

**Educate to hate – the use of education in the creation of antagonistic
national identities in India and Pakistan.**

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In states that are diverse, issues of national identity formation and who belongs and how they belong can, and often does, change over time. The article analyses how education was used as a tool to artificially create antagonistic national identities based on religious and ethnic definitions of who was Indian or Pakistani. It focuses in particular on how in India the BJP led government (1998-2004) and in Pakistan the government under General Zia-ul-Haq (1977-1988) rewrote the curriculum and changed the text book content in order to create the 'other' in order to suit their ideology and the politics of the day.

Drawing on the original textbooks, extensive fieldwork interviews in both countries and on recent literature, the paper proposes the argument that fundamentalisation in general, and the fundamentalisation of textbooks in particular are state-controlled mechanisms through which to control society. They can also have serious international consequences as two antagonistic national identities oppose each other's definition of history and self.

Introduction

Education is a central tool in national identity formation fostered through states. In fact a large part of identity creation happens through the formal education process at school. National identity formation is a part of the construction of a state over time and the role of governments is central in determining the parameters of 'who belongs' (Adeney and Lall, 2005). Governments in fact have the ability to control and impose curricula in schools and with this help to define the identity discourse of the day.

Over the six decades following independence, education in India and Pakistan has primarily been used to create a national identity which attempts to unify the individual nation. Religion has at times been drawn upon to cement this national identity, in Pakistan much more frequently and intensely than in India. However, governments in both countries have recognized that education policy was an effective means to promote and spread nationalist ideology and consequently have used their countries education infrastructure for political aims.

In this article two particular time periods in both countries have been chosen for comparison to highlight how education has been used for specific political purposes by different governments. In both cases the particular political situation warranted a re-thinking of national identity and the governments in power turned to religious nationalism to define it. However this new definition of national identity in turn was also particularly anti-Pakistani (in India) and anti-Indian (in Pakistan). Both countries have fought three wars since partition and independence in 1947, and to this date the peace process that started in 2003 is precarious. Greater tolerance between India and Pakistan can only be achieved through a less nationalistic vision of self and a less antagonistic vision of the other. This article will argue that the radicalisation of education could have profound consequences for security in the region.

In India the politicisation of Hindu nationalism in the late 1980s and early 1990s led to a BJP led government between 1998 and 2004. During this time Hindu nationalists pursued education reforms which affected schools, staff and textbooks across the whole country. The aim was that by educating the next generation within the Hindu

Nationalist ideology, Hindutva thought would become the normⁱⁱ. This intolerant view means that all non-Hindu communities in India, but especially the Muslim community are seen as separate, second-class citizens, portrayed even as having loyalties outside of India. This stands in total contradiction with Hinduism's historically very inclusive identity formation process.

In Pakistan this type of problem has been endemic since 1947, but reinforced after the 1971 secession of Bangladesh. Islam has always been seen as a central tenet of Pakistani national identity. After all Pakistan had been created as a state to safeguard the Muslim minority of the subcontinent. However whilst religion played an important role in its creation, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding father, conceived of Pakistan originally as a secular democracy. Despite this, many successive governments increasingly islamised the curriculum of the various state schools. This was particularly the case under Zia-ul-Haq, whose policy of islamisation radicalised Pakistani society between 1977 and 1988. This islamisation process has never been reversed. In fact today's textbook and curriculum reforms has simply entrenched what has been an increasingly Sunni Islamic view of the nation across the Pakistani population, building on the changes made in the late 70s.

The effects of such a gradual radicalisation of the education process in both countries could be serious. Currently the world is witnessing the increased use of religion as a call for arms to fight 'just' wars against those of another faith or culture. The political argument that we are living what Huntington has coined as the 'clash of civilisations' is untrue, yet it can be artificially be brought about through education and increasingly nationalistic and religious views of self. This article will argue that whilst education could be used to foster a rapprochement between India and Pakistan, it could if left unchanged instead also lead to the radicalisation of both societies who have turned to religion to define their national identity. This in turn can lead to a dangerous clash between two nuclear powers. The nexus between education, religion and national identity is a complex one, which does not simply have domestic effects, but can also have international repercussions.

This article will discuss the issues of identity formation, give a brief background of historical education policy formulation in both India and Pakistan before discussing

and comparing the era under General Zia in Pakistan with the BJP led government in India. The article concludes that increasingly nationalistic views of self and antagonistic views of the other through the education systems could lead to heightened tensions between these two nuclear armed countries.

