyderabadis, the State's Muslimness was unique.

At a time when the Muslims were feeling dejected and insecure, Hyderabad played a very positive role in directing their attention towards Japan's example. Zafar Ali Khan's *Jang-e Roos wo Japan*, a soap opera with 39 episodes in a leading Hyderabadi monthly *Dakan Rivyu* (Deccan Review), had made Japan a familiar name (Moinuddin Aqeel, 2010, p.202). The textbooks of Osmania University, published between 1919 and 1921, were prefaced with references to Japan's modernization and the need for Hindūstān to take lessons from Japan's example (Kavita Saraswathi Datla, 2009, p.1117). The writer Maulavi Abdul Haq, the *Baba-e Urdu* (Father of Urdu), was to play a key role, along with Syed Ross Masood, in carrying out educational reforms and the promotion of Urdu in Hyderabad. Both Zafar Ali Khan and

Maulavi Haq were graduates from Aligarh Muslim University and had moved to Hyderabad where they played a key role in creating awareness about Japan among the Hyderabadis. Thus, very soon, despite Hyderabad being a landlocked state located in the heart of peninsular India, it had established its own independent connections with Japan. In fact, Hyderabad was 'a major sponsor for the despatch of Indian Muslims to Japan' (Nile Green, August 2013, pp.612-13). It is quite possible that the ruling Asaf Jahis, who enjoyed excellent relations with the British, were envisaging an independent future for their dominions, and looked to Japan as a template for empowering themselves.[7]

Japan as the 'Answer'

The Muslims in India resented not only the British rule but also teaching-learning in English, which by the 1920s had become the dominant language of University education in India. The lukewarm attitude towards Western education, which they felt was undermining their religious and cultural identity, adversely affected the Muslim literacy. A few rational Muslim educationists, like Syed Ahmed Khan (1817–98), had been for decades striving hard to convince fellow Muslims about the benefits of Western learning, but to no avail. It was ironic that even his Oxford-educated grandson Syed Ross Masood (1889-1937) expressed his apprehensions. While he recognized the relevance of modern education, he saw no merit in imposing English-medium education on the Indians.

Japan's ability to defeat a European power had vindicated the efficacy of the 'Japanese' model of modernization based on the hybrid *wakon yōsai* formula or a synthesis of Eastern and Western knowledge. Hence, if the basic hurdle for Syed Ahmed Khan and other Muslim reformists was the question of balancing tradition with modernity, and modern education with the ethnic identity of the Muslims, then Japan provided the right 'answer' how it could be accomplished. Japan not only served as a metaphor for Asian modernity, it also presented a model which could guide their societies to modernity without losing their traditional values. Japan had intelligently selected the essential aspects of Western civilization for adoption without appropriating "superficial and harmful" Western habits or undermining its own cultural heritage. Through this 'selective' approach, the Japanese had created an effective synthesis of Western and Eastern knowledge. The Japanese experience of modernization proved that non-Western cultural and religious traditions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Islam, need not be regarded as obstacles to modern progress (Cemil Aydin, 2007, p.81). By developing a system of modern technical education in its own language rather than English, Japan had also demonstrated the power of vernaculars for higher education. This greatly assuaged the Indian Muslims who were opposed to English medium and secular education. Thus, while the iconic 'Grand Old Man of Aligarh' had travelled to the West in 1869-70 to study the British model for the Anglo-Mohammedan Oriental College, the equally iconic Ross Masood took just the opposite direction and travelled to the East in 1922 to study the Japanese model for Jamia Usmania.

Early visitors to Japan

Masood was, however, by no means the pioneer traveller to Japan. Prior to him, several Indians had taken note of Japan's modernization and industrial development. The historic and fascinating encounter between spiritual-philosopher Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) and an astute Parsi businessman Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata (1839-1904) in 1893 aboard a luxury steamship *SS Empress of India* sailing from Yokohama to Vancouver is well known. Tata was

on a business trip to Japan, and was so impressed with Japan's scientific and technological developments, that he not only signed up with a Japanese shipping magnet Shibusawa Eiichi (1848-1931) for starting direct shipping services between Japan and India, he also decided to set up a silk farm with Japanese sericulture technology in Mysore and brought a Japanese couple Mr. & Mrs. Odzu to run the farm. The visionary Tata's observations about Japan's industrial ventures were vindicated when Japan defeated China, its mentor for several centuries, in 1895. The news took the world-watchers by surprise. A leading British daily *The Times* (August 27, 1897) attributed Japan's 'marvellous transformation' to the thoroughness of its educational planning, and the establishment of technical and business schools (*senmon gakko*), for educating and training human resources in response to Japan's industrial needs. The article concluded, "Japan's whole system of commercial education is one to which, in its completeness, even the Anglo-Saxon countries have not yet attained." The foreign observers, both in and outside Japan, were stunned by a small Asian country's ability to discern the importance of technical education so ahead of its time.

