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Place of Knowledge: Education and Urban History in Rampur
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Abstract: This paper examines the educational and urban history of Muslims in Rampur from its princely past to its post-colonial present as it moved from the centre to the margin. The paper examines the intertwined histories of the transformation of education and urban inequality and also highlights alternative histories from the ‘Muslim ghetto’, providing an entry point into ‘marginal’ archives and histories. It does so by focusing on trajectories of madrasa education and Urdu print culture and mapping them onto the histories of education and urban inequality in contemporary Rampur.

Keywords: Education, urban, madrasa, Urdu, Muslim ghetto, Rampur

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Introduction

The concept of marginalization has been used to describe the spatial and educational conditions of Muslims in contemporary India. While well-meaning, this marginalization discourse ironically effaces Muslims in the scholarly act of recuperation and representation. This paper argues that a historical study of margins is required in order to understand their formation and possibilities, and not just their limitations. It does so by looking at connected urban and educational histories in Rampur. This allows us to see the complex relationship between centre and margins during the transition from princely past to subaltern contemporary history of Rampur city. Moving beyond the dominant scholarly discourse that sees and yet renders invisible the creativity that lies amidst marginality – or perhaps exists because of it – we must also find new ways of thinking and writing about margins as a creative site. Anita Desai describes Muslims and Urdu in post-colonial India as being ‘In Custody’, but perhaps it is in this self-imposed custody – the Urdu word being Hifazat, which also conveys a sense of preservation and safety in times of violent erasure – that the margins become a protective and productive site.1

Rampur was the last Muslim-ruled princely state in the colonial United Provinces. Though small in size compared to Hyderabad and Bhopal state, it nonetheless contributed substantially to the preservation of the intellectual and cultural heritage of Muslims in India.2 The Raza Library of Rampur stands out as the symbol of this contribution.3 This working paper traces the historic transformation of education in Rampur city from the princely era to the post-colonial present in order to understand the shifting educational and urban history of Muslims in Rampur between the centre and the margins. Moving beyond the official archive of the colonial and princely state, the paper also highlights alternative histories from the contemporary ‘Muslim Ghetto’ in Rampur city by focusing on trajectories of madrasa

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education and Urdu print culture and mapping these onto educational and urban histories in contemporary Rampur.

The paper studies and maps key moments in the history of Rampur, from its princely past to its subaltern present. It draws on the institutional archive of the colonial and princely state, personal affective archives of nostalgic memory, and Urdu writings of lived experiences, emotions, and memories, which offer a commentary on the present and alternative visions of the future (albeit by returning to the past). The case study of Rampur also offers scope to make a larger point by rethinking education and urban inequality from the margins. The paper argues that the history of Muslims in Rampur moves from the centre to the margins, and that it is precisely the margins – both the ‘Muslim ghetto’ or ‘old city’ in the urban sphere and the educational margins of the madrasa – that allow us to understand the complex linkages that exist between centre and margin, as opposed to a linear narrative of emancipatory promise.

A project that brings educational and urban histories together should be a project that reflects on their deep connections and contradictions. It should also alert us to the impacts of educational and urban inequalities. Given the hegemonic discourse of educational and urban development, it behoves us to probe its historical evolution and legacies. Muslim educational institutions (madrasas) and neighbourhoods (mohallas) in Indian cities are productive sites to explore these competing histories and minority pasts beyond the marginalization narrative.

This paper therefore explores key shifting historical moments in the connected urban and educational histories of Rampur from the princely to the contemporary periods. These histories of educational and urban changes are viewed from behind the crumbling walls of an Urdu library in a Muslim mohalla and through writings from a madrasa magazine, and helps us understand how people engage with the princely past in the subaltern present. Moving beyond a nostalgia for a lost past, I argue that these writings about the decline of the city and its educational facilities also offer a post-colonial minority critique of the present and a vision of the future – albeit one that draws on the resources of the past. This nostalgia is different from the elite Muslim ‘restorative nostalgia’ of the colonial era, and closer to the ‘reflective nostalgia’ of post-colonial minorities that is manifested in writings about the educational and

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urban milieu of Rampur. Not only does this paper critique the linear narrative connecting educational and urban progress, it also offers an alternative view from the margins.