Identity formation

Todorov's study of identity formation stipulates that there is a fixed pattern to the way in which identities are coded or structured. Either the *Other* is coded as identical to us, and in that case we can recognize him/her as an equal. But the prerequisite for this equality is that we consider the *Other* to be 'the same as us'. However when the *Other* is coded as different from us, this difference is translated into inequality or, more precisely, inferiority. (Todorov, 1999)

The construction of national identities very often follows this scheme. The proper identity is discursively set off against an inferior other that defines the antithesis of the desired identity. Moreover, the construction of national identities is a complex, on-going, re-iterative process.ⁱⁱⁱ The stability and evolution of any such identity depends therefore also on the ability of authoritative institutions, usually the state. The state is also responsible for defending it against contesting counter-discourses. Power here supports knowledge in that it provides it with authority, and knowledge constitutes power, as the creation of a national identity is part and parcel of a nation's cohesion and purpose.

In India national identity formation was for many decades carried out under a secular banner. India had not been created as a 'Hindustan' in opposition to 'Islamic Pakistan', but saw itself rather as a multiethnic, multi-religious country unified by shared history (Nehru 1946, see also Lall, 2001). The state was central in delivering this message of inclusive, secular national identity through schools and other educational establishments. Only with the advent of political Hindu nationalism did the message change, consequently creating the '*other*' both within and outside the country (notably Pakistan) as non-Hindus - and Muslims in particular were excluded from the new national identity of being Indian.

In Pakistan, national identity formation always had an Islamic core as religion was seen as the only means by which to unify a country made up of such diverse regions and separated by over 1000 miles of hostile Indian territory. The role of Islam to unify Punjab, the NWFP, Sindh, Balochistan and East Bengal came to an end when in 1971 Bangladesh seceded from the other provinces in a bloody civil war. The question of national identity was further bogged down by issues of language politics^{iv} as Urdu was imposed as a national language despite being spoken only by a small minority. (Rahman, 1998) However despite this and the increasing differences between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, Islam remained the central pillar in defining Pakistani national identity. This was reinforced through all educational institutions such as schools and madrassas. As in India, this created 'the other' within (Hindus, Christians, Ahmadiyahs) and outside of the country (notably India).

Education is a central way of cementing this state defined identity through the formulation of curriculum aims and the content of textbooks. (Apple 2001) In both countries education has been a tool for successive governments to define national identity. The next section will give a brief historical background of education policies in both India and Pakistan before the article returns to discuss the relationship between education, religion and national identity formation.

Education in India – the background

Since Independence, Indian governments have regarded education policy as a crucial part of India's development agenda. Emphasis has traditionally been placed on universality, pluralism and secularism, while over the years achieving excellence has become a major focus.

In 1947 Nehru envisaged India as a secular democracy with a state-led command economy. Education for all and industrial development were seen as crucial tools to unite a country divided on the basis of wealth, caste and religion, and formed the cornerstones of the anti-imperial struggle. The legacies of this Nehruvian approach to education are considerable. Subsidised quality higher education through institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) formed a major contribution to the Nehruvian vision of a self-

reliant and modern Indian state, which now rank amongst the best higher education institutions in the world. In addition, policies of positive discrimination through reservations in education and employment, widened the access of hitherto unprivileged social groups to quality education. However despite these pockets of excellence, broad universal access to primary education remained an illusion for the successor governments.

Drawing from Nehru's vision the Kothari Commission (1964-66) was set up to formulate a coherent education policy. According to the commission, education was intended to increase productivity, develop social and national unity, consolidate democracy, modernise the country and develop social, moral and spiritual values. (Sharma, 2002) A new education policy developed in 1986 under Rajiv Gandhi was intended to raise education standards and increase access to education. At the same time, it would safeguard the values of secularism, socialism and equality which had been promoted since independence. To this end, the government would seek financial support from the private sector to complement government funds. The central government also declared that it would accept a wider responsibility to enforce "the national and integrative character of education, to maintain quality and standards". (Shukla, 1988, p.6) The key legacies of the 1986 policy were the promotion of privatisation, and the continued emphasis on secularism and science. (Jayapalan, 2001)

In 1992, when education policy was re-examined, the NPE was found to be a sound way forward for India's education system. The new emphasis in 1992 was on the expansion of secondary education while the focus on education for minorities and women continued.

Education in Pakistan – the background

The regions which were to make up Pakistan had not benefited from the British education infrastructure as much as the core regions which today form the Indian state. (IGC Asia report no 84, 2004) Given the brutal aftermath of partition and the priority of creating a new nation after independence, education was not high on the policy makers' agenda. The 1947 All Pakistan National Education conference made Urdu, the national language compulsory in schools. Free and compulsory education

for the first five years was also outlined as a major objective in order to redress the imbalances left over from colonial times^v.