Another notable Indian to be impressed by Japan's industrial development was the distinguished engineer-statesman Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya (1860-1962) who visited Japan three years later in 1898, and again in 1919. During his *Diwan*-ship of Mysore State, between 1909 and 1918, Visvesvaraya carried out comprehensive educational and economic reforms, including the state-capitalist system that he had seen in Japan, to boost the industrial development of the state. And, very soon, Mysore acquired the reputation of being a model state within colonial India due to its successful industrialization and modernization (Aya Ikegame, 2013, pp.10 & 179 n11). Apart from Tata and Visvesvaraya, the swift rise of Japan had also been taken note of by the rulers of a few small Princely States, like Baroda, Rampur, and Kapurthala. Inspired by Japan's success stories and the mass education programme, Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III (r.1875-1939) of Baroda initiated concrete measures for compulsory and free primary education. In 1896, Baroda became the first state to have compulsory and free primary education,[8] thereby placing his state far ahead of contemporary British India. Nawab Hamid Ali Khan (r.1886–1930) of Rampur, and Maharaja Jagatjit Singh (r.1877–1947) of Kapurthala, had gone to Japan mainly for tourism and recreation in 1896 and 1903 respectively. During their stay they were so overwhelmed to witness Japan's progress and technological innovations that after their return they immediately directed their energies towards educational reforms in their respective states, even before Mysore and Hyderabad did.

Syed Ross Masood goes to Japan, 1922

It was against this Japan-inspired background that Ross Masood was sent to Japan in March 1922 by the Nizam Asaf Jah VII (Mir Usman Ali Khan, r.1911–1948) of *Mumlikat-e-Asifiya* (Hyderabad State) on a fact-finding mission to study Japanese system of pedagogy. The main objectives were: to study how Japan had managed to develop a European-style educational system in its own language without relying on English; to assess the nature and success of the enterprise; and to determine to what extent Hyderabad could learn from Japan. As the Director of Public Instruction in the state of Hyderabad from 1916 to 1928, Masood had a broad spectrum of responsibilities, which included setting up of an Urdu-medium University with a European curriculum in the capital city of Hyderabad, and promotion of Urdu in Nizam's Dominions. In other words, Masood's task involved making Nizam's Dominions a modern and cohesive state through educational reforms. Another Mulism who travelled to Japan along with Ross Masood was Shaykh Mohammad Badral-Islam who wrote *Haqiqat-e-Japan* [The truth about Japan] after returning in 1934.

Prior to his departure, Masood had gathered all available information about Japan and its education system. When the engineer-statesman M. Visvesvaraya came to know about Ross Masood's Japan-trip, he travelled from Mysore to Bombay to meet him prior to his boarding the Japanese ship *Wakasa Maru*. Visvesvaraya was in Japan only recently in 1919, so he was able to give him the latest feed-back and also letters of introduction, contact details of various Japanese officials, academicians, and some Japan-based Indians. By then, Visvesvaraya had also published his observations of Japan, as part of a larger work, under the title of *Reconstructing India* (1920). Masood had also read the 546-pages report, *The Educational System of Japan* (1906), by W. H. Sharp (1865-1917), who taught Philosophy and later became Principal at Elphinstone College, Bombay (from 1894-1900 and 1906-07). Sharp was sent to Japan in 1904 by Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India (1898-1905), to study the educational system and its bearings on Indian society (Sharp, 1906, p.8). Asian people's growing fascination with Japan's educational system, the reaction of the West on the East and the revival of people's movements everywhere - in India, in Japan, and in China, had caused serious consternation in the minds of the British. To them the primitive society suddenly seemed to have awakened (Chamberlain, 1910, p.120). These developments prompted the British colonial masters not only to review the British education in India but also study the nature of Japan's education system and the possible impact on the Indians.

Since Masood was involved with the setting up of the curriculum for the Osmania University, it was important to know the criteria and the methodologies adopted by the Japanese in the selection of the courses and medium of instruction. During his interactions with the educationists and officials of the Education department, Masood was told that before zeroing in on any particular system, the Japanese had made several reconnaissance trips to America and Europe to study their education systems and survey technological advancements. After their return, quite a few published their observations and the results were extremely productive. Their reports enabled the authorities to evolve a system of their own selecting what was necessary, and accordingly devise means and methods for their assimilation and implementation. Likewise, Masood also recorded details of his trip and published it in form of books, both in English, *Japan and its educational system* (1923) and in Urdu, *Japan aur uska talimi nazm o nasq* (1924).