**Education and urban history in Rampur**

Mohammad Ali Jauhar (1878–1931), who was born on 10 December 1878 in princely Rampur, has left us with a vivid historical account of the education of a Muslim child from a respectable family in the late nineteenth century. In his autobiography *My Life: A Fragment*, he recalls that, in addition to being a site of familial joy, home also served as his first school. At home, conversations amongst women, in which his mother Abadi Bano Begum was an active participant, schooled him in religion and, in particular, on the ‘Ethics of Islam.’ Further, with the help of a tutor – ‘the old red bearded pedagogue’ – young Ali also learnt to read the Quran in Arabic and memorized the shortest chapters (suras) for daily prayers. He also studied Persian textbooks on good morals and manners (*akhlaq*) which were used in local private schools (maktabs) and public schools (madaris) in princely Rampur.

Despite changing family fortunes, the Ali brothers were initially sent to school in Rampur. Subsequently, they were pupils at Bareilly High School, where they learnt English and along with it modern arithmetic, history, and geography, regarded by Ali as ‘Godless education’. In his critique of the modern colonial Western education system, Ali writes:

> ‘The entire outlook of the education which the Government did provide for the youth of India was “Modern” in its destructiveness. It tended to breed in the student an arrogant omniscience, and to destroy along with age-old blind beliefs in superstition, all respect for Tradition and Authority. No doubt in course of time, it led to the awakening of a genuine spirit of enquiry and a search for truth. But in its first onset it was mainly destructive, and what little it substituted in the place of the superstitions it destroyed was itself based on blind belief and superstitions, albeit “Modern”.’

Ali subsequently studied at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh and the University of Oxford with financial support from the Nawab of Rampur. Upon the completion of his university education, Ali entered the employ of the Rampur state service before

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8 Ibid, 60-61.
Razak Khan Place of Knowledge

embarking on a career as a national Muslim leader and helping to establish the national Muslim university Jamia Millia Islamia.\(^9\) The above extract from his autobiography provides us with insights into the many forms of education available in princely and colonial India. Learning and education were emphasized as multi-layered processes that started at home and often culminated at school, but not always. Emphasis was on knowledge (ilm) rather than institutionalized education achieved through regulated schooling. This was the qasbati educational milieu and world-view in which Rampuri Muslim children grew up, before entering the alternative colonial and princely modernity discourse of urbane education in colonial India.\(^10\)

Within the colonial modernity discourse, Muslim opposition to English education stemmed from ‘backward but proud Muslims’.\(^11\) While suspicion towards English education and culture lingered among Muslim maktabs and madaris, there was also engagement with secular educational discourse and practices. Reports from the Rampur princely state administrative and education department point out that these sites of learning ‘though primarily religious… add so much of secular teaching as well to fit the more ambitious of their pupils to join higher schools where they may gain knowledge that will be more practically useful.’\(^12\) English schools also spread under the increasing influence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan’s All India Muslim Educational Conference and movement, which aimed to extend modern English medium education to Muslims.\(^13\)

Rampur remained an important centre of ‘Oriental’ learning, with the Arabic College Madrasa-e-Aliya attracting students not just from India, but also from Afghanistan and Bukhara.\(^14\) The Madrasa-e-Aliya was the oldest educational institution in Rampur and was renowned for religious instruction and Arabic learning. While the princely library connected Rampur with diverse literary cultures and scholars, the Madrasa-e-Aliya placed Rampur in a larger geography of learning as the ‘place of knowledge’ (Darul-ulum) and connected it with other centres of religious learning such as Deoband, Bareilly and Lucknow.\(^15\) The Madrasa