According to Jinnah's vision Pakistan was not to become a theocracy though Islamic ideology remained central in education and politics. Islam was going to be used to oppose identity formation on the basis of ethnicity. The inclusion of Islamic studies in the curriculum and making Urdu compulsory for all were seen as tools to unify the diverse country, which until 1971 included East Bengal, separated from West Pakistan by over 1000 miles of Indian territory.

Whilst the state struggled to set up a countrywide education infrastructure, a parallel system of private schools where English was the medium of instruction and Madrassas (Islamic schools) existed from the start. In 1949 the central goals of education policy were formulated to include: improving quality, achieving 80% literacy in 20 years, and requiring 75% of children of school going age to be enrolled. The subsequent 9 five year plans (1957-2003) set out to increase the quantity of the schooling infrastructure and increase the enrolment of children through mass literacy programmes. The targets of these plans and goals were however never achieved.^{vi}

In 1959 Sharif report became the 'Magna Carta' of education in Pakistan (Saigol, 2003). It's first aim was the modernisation of Pakistani society. Ayub Khan who was in power at the time fostered a liberal type of Islam which was open to the role science could play in making Pakistan a modern nation. The report also indicated a significant change in government thinking, shifting the responsibility from the state for universal education, to the parents, resulting in an increased number of private schools selling quality education at rates out of reach to the majority of Pakistanis. The same report also created the textbook board, whose primary task has since been to ensure that the government's policies have been reflected in the textbooks.

When General Zia ul Haq took over in July 1977 he made significant changes to the education system by introducing radical islamisation measures which will be described in more detail in this article.

The problem of national identity, religion and education

The nexus between education, religion and national identity is a complex one. As mentioned above, political parties and individual politicians have used the education system in both countries to influence the national identity discourse of the day. This was done by creating an artificial exclusive national identity to bind the nation together, at the same time as defining who was to be excluded from this particular vision.

The two periods in Indian and Pakistani history have been chosen as they represent the pinnacle of using religion to define who belongs to either country. Given the fact that both countries are multi-ethnic and multi religious, this narrow definition automatically excludes minorities within the country as well as stigmatising the enemy on the other side of the border. The explosive mix of religious nationalism and national identity reached its height in India under the BJP led government between 1998 and 2004 and under General Zia between 1977 and 1988.

India – the question of religion and education

As explained above from Independence, India's education system was secular, even though the concept of secularism was not enshrined in the constitution until much later. This was partly because there was a broad consensus among the elite that took power in 1947 that there was no need to emphasize what was the obvious corner stone of independent India. However, while the separation of religion and state, and the payment of respect to all religions, were the views of the elite, religion continued to play a major role in daily life. From the time of Indira Gandhi onwards, religion began to play a greater role in politics.

The role of religion in education has always been contentious. Starting in the colonial era a number of Christian missionaries set up schools in remote areas, in an attempt to bring education to many rural and tribal areas. These schools supplemented, and at times replaced, state education. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has responded to claims of voluntary and forced conversions by establishing their own schools and medical services in tribal areas, particularly in Madhya Pradesh and North East India, in an attempt to reconnect tribal populations with Hinduism and wanting to rival the work of Christian missionaries. (The RSS is a Hindu Nationalist, allegedly cultural organization set up in 1925 by Dr. K. B. Hegdewar. Its aim is to promote India as a Hindu nation where minority religious groups are subordinate to Hindus.)

The BJP, the political arm of the RSS, which dominated coalition governments from 1998 until 2004 came to power with an agenda heavily influenced by Hindutva, including the introduction of a uniform civil code under Hindu law and the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.^{vii} A Hindu national identity for all Indians was on the agenda, departing radically from the secular vision which had been implemented since Nehru's time. The principal reason for this radical re-writing of Indian national identity was due to the increasing effects of globalisation in India after the 1991 economic reforms. (Lall, forthcoming) As the middle classes grew larger and wealthier, the masses did not benefit from the opening up of the economy. This rising feeling of economic insecurity led to calls for self sufficiency and new questions of who and what was Indian in light of westernisation by stealth. The BJP championed these voices in its original election manifesto, calling for the economic reforms to be checked and a return to Hindu roots.^{viii}

In most policy fields the BJP had to moderate since it needed to maintain the support of its coalition partners. However education policy soon moved towards a new, nationalist agenda. In 2000/01, NCERT issued a National Curriculum Framework for school education under the slogan of 'Indianise, nationalise and spiritualise'. The framework called for the purging of all foreign elements from the curriculum in state schools. These included the British legacy as well as aspects of Indian culture which were seen as having been introduced by the Mogul invaders. The new policy also

involved a massive textbook revision in history and the social sciences which actively discriminated against the Muslim minority and set Pakistan in a bad light.^{ix} (Lall, forthcoming)

The results of these policies were seen both inside and outside the education sector as books and textbooks, critical of certain aspects of Hinduism or Indian history started to be removed and replaced by pro-Hindutwa literature. The BJP's biggest success went well beyond the re-writing of history as the middle classes started to endorse the new 'Hindu nationalist' language, endorsing the new policies on the basis that Hindus had never been given their due by previous governments. (Lall, 2004)

Pakistan – what role for Islam?