While in Japan, Masood travelled extensively to observe Japan's high schools, colleges, universities, polytechnics, special schools for the physically challenged, and related-curricula. His real interest lay in knowing the uses of Japanese language rather than languages of Europe for all forms of contemporary scholarship and education (David Lelyveld, 2017, p.xii). Unfamiliarity with Japanese language did not stop Masood from conducting an in-depth investigation. To gain insights into teaching-learning techniques, he prepared detailed questionnaires and visited several universities in Kyoto and Tokyo. In 1922, there were 17 Universities in Japan for a population of about 56 millions. He contrasted the situation with India, with six times more population, and there were only 14 universities. (Table 1)

Table 1: Number of Universities in India and Japan, 1922

JAPAN = 56 million (population)		INDIA = 350 million (population)	
Imperial	National & Private	British	Indian
7	10	7	7

In the Imperial University of Tokyo, Masood met the renowned Sanskrit scholar Takakusu Junjiro (1866-1945), also an alumnus of Oxford University, and the two felt comfortable

talking in English about a wide array of issues. Masood found his visit to Keio Gijiku, a private university founded by Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901),[9] truly inspiring and thought provoking.[10] The university curriculum included courses on law, business and commerce, Western medicine, science and technology. Masood lauded Fukuzawa Yukichi as "the greatest of the early educationists of Japan" comparable only to India's Syed Ahmed Khan. Both considered education as the basis of all progress, set up translation bureaus to translate Western works,[11] and devoted their whole life and energies in enlightening the people about the benefits of Western education (Masood, 1923, p.89).[12] With the help of like-minded scholars, they created equivalents for the new concepts and terminologies that did not exist in native vocabulary. Masood admired Fukuzawa's passionate zeal in reaching out to the masses through public speaking (*enzetsu*), articles in magazines and newspapers written in plain colloquial language and often illustrated with cartoons. Masood makes a special mention of his *Gakumon no Susume* (1873) of which the very first edition, 3,400,000 copies were sold, which points to widespread literacy in Japan in 1870s. One nation and one language had added to their homogeneity, and facilitated swift spread of literacy and education.

Masood attributed Japan's high level of literacy and reading culture to people's zeal for learning and receptivity to foreign cultures. This encouraged them to import, select, and assimilate elements from foreign civilizations, be it Chinese, or Korean, or Indian, or Western. Despite their ignorance of European languages, they had, within a decade after the Meiji Restoration, not only read Samuel Smile's *Self Help*, John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, Chambers' *Encyclopaedia*, *The Universal Geography*, works of Romain Rolland and Leo Tolstoy, etc. but also brought many of these masterpieces within the reach of masses through translations. The impact of these books on the Japanese people's minds was much more rewarding than the classroom teaching. The foreign-educated Japanese passed on to their countrymen all the essential knowledge they had acquired abroad. He contrasted the situation with India where the new knowledge gained through English education did not percolate down, because "we created a kind of monopoly by adopting the selfish policy of reserving for ourselves what we had learnt of Western knowledge." In India, diversity of vernaculars has no doubt created many language barriers, but we also made no efforts to disseminate through translations. Rather, "those of us who had the good fortune of receiving European education not only held ourselves aloof from old-fashioned people but also despised them as ignorant beings unworthy of any notice." As long as modern thought and modern science remained 'locked up in a foreign language,' progressive ideas would never spread and India would not be able to compete with the other nations of the world (Masood, 1923, pp.82-84).

The most important question that weighed heavily on Masood's mind was pertaining to the study of Western sciences in an Asian language. Masood himself had Western education first at Aligarh and then in England. Hence, it was not easy for him to fully comprehend the problems of vernacular medium higher education. His major apprehensions were: whether it would be possible to find accurate vocabularies in Urdu to interpret the complexities of modern sciences; and whether replacing English scientific words by Urdu would make learning easier, or difficult, for the students (Masood, 1970, pp.181-182; cited in Kavita Datla, 2009). In order to fully grasp the productivity of Japanese as the sole medium of instruction, Masood made laborious efforts to gain insights into the nature of the language, its writing system, and then relate it to Urdu. W. H. Sharp had done a similar exercise in 1904, but saw no merit of education in Japanese language, especially the use of Chinese ideographs which were putting an unnecessary strain on people's brain. Inclusion of Chinese, except for its aesthetic value, had no relation to intellect, and no match to the discipline afforded by Latin and Greek (Sharp, 1906, p.402). Masood also found Japanese language - loaded with

Chinese *kanji* and two Japanese syllabaries *hiragana* and *katakana* - very cumbersome, and far more complex than Urdu. But, unlike Sharp, Masood admired the Japanese perseverance and determination in making their language self-contained, an all-purpose and a worldly vernacular that could contend with English. He said, "I am an Asiatic, and as such, have understood, perhaps in a more personal way than it is possible for any European or American to understand, the exact weight of each obstacle which Japan has had to remove from her path in her march towards national unity and full independence" (Masood, 1923, p.iii). Masood's portrayal of Japan's vernacular medium higher education was very positive. In order to transplant Western sciences into Japan, the Japanese had created equivalents of Western scientific concepts. While some were replaced by existing Japanese words, others were assigned to new Japanese words coined deliberately. By making their language self-contained, the Japanese had brought the modern knowledge within the reach of everybody. And, 'one nation and one language' had added to their homogeneity, and facilitated swift spread of literacy and education. He argued, if the Japanese could do it successfully, it could be done with Urdu as well. Urdu, unlike the Japanese language, belongs to the Indo-Aryan family and has greater affinity with European languages (Masood, 1923, p.179).