\(^12\) Annual Administrative Report of Rampur, 1899-1900, Rampur Raza Library: 57.
was established by the Farangi Mahal scholar, Maulana Abdul Ali Farangi Mahali. He was invited by the founder of Rampur state Nawab Faizullah Khan (r. 1774–94) as part of his efforts to establish Rampur as a centre of learning. The Madrasa-e-Aliya developed its own traditions and specialized in logic (manṭiq) under its remarkable teachers and their worthy successors. The intellectual environment was characterized by an emphasis on rational thinking. Uniquely, even though the Madrasa invited scholars from Delhi, such as Maulana Nur Salam Shah and Abdul Haq Dehalvi, they were unable to bring about the adoption of traditional Islamic studies on the curriculum. Both Barelvi and Deobandi religious scholars (ulema) and students visited the Madrasa. Some of the distinguished ulema and scholars associated with Rampur were Mulla Ghiyas-ud-Din, the compiler of Giyas-ul-Lugat, along with M. Fazl Haq Khairabadi, M. Abdul Haq Khairabadi, M. Sadullah, Maulana Irshad Husain, and many more. Even though many of them differed in their intellectual positions on various issues, they respected each other’s differences, which meant that the Rampuri Muslim population was not polarized across sectarian lines. Instead, the religious milieu created by the Madrasa-e-Aliya was characterized by convivial social interactions (mu’asharati mel-jol) and rigorous, but harmonious, intellectual exchange. Therefore, madrasas were transmission sites not just in educational terms, but also for social values of co-existence and conviviality in the urbane locale of princely Rampur.

The Rukn-e-Aliya was a preparatory school for the Madrasa-e-Aliya that taught Arabic, Persian, and mathematics. It had three teachers and 40 pupils. The Ghausia school was almost as old as the Madrasa-e-Aliya, but focussed on religious teaching, with seven teachers and about 95 pupils. There was also a Shia school containing about 80 students which provided religious education on Shia principles. Gradual changes were inevitable, even within the most traditional educational institutions and practices.

With changing times and demands, the Madrasa-e-Aliya was overhauled in 1889 and the curriculum brought into line with the Oriental colleges of Calcutta and Punjab so that, by the end of the nineteenth century, its students could sit the exams of the University of the Punjab in Lahore. The new curriculum for the maulvi exam for the Punjab University required proficiency in Arabic as well as a knowledge of grammar, literature, law, logic, and translation from Arabic to Urdu and vice versa. While old texts were still taught, students also had to

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16 Ibid, 73-74.
master the new Arabic course developed at the University of the Punjab. A board of examiners was appointed to conduct examinations on an annual basis. To improve the overall quality of teaching, new teachers of Arabic and Persian were appointed. The Madrasa was also under the supervision of the renowned Arabic scholar Maulvi Abdul Haq Khairabadi. Scholarships and financial assistance were provided, particularly for students from outside Rampur. In other words, even this bastion of ‘tradition’ underwent changes and responded creatively to the call of modernity. This process was also facilitated by the princely-state context, in which changes were not necessarily imposed by the colonial state, but could emerge from within the princely patronage system.

Under British colonialism, Western education and good governance were put forward as the hallmark of the colonial civilizing project. The promotion of Western education was applauded, and the expansion of women’s education was encouraged in the colonial discourse on education, and this language was appropriated and transformed by native princely rulers. Thus, the Begum of Bhopal championed the cause of female education, as did the Nawab of Rampur. Nawab Kalb-e-Ali Khan (r. 1865–87) also issued a proclamation on female education as early as 1872:

‘As the subject stands in the relation of children to a just father and as the education of their children is the first duty of parents, I consider it incumbent on me to endeavour as much as possible to encourage the spread of education among my subjects.’

The Rampur state government defrayed the cost of girls’ schooling and also gave a stipend of Rs 2 for each girl student which was increased in proportion to the progress they made in their studies. The privacy (pardahnasheeni) of these girls was also guaranteed: private houses were selected and female teachers appointed for their tuition. Thus, the colonial idea of the civilizing impact of education was appropriated and transformed by native rulers within the discourse of privacy and princely paternal duties and as a site for establishing new princely legitimacy. While the ‘light of knowledge’ was promoted and calls were made for the spread of reason, traditional ideas of separate spheres based on purdah were also preserved. Education

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20 Foreign Department, Political B September 1872 Nos 62: 64. National Archives of India. New Delhi.
21 Ibid.
became a site of competing languages of governance, where both colonial and princely ideas of progress were debated and relocated intellectually and spatially.

Nawab Kalb-e-Ali Khan’s successor Nawab Mushtaq Ali Khan (r. 1886–89) continued to promote education. In 1880, there were only six state-supported schools for boys; however, from 1880 onwards, the state began to prioritise education and acquired the services of an experienced officer, E. A. Phillips, in 1887 to meet the needs of the times. By 1900, there were no less than 93 schools supported by the state. In the following year, more institutions were added, making a total of 103 schools attended by 30,741 pupils. The total expenditure rose from Rs 11,708 in 1881 to Rs 51,237. The state high school, founded in 1887, had 301 boys on its roll on 30 September 1908, of which 151 were Muslims and 150 Hindus. There were also six vernacular schools, which had as many as 477 pupils in 1908. In the same year, the total number of Madrasa-e-Aliya students was 323.