'What should be the ideological basis of education? Whether [sic] the Islamic conception of universal brotherhood of man, social democracy and social justice should constitute this ideological basis – cultivation of democratic virtues, i.e. tolerance, self help, self-sacrifice, human kindness etc and the consciousness of common citizenship as opposed to provincial exclusiveness.'
(Government of Pakistan 1947)

As mentioned above Islam in Pakistan was promoted through education to unify the country. This was reinforced after the 1971 war when Pakistan's national identity was set in question by the breakaway of Bangladesh. The role of Islam in Pakistani society had to be redefined as it had not held the country together. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto came to power amidst political confusion with an Islamic socialist programme, promising to build a new Pakistan and to address the economic and political issues facing the country at the time. The result was an over emphasis on a 'separate Pakistani identity' and a new description of the enemy so as to unify the nation (Salim and Khan 2004). His education reforms included the right to education in the 1973 constitution (Article 37 (2) a-b) but also centralised the role of religion in national identity creation through the introduction of Pakistan Studies.^x This was the base used by his successor whose politics would forever radically change the Pakistani education system.

When general Zia-ul-Haq took over with the 1977 coup, his first drive was the islamisation of all sections of Pakistani society. Largely this was to justify his political legitimacy as a military dictator who had removed the democratically elected leader from power. But in part this islamisation programme and quest for a radical Islamic national identity for Pakistan were also to unite a nation which was still being torn apart by internal issues of regionalism. In his first address to the nation, he declared that Islamic laws would be enforced and that earnest attention would be devoted towards establishing the Islamic society for which Pakistan had been created. He wanted to bring the legal, social, economic and political institutions of the country in conformity with the Islamic principles, values and traditions in the light of the Quran and Sunnah. This was a totally new concept of Pakistani national identity, a 180 degree turn from Jinnah's original vision.

A number of steps were taken to eradicate non-Islamic practices. He introduced Zakat, Ushr, Islamic Hudood and Penal Code. The National Education Policy and Implementation Programme (GoP 1979) set out to islamise the youth by giving textbooks of all subjects (including the sciences and mathematics) a religious orientation. The teaching of Islamic Studies and Arabic were made compulsorily for B.A., B.Sc., Engineering, M.B.B.S., Commerce, Law and Nursing students. For professional studies, extra marks were given to people who had memorised the Quaran (Hafiz-e-Quran). The aims of the new education system were to be in conformity with the principles of Islam. Zia's islamisation programme was based on the ideals of Maulana Maududi, the founder of Jamaat-e-islami, who also had influenced reforms in Saudi Arabia. The new education policy wanted to create an awareness of universal Muslim brotherhood amongst students, making them feel a part of the Ummah, the universal Muslim brotherhood. Despite this, English medium schools were not banned and the private sector expanded rapidly catering for the more affluent middle and upper classes and creating in effect a two track society.

During the same period Pakistan became a US ally in the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. This resulted in the state promotion of madrassas through governmental financial support. (ICG Asia report number 36, 2002) In effect Islam was being harnessed to fight the evil of the day – communism. But the role of the mosque school went much further than that. Madrassas were to be used to expand the

primary education system. Every village mosque which had space was encouraged to open a primary school which would be run by two teachers – the imam and a regular primary school teacher. The curriculum was to be the same as that in other primary schools allowing for the easy transfer to the formal education system of any student who wanted to.

The mosque will be accorded its rightful place. Five thousand mosque schools will be opened... (The Pakistan Times, October 13th 1978 cited in Salim and Khan, 2004, p.27)

Zia was aware of the discrepancies in an education system led in part by the state and in part by the mosque and pushed for the integration of both systems so that there would be one Islamic vision. Since that time the Pakistani state has increasingly relied on the madrassa system as an alternative to the state funded public one. The increases of madrassas and private schools have allowed the state to renege on its responsibility in educating the Pakistani masses and consequently the state education system has withered.

Zia's islamisation process went against the grain of the people who were religious in their personal, yet not necessarily in their public lives. An unexpected outcome was further division of Pakistani society - by relying on a policy grounded in Islam, the state fomented factionalism. By legislating what was Islamic and what was not, Islam itself could no longer provide unity because it was then being defined to exclude previously included groups. Imposing a Sunni world view through the education system led to deep divisions between the Sunni majority and the Shia minority (estimated at between 8 and 20% of the total population) culminating in riots around paying Zakat (the religious tax) to the state as well as the disaffection of the Ismaeli communities in Gilgit and the Northern Areas. The primacy of the Sunni perspective not only led to disputes between Sunnis and Shi'a but also ethnic disturbances in Karachi between Pakhtuns and Muhajirs, increased animosity toward Ahmadiyyas, and the revival of Punjab-Sindh tensions can all be traced to the loss of Islam as a common vocabulary.