India's first Vernacular University: Jamia Usmania

After his return from Japan, Masood developed deep disillusionment with racism and colonial educational system. To him, his own education appeared "not a national" one. A "national education," he said, "should not alienate people of the same country" (Masood, 1968, p.202). Japan's education system was 'national' because it was being imparted in its own language. To substantiate his point, he referred to the Non-Cooperation movement which grew rapidly because Gandhiji and other leaders were reaching out to masses in their own tongue (Masood, 1923, p.353).[13] Thereafter, Masood became a staunch supporter of vernacular-medium higher education. But the linguistic scenario of Hyderabad was diverse because it had four major vernaculars - Telugu, Mahratti, Kannada, and Urdu. (Table 2) Since it was not possible to make all the four vernaculars the media of secondary and higher instruction, Masood's choice fell for Urdu. While conceding that Urdu was a language of minority, and would have to contend with Telugu and Mahratti – the predominant languages. But, he justified his decision on the grounds that Urdu had been the state's official language for a long time and people were familiar with it. Hyderabad city was predominantly Urdu-speaking (67.25%) against 22.29% Telugu (Chirag Ali, 1885-86, p.456).

Table 2: Language/Speakers in Hyderabad State (1871)

Telugu	4,266,469
Mahratti	3,147,745
Kannada	1,238,519
Urdu	928,241

Source: *Census of 1871* in Chirag Ali, *Hyderabad under Sir Salar Jung*, Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1885-86, p.432; cited in Tariq Rahman, "Urdu in Hyderabad State."

The establishment of India's first vernacular Osmania University (*Jamia Usmania*), and also the first to use Urdu,[14] was no doubt a 'bold experiment' which gave immense gratification to Masood for his key role. An elated Rabindranath Tagore, the founder of Visva Bharati at Santiniketan, congratulated Akbar Hydari (1869-1941), the *Sadr ul-Maham* (Chief Minister) of Hyderabad State, and said, "I have long been waiting for the day when, freed from the shackle of a foreign language, our education becomes naturally accessible to all our people."[15]

Masood was a *ghair mulki* (not a native) to the Hyderabad dominions,[16] but he devoted himself whole-heartedly in the service of the Nizam Asaf Jah VII, who out of his concern for an overall development of Hyderabad, had gathered the best talents, mostly from among the Urdu-speaking Muslims of North India.[17] Two other eminent scholars picked by the Nizam were Maulvi Abdul Haq (1870-1961) and Wahiuddin Salim Panipati (1867-1928). All three of them had old Aligarh connection, and played a key role in the establishment and functioning of the Osmania University. Both Abdul Haq and Salim Panipati were ardent promoters of Urdu; the latter was well-known for his skills in coining terminologies in Urdu. It is clear that, Masood wanted to make Urdu a self-contained language that could match with English and serve as a standardized language of education and exchange of ideas. By making Urdu the medium of instruction at Osmania University, Masood was not only attempting to transform the linguistic situation of Hyderabad, but also expand the linguistic functions of a vernacular (Kavita Datla, 2009, p.1120). Urdu did not stop with Osmania, but was gradually made compulsory in all the schools in Hyderabad State.

Japan-inspired reforms: Outcome

Masood was quite optimistic about the future of Hyderabad, and Indian people's intellectual potentials which he considered superior to the Japanese. "All that we lack are facilities for the proper development and training of what may be called our national genius."(Masood, 1923, pp.83-84). In the early years of Meiji rule, Japan too lacked facilities and trained teachers; the government had to hire foreign specialists (*oyatoi gaikokujin*), and send students and educators to Western countries for higher studies and training. Masood strongly recommended sending students and officials for training to Japan. As a matter of fact, Hyderabad sent a large number of Muslim students to Japan.