The increased cultural and political investment in education was soon reflected in Urdu print coverage. On 28 December 1889, the newspaper Azad (Lucknow edition) reported that the accession of Mushtaq Ali Khan to the throne was a signal for the rise of the ‘sun of education’ in the state. By September 1888, the outlay on schools was Rs 16,273 and the amount budgeted for the following year was Rs 24,000. The aid given to schools situated outside the state was increased from Rs 1,488 to Rs 2,688. In its survey of girl’s schools, Azad observed that there had previously only been teachers of the Quran, but that now there were three tutors who also taught Urdu and industrial arts such as sewing. The number of girls on the rolls was 62, of whom 18 were scholarship holders. Azad also mentions the association established by Lady Dufferin to provide financial aid for native women. Referring to the Anglo-Oriental school, which was opened in March 1888, Azad reports that the school was under the superintendence of Officer Phillips. It had five classes and no tuition fee was levied from the students, who numbered 111 – 57 of them Muslim and 54 Hindu. The staff consisted of nine teachers, five of whom taught English, two Persian, one Hindi, and one calligraphy.

The endeavours prompted by these policies soon bore fruit. The Naiyyar-e-Azam (Moradabad edition) of 26 October 1898 notes that both Hindu and Muslim residents in the state of Rampur had, since 1887, shown a marked desire to cultivate education. It further points out that even some old aristocratic families had taken to educating their sons, citing the case of

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22 Ibid.
24 Selections from Vernacular Newspapers, also called Native Newspaper Report 1889. National Archives of India, New Delhi.
Mohammad Khan, a son of the well-known family of Ali Baksh, who had passed the B.A. exam and gone to England for further studies, and whose expenses the Nawab of Rampur had undertaken to pay. The paper notes the Nawab’s own pedagogic pedigree, stemming from a sound English education, as ushering in an era of English language adoption among his subjects.25

The Nawab referred to here was Nawab Hamid Ali Khan (r. 1889–1930), who also contributed generously to educational institutions outside the state such as the Muhammadan College at Aligarh, the Yunani Tibbia Madrasa at Delhi, the Islamia College at Lahore, the Muhammadan School at Moradabad, and Bareilly College.26 The impact of these efforts was obvious, with the proportion of literate males increasing to 2.48 per cent in the census of 1901, as compared with 2 per cent in 1881. According to the 1901 census, of a total number of 7,372 literate persons in the state, 7,007 were male and 365 female.27

25 Selections from Vernacular Newspapers, also called Native Newspaper Report 1898. National Archives of India, New Delhi.
27 Ibid.

Photograph of High School at Rampur in Uttar Pradesh, taken by an unknown photographer in c.1911.
Hamidiyya High School

The Rampur state also established and aided other educational institutions, such as high schools, vernacular middle schools, the city girls’ school, and district schools. These were mostly advanced schools. Under the princely state grant-in-aid system and with the consent of influential local residents, the authorities decided to adopt the Anjuman-e-Himayat-e-Islam (Lahore) series of Persian and Urdu books. Then there were private institutions and family or household schools (maktabs) where private tutorials prevailed. The curriculum here was diverse and included grammar, literature, logic, Muhammadan law, translation, rhetoric, philosophy, and ethics moral etiquette. In addition, the state opened new technical schools that prepared students for industrial jobs under the supervision of G. A. Philips, the private secretary to the Nawab. The state annual administrative report points at the marked increase in the number of state schools and the students attending them. From 1900 onwards, 26 new fee-free schools were opened. Rampur state also remained a major patron of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, the Shia College, Lucknow, and the All India Muslim Educational Conference.