Today the effects of Zia's times are still felt. A recent review of the content of Pakistan's curriculum and textbooks revealed that they are 'insensitive to the religious diversity of the Pakistani society and that Islamiyat is not solely taught as one subject but permeates the teaching of Urdu, English and Social Studies as well. Nayyar and Salim have found that 'much of this material runs counter to any efforts of national integration.' (Nayyar and Salim, 2004)

Education with a direct effect on international relations?

Research on Indian and Pakistani textbooks, curricula and education systems show that over the years both India and Pakistan's nation building process has been subjected to the political aims of the governments in power at the time. (See Lall, forthcoming for India, Kumar, 2001 for India and Pakistan and Hoodbhoy, 1998 Saigol, 2003 and Rahman, 1997 for Pakistan) History having been selectively interpreted resulted in two largely politicised nations who had been instructed about their own exclusive national identity, which inevitably led to conflict with the other country. This was already the case well before the BJP and the Zia years. As Krishna Kumar (2001) details in his study Prejudice and Pride, it was the teaching of history from different vantage points which has led to such a different interpretation of each others nations. Yet the periods used as examples in this article show the extreme version of this.

Pervez Hoodbhoy (cited in Salim and Khan, 2004, p.5) has described the education system of any country as 'cultural DNA' which determines what the nation will become tomorrow. In one of his papers he states:

A school curriculum is the basic road-map of education, and it is here where the most fundamental problem lies. Pakistan has yet to decide whether it wishes to live in the 21st century of modern education or return to the days of Nizam – ul – Mulk and the madrassas system of the 11th century. In trying to seek the happy mean it has ended up with something near to 16th century pre-Renaissance and pre-Frobelian education. Public school education today is premised on a belief that repeated sermonizing, and strict regimentation of the

school environment, will produce moral and patriotic Pakistanis. (Hoodbhoy 2005)

It is ultimately up to the policy maker of the day if they wish to promote a medieval or modern way of thinking through the education system and if this way of thinking is to lead to peace or confrontation with their neighbours.

As mentioned previously, India's politicisation and use of the explosive mix of religion and nationalism is a more recent phenomenon than that in Pakistan and largely linked to the rapid globalisation process which has gripped the country since the 1991 economic reforms (Lall, forthcoming). Yet the indoctrination of the separate identity of Muslims and Hindus who ultimately derived from the same nation before 1947, reinforces mutual enemy images as opposed to focusing on the many common chapters of South Asian history and traditions.

It is interesting to note that pre-1971, even after the bloody aftermath of partition in 1947, Pakistan's education system was not yet going down this route:

...[It] was only after the East Pakistan debacle in 1971 that we started desperately discovering our roots somewhere else instead of the rich Indus-Ganges civilization and embarked on over-emphasizing 'separate Pakistani identity' through textbooks. (Salim and Khan, 2004, p.6)

It is after 1971 in Pakistan and after 2000 in India that the heroes of history were divided between the two countries on the basis of faith and that those who 'did not belong' were removed from textbooks.

The syllabus prescribed in the curriculum after 1979 required the teaching of:

- *The difference between the cultures of Hindus and Muslims*
- *The need for an independent Islamic state*
- *Ideology of Pakistan*
- *The malicious intentions of India against Pakistan*

- *The Kashmir dispute*
- *The need for defence and development of Pakistan*

This was reinforced by teachers' guides, which also emphasised that the educational objectives were awareness about Islam and Islamic values. The guide for Social studies of class V for instance says:

... the teaching objectives of the first chapter include the development of an understanding of the differences between Hindus and Muslim cultures and the British and Hindu antagonism towards the Muslims of India. [...] The teaching objectives of the third chapter i.e. the Wars between India and Pakistan ask for development of awareness in the students about the anti-Pakistan intentions of India and the importance of the Kashmir issue. (Salim and Khan, 20-04, p.43)

The government also fostered an anti-Hindu and anti-India outlook through historical distortions. Congress, for instance, is portrayed as a Hindu organisation intent on subjugating the Muslims of the subcontinent. Gandhi's role in the independence movement is minimised and he is portrayed as a Hindu leader. Further back in time Aurangzeb, a Moghul emperor of the 17th century known for his brutal anti-Hindu policies, is portrayed as an orthodox and pious Muslim (not mentioning his fratricide), whilst Akbar's liberal policies are decried as being responsible for spreading faithlessness (Akbar was a Moghul emperor in the 16th century who was known for his religious tolerance.). Hindus are described as backward and superstitious:

Hindus were clumsy as regards dress before the advent of Muslims in the region. They used to cover their bodies with one or two cloth sheets. Muslims introduced the dress, which covered the body properly and looked good. (Pakistan Studies for Intermediate Classes, Punjab Textbook Board, 1985, p.4)

Whilst original Pakistani textbooks from the late 70s and mid 1980s are virtually impossible to get hold of today, the textbook boards and schools assure that anything printed before 1991 is a carbon copy of the books printed under Zia.^{xi} It is therefore

interesting to note that Pakistan Studies textbook of 1991 used for the preparation of GCSEs reinforces a very anti Indian and anti Hindu image:

In the chapter entitled 'Imprints of the Past', there is nothing about the Indus Valley civilisation. The indigenous Indian Culture (sic) mentions peasant culture, caste, and some fragments on Hinduism. The history starts with the advent of Islam in the region. Islam is depicted as having had a positive social impact:

Islam lives in the tranquil and inconspicuous harmony of village life. It is a sacred, yet private matter for the individual who feels that the communal spirit of tolerance, fellowship and mutual help, so integral to the cohesion of village life, is endorsed by the teachings of Islam. (Qasir, 1991 p.165)

The Mughals in particular are praised for the 'stable, extensive and rich empire they built (p.168) and the contribution they made to India in the arts and through culture and language (p.169)

None of the sections, not even the section headed Foreign Policy deals with the Indo-Pakistani wars. The role of India in the secession of Bangladesh is totally glossed over and contained in the following sentence:

With immense swiftness Indira Gandhi sent her troops to Bangladesh and put an end to an uncertain Bengal – of course on the pretext of support for democracy and the peoples' right to self determination. (Qasir, 1991 p.81)

However India's role as a hegemon in the region is depicted as follows:

...India, though an underdeveloped country, is incomparably bigger than its neighbours, both in terms of its territory and its population. Thus countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Tibet etc, find themselves stationed the body of the heaving giant of India whose moods and whims can cause anguish and torment to its neighbours. (Qasir, 1991 p.134)

It is interesting that Zia's time gets particularly favourable treatment in the social science textbooks all around: In analysing the textbooks between class 9 and BA, K.K Aziz (2004) points out that General Zia's military rule gets five glowing testimonials:

1. *His repeated postponement of elections was the right decision taken for unavoidable reasons;*
2. *He honestly tried to enforce the Islamic system of government as had been promised by the Quaid-i-Azam to the nation;*
3. *His Islamic ordinances at last achieved the real objective of the creation of Pakistan;*
4. *He was chosen by destiny to be the person who achieved the distinction of implementing Islamic law; and*
5. *Naturally he deserves our thanks and congratulations.*

(Aziz, 2004, p. 158)

So the dictator who started the re-writing of the history and social science textbooks is remembered fondly through the education system, perpetuating the myths and lies.

Indian textbooks after the *Indianise, Nationalise and Spiritualise* drive of the BJP-led government have similar distortions and omissions. Khan, in his detailed study on the mistakes contained in the BJP sanctioned textbooks emphasises that 'rewriting history and doctoring textbooks have been a RSS passion [...] Whenever the BJP has come to power, the first thing it has done is to tamper with the school curriculum. (Khan, 2004, p.14) Generally an anti-Muslim rhetoric is emphasised and Muslims and Pakistan throughout history are described in negative terms. The examples below are some of many which have been put forward by the panel of historians which was appointed to revise the textbooks which had been published under the BJP led government after they lost the 2004 elections (see NCERT, 2004)

In India the history textbook in class VI (*India and the World* (2003) by Makkhan Lal, Sima Yadav, B.K. Banerjee and M. Akhtar Hussain) describes the *Upanishads* as "the greatest works of philosophy in the history of humankind" (p. 134). Similarly, on p. 58:

... Indian and Chinese civilisations are the only ones which have survived right from the time they came into existence till date... All other early civilisations have disappeared and the present people/civilisations have no connection with the past ones.

Aside from being incorrect, such discourse leaves the learners in no doubt as to which civilisation is the greatest and which ones can be looked down upon.

Class IX textbook (*Contemporary India* (2002) by Hari Om) omits certain important facts: There is no reference to the historic Karachi session of the Indian National Congress (1931), or the contribution of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan as a reformer and educationist. The role of the Muslim league in the independence movement against the British is inaccurately depicted. There is a tendency to downplay the role the Indian Muslims have played in shaping contemporary Indian society.