A prime reason for Japan's successful implementation of educational reforms, Masood noted, was its linguistic homogeneity and people's patriotic spirit. The Japanese laid lot of stress on the ethical education which was geared at instilling national unity and patriotism, and reverence for the Emperor. To him, imparting knowledge in one's mother tongue was also an evidence of their uncompromising patriotism and loyalty towards their country. In order to generate a conducive atmosphere in Hyderabad, Masood deduced three 'forces' from the Japanese model: loyalty and patriotism towards His Exalted Highness; love for the country; and promotion of Urdu to make the Nizam's Dominions linguistically homogeneous. Masood recommended history textbooks to focus on the great and benevolent deeds of Indians, particularly the Royal House of Hyderabad. Like in Japan, the schools must prominently display photographs of their monarch (Masood, 1923, pp.342-346). This way Masood hoped to transform the veneration of the Emperor into veneration of the Nizam, foster unity and patriotic spirit among the students, and make Hyderabad a cohesive and literate state. This he deemed prerequisite for the smooth implementation of educational reforms.

The most visible outcome of the Urdu medium education was that the overall literacy level in Hyderabad State rose from 2.8 per cent in 1911, to 5 per cent in 1931. But, such a move benefitted mainly the Muslims whose literacy swelled from 3.4 per cent in 1911 to 10.4 per cent in 1931. The Hindu literacy, in contrast, recorded a minimal increase from 2.2 per cent in 1911 to 4 per cent in 1931. (Table 3) At the same time, this 'Urduization' of education turned out to be detrimental for the Hindus many of whom migrated to colleges in British India (Madras Presidency) resulting in the decline of Hindu population in Hyderabad State. The imposition of Urdu evoked protests from the non-Muslims and eventually divided the populace. The press carried reports about the discriminatory policies of the Nizam towards

the Hindus, such as the highest posts being dominated by Muslims, etc. (*The Hindu*, 11 October 1923). Other allegations included making Jamia Usmania a sectarian university, giving prominence to Urdu, and neglecting other local languages (Rahman, 2016, p.51).[18] Masood knew that in a multi-lingual country, it was difficult to go unilingual. But, he remained steadfast to his commitment about having vernacular language as vehicles for higher learning. Like in Japan, a Bureau for Translations and Compilations (*Shuba-e Tarjuma*) was set up to facilitate translation of necessary literature into Urdu. In 1924, testifying before the Blatter Commission (University Reform Commission) in Bombay, Masood called for a system of vernacular education in all major languages throughout India, up throughout the university level, with English as a compulsory second language in all of them (Masood, 1968, p.188).

Table 3: Literacy in Hyderabad State 1911-1931 (Religion wise)

1931			1911	
Overall = 5%			Overall = 2.8%	
Hindus	Muslims		Hindus	Muslims
9,699,615	1,534,666	←Population→	11,626,146	1,380,990
391,317 (4%) Women 3.5%	158,859 (10.4%) Women 11%	← Literate →	266,968 (2.2%)	81,260 (3.4%)

Source: *Censuses of India, 1911 & 1931*, Government of India; K.V. Narayana Rao, "Internal Migration Policies in an Indian State: A case study of Mulki rules in Hyderabad and Andhra" (August 1977), p.17.

The question arises whether the Japan-inspired reforms were able to take Hyderabad to similar path? At the outset of his report, Masood compared Japan to Hyderabad, not to India (Masood, 1923, p.2). While he was looking at Japan, his mind was on Hyderabad. But there existed vast differences which created grave doubts about the feasibility of replicating Japan-style reforms and achieving similar results. That is why while concluding his report, he sought to caution beforehand by making it clear that Japan possessed certain natural advantages (Ibid. p.340). Hence, what worked in Japan, might not work in Hyderabad. Japan's foundations were built on a strong spirit of national unity, and intense loyalty to the Emperor. Unlike the Japanese, 'we are not homogenous people.' Masood contrasted Japan with a heterogeneous, multi-lingual and multi-religious India. Within the limited area of Hyderabad itself, there are so many 'difficulties' almost parallel to 'India as a whole.' "It is like dealing not with one country, but with a collection of several countries each with a different language and people of its own" (Ibid.). W. H. Sharp's assessment of Indian and Japanese conditions twenty years ago was in similar vein. Japan, he said, has linguistic homogeneity, energy and initiative of its people, and same language throughout as both subject and medium of instruction. All these have given Japan the advantage of a single system in place of the multiplicity of British India (Sharp, 1906, pp.478-80). As per Sharp's diagnosis, India was totally different and inherently unable to take a similar path.

Conclusion

In the Indian discourses, Japan's accomplishments were attributed to compulsory public education and industrial polices. Japan was the first country to initiate successful programmes in mass education - in its own language. It had showed to the world that the process of modernization was not unique to the West, but was possible in any society. And, it was possible to modernize without losing the intrinsic cultural traditions and ethnic identity. During his interactions with the Japanese, Masood was told, that they adopted Western things in the same way as Western machinery, with the sole object of cold utility and nothing else (Masood, 1970, p.40). This was the most striking aspect of Japan's modernizing process

which attracted the Indian intellectuals and reformers. In other words, whether it was Bhudev, or Visvesvaraya, or Masood, all were responding to the Meiji policy of *wakon yosai*, a hybrid approach for selecting only the necessary aspects of Western civilization, while preserving the essence of their cultural heritage. The Osmania University, being the first to impart European learning in a vernacular language, served as a testimony of how to balance modern education with the ethnic identity of the Muslims.