Nawab Hamid Ali Khan took a keen interest in developing education and fostering an intellectual environment (adabi maḥaul) through the legacy of the Madrasa-e-Aliya and the Rampur princely library and firmly established Rampur as a centre of knowledge. His son and successor Nawab Raza Ali Khan (r. 1930–66) laid emphasis on the modernization and industrialization of Rampur, which is also evident in his patronage of modern Western education in Rampur. The State High School was upgraded in 1939 to an Inter College called the Raza Inter College, and a degree college named the Raza Degree College was opened just before the merger of the state of Rampur in 1949. Under Raza Ali Khan, the emphasis was on industrializing the state to generate employment opportunities, which resulted in greater power being given to the legislative assembly and municipality. These shifts were also reflected

29 Ibid, 10.
30 Annual Administrative reports of Rampur Education Department from 1896 onwards.
in the public works undertaken during this time. The emphasis was on useful modern structures such as sugar factories, electricity generation, the textiles industry, teacher-training colleges, and colleges offering a wider range of programmes of study.

Princely patronage of modern architecture was intended to create new ‘structures of legitimacy’ in the changing milieu of princely Rampur. This points to the politics of monuments and to urbanity’s close connection with politics. Under Nawab Raza Ali Khan, there was a focus on useful and modern buildings such as factories, vocational, and educational buildings, and this was reflected in the architecture that the Nawab promoted even in his home at the Khashbagh. Rampur’s princely library, however, remained the most unique symbol of cultural sovereignty, as the Nawab eloquently expressed:

‘It is gratifying to observe the magnificent Library which is possibly one of the most unique in the world. It has received considerable attention and the care of these priceless volumes has been placed in excellent hands. It is obvious to all who have been privileged to enter the building in which they are housed that their value is wisely appreciated.’

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Thus, while serving as an agent of progressive reform, the Nawab also acknowledged the value of preserving traditional Indo-Islamic knowledge. Even now, the library structure housed in the Hamid Manzil stands as a symbol of Rampur’s past and present. Rampur was one of the first Muslim princely states to merge with the Union of India. However, the post-colonial era has seen the continuous decline of monuments that once symbolized the grandeur and the progress of Rampur.

While the Rampur Raza library has been appropriated as part of India’s national heritage, other monuments have not received any attention. The beautiful Rampur fort gates are gradually crumbing, or are being encroached upon with impunity, and the walls of the fort have vanished behind a line of shops. This also reflects the changing political landscape of Rampur. The grand Nawabi part or center of princely Rampur is now the most neglected place and has degenerated into the “old and backward Muslim area”, ironically under “secular governance” of modern urban development.35 However, within these histories of marginalization one can also find minority pasts articulating Muslim subject agency and claiming history.

Documenting Minority Pasts and Present: Writing from the Margins

In 1951, literacy rates among men and women were 10.5 and 3.7 per cent respectively in the Rampur district, while in 1961, they were 17.9 per cent for men and 5.8 per cent among women. The district had four madrasas in 1971–72, all affiliated to the Uttar Pradesh Board of Arabic and Persian Examinations. The Madrasa-e-Aliya had a total enrolment of 228 students in 1971–72, with 35 teachers on the staff. The Madrasa Jame-ul-uloom Furqania in Meston Ganj was founded in 1950. It owes its origin in the khanqah-e-Ahmadia Qadria started by Shah Ahmad Ali Khan Rampuri in 1839.

The subjects taught were Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, and mathematics, and Maulvi, Alim and Fazil exams were held. It had 351 students and 17 teachers in 1971–72.36 The fortunes of the Madrasa-e-Aliya waned after the integration of Rampur state into the Indian Union and it fell into disrepair, but other madrasas successfully transitioned and transformed into centres of modern education thanks to the personal initiative of Shaair Ullah Khan.37

37 On the modernization of madrasa education and the pioneering role of Shaair Ullah Khan in Rampur, see, Amrit Dhillon,“‘It will help future generations’: Muslim schools in north India set to modernise,” 9 November,
Shaair Ullah Khan Wajeehi is a member of a highly respectable and learned Sufi family that has historically played an important role in madrasa education in Rampur. He was brought up in a pious Sufi environment by his grandfather, after whom the madrasa journal is named. During my archival work in Rampur, many Rampuris suggested that I meet Shaair Ullah Khan, visit his Jame-ul-Uloom Furqania Madrasa, and consult library and archival sources relating to his madrasa and his family, including the madrasa journal. My academic training in the history departments of secular Indian and European universities required me to regularly visit the National Archives of India and consult colonial sources, and encouraged me to visit the British Library in London as the ultimate secular pilgrimage for a historian. However, my university education never inspired me to look at alternative vernacular sources in small-town libraries, such as madrasa collections.38