In *Medieval India*, the history textbook for class XI by Meenakshi Jain, the process of conquest by the Muslim and Hindu rulers is characterised by discriminatory language: Hindus are generally described as conquering, expanding their kingdom and marching triumphantly, whilst the Muslim expansionist acts are invasions, incursions and the rulers are called intruders and depicted as foreign.

Class XII's *Modern India* by S.C. Mittal describes the Muslims as resorting to the wholesale plunder of temples, depicting the Muslim rulers as brutal and the ruled Hindus as oppressed by them.

Khan's conclusions state that 'the NCERT textbooks in a way Indianise Aryans by claiming that they are the original inhabitants of India, Aryanise Hindus and Hinduise culture, nationalism and patriotism...' (Khan, 2004, p.101) The focus is on the ancient period of history, glorifying that epoch.

Nalini Taneja from Delhi University gives the following analysis:

In the name of 'Indianised, nationalised and spiritualised' education there is an attempt to polarise and divide people along religious lines by

communalising their consciousness. Through a distortion and concoction of facts there is an effort to reconstruct history and tradition along communal and sectarian lines. [...] Uma Bharti, the Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resources did not take long to pronounce that the Kashmir problem finds its roots in the teaching pattern in the Madrasas and that there is a need to closely monitor them. (Taneja, 2003)

Contrasting Indian and Pakistani history books it is interesting to note that each one focuses in particular on the period seen as most glorious for their religious group – so that in Pakistan ancient history is almost totally ignored as history starts with the Moghul invasions, whilst in India the focus is on the ancient civilizations.

Unlike in Pakistan, the Congress led government which followed on from the one which had been responsible for the re-writing of history, tried to reverse at least some of the damage done by appointing a panel of expert historians and issuing new books. Not all states in India however have agreed to withdraw the offending textbooks, and consequently some of India's children are still being educated in a Hindu nationalistic form. This is particularly the case in Gujarat, a staunchly Hindu Nationalist state^{xii} but generally the case in any state led by the BJP or an allied party. Since education matters are decided at state level, state elections can and have led to the changing of textbooks in schools since 2004.

In Pakistan the governments which have followed General Zia were democratically elected – yet they did not touch any of the fundamental tenets of islamisation which had been initiated then. Neither the Hudood laws have been removed, nor the content of the textbooks rewritten.

The current government under General Musharraf started Education sector reforms in 1999. Post 9/11 Musharraf's government came under pressure to revise the curriculum and USAID has invested close to \$100 million in the Education Sector Reform Assistance programme (ESRA).

The old curriculum however has been overhauled and allegedly de-islamised. Currently this draft curriculum is circulating with Provincial governments, having been sent out on the 22nd of July 2006^{xiii}. According to an interview at the Sindh

Textbook board^{xiv} in Karachi the new de-islamised curriculum is likely to be accepted in Sindh, but will have problems in the Punjab and will most probably not be accepted in Balochistan and the NWFP.

Basically the textbook and curriculum reform has now become embroiled in the issue of the role of religion in national identity and the westernisation from above debate as the reforms are seen as being pushed by the US. In how far these reforms will be accepted still needs to be seen, not least because Musharraf happens to be dependent on the Islamic parties for electoral support in the upcoming 2007 elections.^{xv}

Politically speaking India and Pakistan are caught in a never-ending spiral of action and reaction. India responded to the Zia ul Haq regime by building up a massive military machine, including developing its nuclear arsenal after the 1974 tests. The worsening India-Pakistan relations in the mid to late 80s led to a deterioration in Kashmir which ended that region's status as a tourist haven and instead developed into a war zone. India felt that under Zia, Pakistan had reneged on the Simla agreement signed after the secession of Bangladesh by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, worsening the relations between the two countries. The increased islamisation was looked at with suspicion in New Delhi, as was Zia's rapprochement with the United States of America in the war against communism.

The increased role of Islam in politics and the end of the Afghan war had brought Islamic freedom fighters to Kashmir during the course of the 1990s. Increased cross border terrorism in the name of Jihad led to downward spiraling foreign relations between the two countries. Pakistan's response to the BJP government led at first to a military confrontation (Kargil 1999) and then to a military stalemate (one million men on both sides of the border 2002) between the two countries. The nuclear competition was re-opened with the BJP's nuclear tests, closely followed by the Pakistani tests in May 1998.

In how far this foreign policy spiral of action and reaction has affected the educational sphere in both countries is difficult to ascertain. However what is clear is that unless there is a lasting peace between the two countries any 'positive' revisions pertaining to the description of the other country in textbooks is difficult to justify by any education ministry.