As per the title of Masood's book, the theme is Japan's educational development, but two-third of the contents are devoted to Japan's history and socio-political development, and very little on linguistic details. The book thus becomes the first study of Japan by an Indian, and also the first to connect Japan with Hyderabad State. But, it was by no means the first work on Japan. Some of the notable earlier writings were Nawab Hamid Ali Khan's *Museer-e-Hamidi* (1896), and Maharaja Jagatjit Singh's *My travels in China, Japan and Java* (1905) and its Punjabi version *Safar-i-Chinu-Japan-u-Java* (1906). Although these works fall in the category of travelogues, they provide valuable information about Japan's history, civilization, and culture. The most notable thing about the writers of these works was their role as administrators or educators. Their intention was neither to flaunt what they saw in Japan, nor rouse readers' sensations through exciting tales of their far-flung adventures. They wanted their narratives to serve as guidebooks or practical tools for the transformation of their states. These writer-statesmen did not see Japan as a befitting political ally or a trading partner. For them, Japan was an idea, and a role-model which could guide their societies to modernity.

In contrast to Hamid Ali Khan and Jagatjit Singh's informal travel accounts, Ross Masood's 400-pages book was an official report, compiled for the Government of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of *Mumlikat-e-Asifiya*. Unlike the rulers of Rampur and Kapurthala, Ross Masood had a specific purpose, to provide a guideline for the educational reforms, and specify what was feasible for Hyderabad, and what was not. In his report, Masood compares Japan to Hyderabad, and not to India. This was natural because he went to Japan to study its education system and its viability for Hyderabad, and not for the whole country. But the magnitude of problems on account of Hyderabad's heterogeneity was comparable to India as a whole. His observations of Japan, the country and the people, had revealed certain inherent aspects which were missing in Hyderabad and therefore dimmed the possibilities of replicating Japan-like reforms in Hyderabad. While concluding his report, Masood cautioned the authorities by making it clear that Japan possessed certain natural advantages. Hence, what worked in Japan, might not work in Hyderabad. 'India is not homogenous like Japan. Hyderabad is itself divided on account of differences of culture, race, religion and language. Hence, educational planning must be done as if dealing with not a single country, but a collection of several countries each with a different language and people of its own.' It is clear that going unilingual by imposing Urdu was not enough to make Hyderabad a homogenous state. So he prescribed history textbooks to focus on the benevolent deeds of Asaf Jahis and display Nizam's photograph to instil loyalty and patriotism among the Hyderabadis. Masood, it is clear, wanted to make Hyderabad an educationally empowered and a cohesive Muslim-ruled state. Hyderabad was also a major sponsor for the despatch of Indian Muslims students to Japan, which indicates that the Asaf Jahis were striving to make their dominion an independent and a cohesive state.

1Notes

Banga Bhashanubad Sabha (1851) included eminent British scholars, e.g., R. Colvin, W. Seton-Karr, J. Long, R. B. Chapman, W. Kay, and H. Woodrow. The aim was to bring the Western works, including children's books, such as *Robinson Crusoe, Aesop's Fables, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Gulliver's Travels, Don Quixote, Iliad* and *Odyssey*, within the reach of Bengalis through translations.

2 Bhudev Mukhopadhyay served the British in Bengal Presidency from 1862 to 1883; was knighted as the CIE (Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire) in 1877; and in 1882, was made the Director of Public Instructions, and also nominated to Viceroy's Council.

3 The Japanese were always open to foreign borrowings. During the late-Heian period, they adopted the formula of *wakon kansai* (Japanese spirit, Chinese skill) which facilitated borrowings from China. This was changed to *wakon yōsai* (Japanese spirit, Western skill) in the early Meiji period when confronted with Western civilization. This hybrid approach helped them to select and adopt the valuable elements from foreign cultures.

4 In the British Provinces, the literacy of the Muslims was (6.2%) lower than Hindus (7.1%). In 1911, the literacy in Muslim-ruled Hyderabad was 2.8%; Hindu-ruled states: Mysore = 6.3%; Cochin = 15.1%; Travancore = 15%; and Baroda = 10.1%. *Census of India, 1911*. The Muslims encouraged memorization of Quran rather than literacy.