My own personal prejudice and the limits of my knowledge became very apparent to me when I finally met Shaair Ullah Khan in his madrasa library. His first question to me was about the historiography of Muslim identity in colonial India and the pioneering work of Barbara Metcalf on the Deoband madrasa. I found myself listening to and learning about history from a madrasa maulana. As a trained historian and passionate archivist who worked at the Rampur Raza Library and the Khuda Bakhsh Library and now maintains his own excellent madrasa and personal library, Shaair Ullah Khan has a deep interest in history. His own work focuses on the history of Urdu journalism in colonial India, particularly in the Rohilkhand region and Rampur. However, his public career as a historian had to give way to family responsibilities after the sudden death of his grandfather Maulana Wajeehuddin Ahmad Khan and his elder brothers Maulana Wajahat Ullah Khan and Maulana Mazahir Ullah Khan death in 2013. Khan became head of the family and maintained its legacy in managing the shrine and the madrasa. However, he also found an intellectual outlet by integrating his role as a religious alim with his career as a historian through the journal *Zia-e-Wajeeh* (Light of Wajeeh), which is published by the Madrasa Furqania.

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The journal is named after Shaair Ullah Khan’s grandfather as a tribute to his legacy. It owes its origin to Maulana Wajeehuddin, who started the Madrasa Furqania Magazine in 1977 to which Shaair Ullah Khan contributed his first article. It was turned into a monthly journal (mahnama) in October 1991, but no longer focused solely on religious (mazhabi) affairs and began to cover cultural (saqafati) matters too. The journal is fascinating, as it brings together religious, educational, social, and urban issues in the history of Rampur, thus providing a fascinating archival source for popular affective memory and local history. It is an evolving archive of Rampuris and of Rampur. The city of Rampur thus found a chronicler of its memories and emotions in the life and writings of Shaair Ullah Khan.

I will focus on some of the key articles in the journal about the changing nature of education and urban culture. Each issue of the journal cover carries an image of a historical place in Rampur and documents their changing situation, pointing towards both the temporal and spatial transformation of Rampur city. Some of the articles are journalistic histories of Rampur that discuss the past through the political narrative of the princely state; others take a more personalized approach focusing not only on rulers but also on intellectuals, artists, and commoners as embodying lived, plural histories.
Let me begin with the spatial dimension of these writings. We find a series of articles on various places of historical interest in Rampur. Some of them are about the history of Nawabi buildings, such as the Rampur fort, which has itself seen changes in its fortunes in the form of encroachments and illegal constructions around the fort wall. The memories of individual lives monumentalized though graves and tombs offer another important means of relating to the past. One article reveals the history of lesser-known, neglected tombs like the Makbara of General Azimuddin Khan, who undertook urban and educational reforms in Rampur. The concern for city life and its history is nicely captured in the essay ‘The Past, Present and Future of Rampur’ (Rampur ka mazi, haal aur mustaqbil). Endowing the city with a personal character, the essay discusses the stories told by elders about Rampur’s past in which Rampur shone bright like the sun. This royal past is then treated as representative of a harmonious social order in which rules and traditions were strictly observed – especially those regarding modesty and exemplary private behaviour, whether in the practice of purdah or in the respectful celebration of public festivals. Further, the author contends that the social environment was much more peaceful due to the better educational and employment opportunities available in Rampur. He argues that the integration of Rampur into the Indian Union fundamentally changed the nature of the city.

Changes in the city’s educational and economic infrastructure affected its cultural fabric and the emotions of its inhabitants, who subsequently lost cultural norms such as respecting their elders and behaving appropriately in public. The author hopes that the future will be better, with progress made not just economically, but also in terms of educational development to bring about a better, more cultured Rampur. This concern with the changing state of Rampur’s morals is also evident in another article by Ibne Hasan Khursheed, who writes about the erstwhile popular religious atmosphere of Rampur (*Rampur main aam mazhabi maulah*). He laments the loss of interest in basic religious education among the new generation and remembers an earlier time when elementary religious education was imparted not just in mosques, but also in the private homes of Rampur, and to both boys and girls. Khursheed stresses that these mohalla-based schools and lessons were not just a source of education (*talim*) but also designed to cultivate character (*tarbiyat*).42 The latter, he observes, is increasingly undermined by the emphasis on English medium schooling, which does not include knowledge of religious and moral norms. This concern with the decline in the spatial and moral structure of the city chimes with concerns about the loss of cultured people in Rampur. Their death is mourned as representing the rapidly crumbling culture and monuments of Rampur.