The other obvious conclusion from the analysis above is that on both sides of the border Indian and Pakistani children are being educated in an exclusive, nationalistic and religiously inspired way which automatically puts them in conflict with each other. The shared past has been distorted beyond recognition in some of the history textbooks. Yet allowing for the fact that children and their families generally believe what they are taught at school and what is written in state sanctioned education materials, one can safely assume that a lot of the lies will be swallowed without question.

Conclusion

The issues concerning the radicalisation of textbooks and curricula in both countries have been discussed in academic circles of India and Pakistan again and again. Hoodbhoy, Rahman, Nayyar, Salim, Saigol and many more have pointed to Zia's legacy and the failure of any government to implement effective reforms. In India Taneja, Kumar and others have been waging the same battle yet in a less entrenched system. None however have pointed to the potentially disastrous international consequences of these education policies, preferring to focus on the discrimination this engendered within the individual countries. The effects of these antagonistic education systems on Indo-Pakistani relations need to be questioned, even if as we don't have any answers.

What are the potential international consequences of intolerant education policies and narrow, exclusivist national identity definitions? India and Pakistan have a warped view of each other. They have fought three wars and have come to the brink of nuclear war a number of times in recent history, most notably during the 1999 Kargil crisis and the 2002 deployment of one million men following terrorist attacks on the Indian parliament in New Delhi. Currently a fragile peace process is in progress.

The current leaders of India and Pakistan were educated before the nationalistic religious craze took hold of the countries. Yet it is evident that at some point in the future those who have been through the system teaching them a radical view of self and an antagonistic view of the other will come to power. This could very well lead to

a radicalisation of the political situation. Consequently it is important for both countries to realise the potentially disastrous effect of their education systems and take steps towards change.

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ⁱ The author would like to thank Dr Andreas Behnke. The section on identity formation is based on detailed discussions with him.

ⁱⁱ Hindutva is based on the premise that India is a Hindu nation. Any non-Hindus in India have to either accept the majority's domination or leave.

ⁱⁱⁱ The discussion of national identity formation and the role of the government is dealt with in detail in Adeney and Lall (2005), 'Institutional Attempts to build a "National" Identity in India: internal and external dimensions', *India Review*, Vol.4 n.3. .

^{iv} For details on national identity see Tariq Rahman's *Language and Politics in Pakistan* (1998) which has details on how language has been divisive in Pakistani politics well beyond the Bengali movement.

^v In 1947 Pakistan had a literacy rate of around 16%, only 10,000 primary and middle schools, only 1,700 of those being for girls, and 408 secondary schools, 64 for girls. IGC Asia report number 84, October 2004.

^{vi} Literacy did go up from 16% in 1951 to 51.6% in 2003, but not reaching 100% by 1975 as had originally been planned.

^{vii} In 1992, 'Hindu' kar sevaks under the leadership of the BJP and other members of the Sangh Parivar, demolished the Babri Masjid, a 15th century mosque in Ayodhya. Despite the lack of historical evidence, they claimed the mosque had been built over an earlier temple commemorating the birthplace of the Hindu god Ram.

^{viii} They did not however stick with this promised policy and once in power, the economic reforms continued unabated.

^{ix} The revisions were contested by a petition to the Supreme Court brought by three activists who argued that the NCERT had not followed the correct procedures of consultation with the states and that it tried to introduce religious teaching, which is forbidden by the Constitution. This was however, rejected by the Supreme Court. (Judgment by Justice M.B. Shah, D.M Dharmadhikari, and H.K. Sema in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 98 of 2002, Ms. Aruna Roy and others vs. Union of India and others).

^x Article 31 (a) and (b) state: 'to make the teaching of the holy Quran and Islamiat compulsory, to encourage and facilitate the learning of Arabic language... [and] to promote unity and observance of the Islamic moral standards.' Cited in ICG Asia report number 84, 2004, p.4.

^{xi} On the three month long fieldtrips between November 2005 and September 2006 libraries, universities, book shops, bazaars and peoples' homes were all searched for copies of textbooks (in English) of the Zia era. Even the textbook boards in Sindh, Balochistan and the curriculum wing in Islamabad could not help. The material discussed here is therefore based on interviews and secondary sources. Those interviewed stressed how important it was to discuss the Zia era for the legacy it had left.

^{xii} It is difficult to correlate the Gujarat Riots with the use of Hindu Nationalist inclined textbooks. However it has been documented that under the Hindu Nationalist state government, the Muslim minority has lived in fear even before the riots in 2002.

^{xiii} Letter from the curriculum wing, Government of Pakistan to the minister of education in Sindh, Dr Hamida Khuro.

^{xiv} Sindh textbook board interview 22nd September 2006

^{xv} For a detailed discussion on the Curriculum reforms see Lall, M. In Lall and Vickers (eds.) (forthcoming) *Education as a Political Tool in Asia*.