5 Sarala Devi Ghoshal was Rabindranath Tagore's sister Swarnakumari Devi's daughter.

6 Although, from the 1920s, passports were required for those entering India, they were not strictly followed. For details, see Taylor C. Sherman, "Migration, Citizenship and Belonging in Hyderabad (Deccan), 1946–1956" in *Modern Asian Studies*, vol.45, no.1 (2011), p.85, 16n. The Nizam had very close relations with the Ottomans. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, two of Ottoman princess - Dürrüşehvar Sultan, the last Khalifah and the heir apparent to the Ottoman throne, and her cousin Nilüfer married Azam Jah and Moazzam Jah, the first and second sons of the Nizam Asaf Jah VII, respectively.

7 The intention became clear when the ruling Nizam, by virtue of the Indian Independence Act of 1947, was given the choice to accede either to India or to Pakistan, he opted for a sovereign Hyderabad State.

8 All children from the age of 7 to 14 were provided with free education.

9 *Keio Gijuku*, founded as a school in 1858, acquired the status of university in 1904.

10 Masood was deeply impressed that the Emperor encouraged private individuals to set up academic institutions, and extended funds from his personal coffers: ¥50,000 (= Rs.75,000 in 1900) to Fukuzawa. The other beneficiaries included Okuma Shigenobu (*Waseda Daigaku*) and Jinzo Naruse (*Nippon Joshi Daigaku*). The repeated references to Japanese royalties' giving funds indicates that Masood expected similar kind of gesture from the Nizam.

11 Syed Ahmed Khan set up the *Scientific Society* at Ghazipur in 1864 to translate works from English and other European languages into Urdu. Fukuzawa formed a literary society *Meirokusha* in 1873 to translate selective Western works. In 1918, in tandem with the establishment of Urdu-medium Osmania University, a Bureau for Translations and Compilations (*Shuba-e Tarjuma*) was also set up for translating important works from other languages into Urdu.

12 Ahmed Khan started *Aligarh Movement*, Fukuzawa started *bummei-kaika* (civilization and enlightenment) movement.

13 Gandhiji decried English-medium education which had produced 'mere imitators' and elite sahibs disconnected with their own culture and masses. The Japanese, on the other hand, brought about the awakening of their people through the use of mother tongue. They were not imitators, rather their actions bore originality. Riho Isaka, "Language and Education in Colonial and Post-Colonial India" in Takeshi Sasaki, *Nature and Human Communities* (Tokyo: Springer Science and Business Media, 2011), p.36.

14[14] The Nizam's order issued on 26 April 1917, said: While 'the medium of instruction will be our language Urdu (*hamārī zubān Urdū*), English will retain its importance and remain a compulsory language.'

15[15] Rabindranath Tagore's letter dtd. 9 January 1918 addressed to Sir Akbar Hydarī (1869-1941); cited in Tariq Rahman, "Urdu in Hyderabad State" in *The Annual of Urdu Studies* (September 2008), p.50.

16[16] Masood was in the *Indian Educational Service* of the British Government of India and in charge of education in Bihar and Orissa. At the behest of the Nizam, the British government sent Masood on a deputation to Hyderabad where he was appointed as the Director of Public Instructions.[17] Reforms included vocational and technical school and colleges; teachers' training; physical education; agricultural schools in rural areas for practical training and experimental farming; free basic education; and adult literacy programme.

[18] The British did not, however, interfere because the Nizam was their loyal ally. It was only after Hyderabad was absorbed into the Indian Union that this policy was finally reversed. For more details, see Tariq Rahman, "Urdu in Hyderabad State").

References

Aqeel, Moinuddin. 2010. "Japan and Haiderabad: Sir Sayed Ross Masood's Visit to Japan and its Impact on the Educational System of Haiderabad State in British India" in Kyoto *Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies* 3 (2) (March 2010). <www.asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/kias/1st_period/contents/pdf/kb3_2/12aqeel.pdf>

Ali, Chirag. 1885-86. *Hyderabad under Sir Salar Jung* (Bombay: Education Society's Press).

Aydin, Cemil. 2007. *The politics of anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of world order in pan-Islamic and pan-Asian thought* (New York: Columbia University Press).

Badral-Islam, Shaykh Muhammad. 1934. *Haqıqat-e Japan* [The truth about Japan] (Delhi: Anjuman-e Taraqqı-e Urdu).

Befu, Harumi. 1971. *Japan: An Anthropological Introduction* (San Francisco: Chandler).

Chamberlain, Wm.I. 1910. "Educational Problems in India" in *The Journal of Race Development*, 1:1 (July 1910).

Dass, Subrata Kumar. 2016. "Japan in the eyes of Bengal" (August 20, 2016). <https://www.academia.edu/3576781/Japan_in_the_Eyes_of_Bengal>

Datla, Kavita Saraswathi. 2009. "A worldly vernacular: Urdu at Osmania University," *Modern Asian Studies*, vol.43, no.5.