The journal’s eclectic section on history, religion, and cultural and moral issues gives the opportunity to present, discuss, and remember various instances of memory, contemporary opinions, and issues of social and political contestation, including visions of a possible future. This attests to the vitality and activism of Muslims in Rampur today – a Vitality shared with other inhabitants, with many Hindu Rampuris also participating in and contributing to the journal, together with Rampuri living across the national border in Pakistan. These often neglected minority pasts must be read and studied in order to understand the nature of postcolonial marginalization, memory, and emotion among Muslims divided by political boundaries, but connected through resilient emotional ties to Rampur.

I have previously written about princely urban cosmopolitanism in Nawabi Rampur and how the Indian state took over the princely Rampur Raza Library as a National heritage institution thanks to the efforts of Nurul Hasan and other Rampuris.43 Other heritage structures

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and local institutions like Saulat Public Library have not been so lucky and have become ‘case of falling walls’. 44

As this paper documents, princely Rampur had many traditional and modern schools, madrasas, and libraries, which have slowly but steadily declined due to wilful post-colonial and secular neglect. This process did not stop even under the Rampuri Member of the Legislative Assembly Azam Khan, who served as the urban development minister of Uttar Pradesh. His ideal for the development of modern Rampur meant the destruction of the city’s princely pasts. He also opened a new educational institution interestingly named after Mohammad Ali, The Mohammad Ali Jauhar University outside the old city, which ironically and visibly carry his political symbolism and appeal. However, while we notice this modernization and innovation, let us not forget that deep inside the Muslim ghetto is also a maulana and many young students affectively reading and writing about history and future of Rampur’s education and city.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have explored the rise, stagnation, decline, and transformation of education in Rampur and of the city itself as connected histories. Rampur’s educational milieu contributes to the urbane appeal of the city, and has historically been captured in the concept of *markaz* – meaning both ‘urbane centre’ and ‘centre of education’ – which marks Rampur as an exemplary ‘place of knowledge’. The process took different urban forms and structures under different rulers. The old princely city structures are crumbling while the new part of the city is growing with new educational institutions structures and forms of urbanity.

Amidst the new lies the old; or perhaps the new is what creates the category of ‘Old City’, which is so well established in urban history. *Purana* and *Qadim* are words of great endearment, value, and significance in Urdu which lose their force in English translation as old. Similarly, the concepts of *ilm*, *taleem*, and *tehzeeb* are rooted in ideas of knowledge, manners, values, and cultural milieus that are marginalized by the concept of modern education with its emphasis on modern, literal, school-based instruction with a view to acquiring certificates and degrees. In some ways, the Muslim mohalla and madrasa represent intertwined urban and educational ideals that run counter to our vision of urban and educational modernity. As shown by scholars, these categories are not opposite, and they emerged under colonial discourses of spatial and intellectual power, sovereignty, and control. Indeed, mohallas and madrasas are both products of colonial control, and they are not unchanging relics of the past.
They have responded to and transformed under modernity. The post-colonial Muslim mohalla and madrasa are online, with computers, Internet cafés, and Wi-Fi; but more importantly, they remain on the margins as limits to the modern conception of uniformity.

Rampuris continue to cherish the old part of the city in their memories, articles, and most beautifully through poetry. Moving beyond the colonial and princely state archives, urban and educational histories – especially contemporary ones – lie hidden behind the walls of madrasas where people meet to discuss and document these minority pasts. Others may be heard at a mushairas, or everyday poetry recitals held on street corners, while deep inside the drawing room and kitchen one can hear and smell many aromatic urbane and cultural legends.45

It is time that we also open our academic doors and intellectual windows to these new spaces and horizons. This paper has attempted to show that education and urban marginality is a productive location to examine and engage with past, present, and future, as embodied in the vernacular archive of the princely past and in critiques of the subaltern present of Rampur.

45 On histories of public poetry and personal stories as archives of Rampur history, see Zayed Masroor Khan, “Rampur's Urdu poetry is about power cuts, sensuality and quirky nawabs,” *VICE*, 14 January, 2019.
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