Esenbel, Selçuk. 2004. "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900–1945" in *The American Historical Review*, Vol.109, Issue 4 (October 2004).

Green, Nile. 2013. "Forgotten Futures: Indian Muslims in the Trans-Islamic Turn to Japan" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.72, no.3 (August 2013).

----------. 2013. "Shared infrastructures, informational asymmetries: Persians and Indians in Japan, c.1890–1930" in *Journal of Global History* (2013), vol.8.

Hironaka, Kazuhiko. 2003. "Indian National Education Campaign and Japanese Education" in *So-Sui* (Fukuoka, 2003), p.18, 31n; cited in Moinuddin Aqeel, "Japan and Haiderabad: Sir Sayed Ross Masood's Visit to Japan and its Impact on the Educational System of Haiderabad State in British India" in *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies* 3 (2) (March 2010).

Husayn, Muhammad Fazl.1904. *Mukammil Mukhabarat-e-Rusu-Japan* [Comprehensive news on Russia and Japan] (Muradabad).

Ibrahim, Muhammad.1904. *Jang-e Rusu-Japan* [The war of Russia and Japan] (Muradabad).

Ikegame, Aya. 2013. *Princely India Re-imagined: A historical anthropology of Mysore from 1799 to the present* (New York: Routledge).

"Indian students" in *Japan Weekly Mail* (February 23, 1907).

Khan, Hamid Ali. 1896. *Museer-e-Hamidi*, 2 volumes (Agra: Matbe Mufeed-e Aam).

Khan, Zafar Ali. 1905. *Jang-e Roos wo Japan* [The war of Russia and Japan] (Hyderabad: Matbaa).

Kumar, Krishna. 2005. *Political Agenda of Education: A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas* (SAGE Publications India).

Lelyveld, David. 2017. "Jūtē hain Jāpān ī kaprē inglistānī: Sayyid Ross Masood's Passage to Japan" in Alireza Korangy (ed.), *Urdu and Indo-Persian Thought, Poetics, and Belles Lettres*, (Leiden: Brill).

Masood, Ross. 1923. *Japan and its educational system* (Hyderabad-Deccan: Government Central Press).

----------. 1924. *Japan aur uska talimi nazm o nasq* (Aurangabad: Anjuman-e Taraqqı-e Urdu).

----------. 1968. *Travels in Japan*: *Diary of an Exploring Mission*, ed. Jalil Ahmad Kidwai (Karachi: Ross Masood Education and Culture Society of Pakistan, 1968 [1922]).

Masood, Sayyid Ross. 1970. "Mass Education Possible through Mother Tongue Alone" in Jalil A. Kidwai (ed.), *Khayābān-e-Masood* (Karachi: Ross Masood Educational and Cultural Society).

Morishima, Michio. 1982. *Why Has Japan 'Succeeded'? Western Technology and the Japanese Ethos* (England: Cambridge University Press).

Mukhopadhyay, Madhusudan (tr.).1863. *Jepan* (Calcutta: Calcutta School Book and Vernacular Literature Society) [Matthew Calbraith Perry, *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the Chinese Seas and Japan* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1856), 3 vols.

Nandy, Frederick and Munshi Shiv Prasad (tr.). 1867. *Tarikh-e Chin O Japan* (Lukhnow: Munshi Nawal Kishor) 2 vols. [Laurence Oliphant, *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan, 1857-1859* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1859), 2 vols. *American and Oriental Literary Record: A Monthly Register of the Most Important Works Published in North and South America, in India, China, Europe, and the British Colonies*, 7 vols. (London: Trübner, 1869-72), p.435.

Prasada, Gauri. 1904. *Tarikh-e-Japan* [History of Japan] (Agra: Anjuman-e).

Rahman, Tariq. 2016. "Urdu in Hyderabad State" in *The Annual of Urdu Studies* (December 2016). <www.urdustudies.com/pdf/23/06Rahman.pdf>

Rao, K.V. Narayana. 1977. "Internal Migration Policies in an Indian State: A case study of Mulki rules in Hyderabad and Andhra" in *Migration and Development Study Group*, Center for International Studies Massachusetts, Cambridge (August 1977).

Sharp, W. H. 1906. *The Educational System of Japan* (Bombay: Government Central Press).

Shirazi, Husyan Ali.1907. *Mikadonama* (Calcutta: Matbaa-yi Habl al-Matin).

Singh, Maharaja Jagatjit. 1905. *My travels in China, Japan and Java* 1903 (London: Hutchinson).

----------. 1906. *Safar-i-Chınu-Japan-u-Java* [Travels in China, Japan, and Java] (Lahore).

The Hindu, (October 11,1923).

The Japan Weekly Mail (February 23, 1907), “Indian students in Japan.”

The Times (August 27, 1897), “Commercial education in Japan.”

17

18