Introduction

> *The word sudharo is a new addition to Gujarati. The Parsis of Mumbai used it first.*[12]
>
> —Narmadashankar Lalshankar, "*Sudharo ne Sudharawala*", 1881

Samira Sheikh characterises Gujarat as "a region that has been continuously settled for almost four millennia. It is the *quintessential land of the immigrant*, subject to continual waves of invaders, traders, pastoralists, and peasants" (3; emphasis added). Flux is identified, here, as the distinctive mark of the region.[3] Transformations arising out of cultural contact may be inferred to be a consistent, rather than an occasional, process for such a society. However, a specific form of change couched in the idea of *reform* assumed centre stage in the region in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Its self-consciousness distinguished it from previous engagements with change. Reform was not retrospectively identified as the *spirit of the age* but was used as a contemporary identity marker by/for those engaged in the specific agenda of sociocultural change(s) it entailed; those identified as *sudharak* (reformer) were cast as the proponents of *sudharo* (reform). The epigraph highlights the scale of the impact and distinctiveness of *sudharo* from previous ideas of change or improvement in native Gujarati society. It was not conflated with existing vocabularies of the region, but demanded the constitution of a new term, a separate term.

The idea of *sudharo* emerges in the region of Gujarat with British colonial contact in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The need for reform was generated by the need to modify native administrative, legal, and political systems according to the principles of British rulers, as well as the perceived need identified by the coloniser to *civilise* and *modernise* native society. Education was identified as one of the most effective instruments to achieve this objective. Accordingly, reform had its ideological origins in the contact of native society with Western/English education and British liberalism and was oriented towards inserting native society into the timeline of modernity.

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[1] All translations and paraphrases from Gujarati and Marathi language sources are mine, except where otherwise indicated.

[2] Narmadashankar Lalshankar, *Dharmavichar*, Mumbai: Gujarati Printing Press, 1885, p. 42.

[3] The research is conscious that the political-administrative unit of Gujarat came into being only in 1960, and thus identifies the contours of the region based on references in authors and historians of pre-1960 Gujarat to the territory that shared historical, economic, and sociocultural exchanges, marking it as distinct from others. It takes into account its shifting contours from the medieval to the pre-British, British/colonial, and postcolonial periods.

As the century progressed, reform became a frame within which the directionality of modernity was contested when education in English was at the centre of debates that sought to consolidate a regional/national identity. In the twentieth century, a clean break between English and reform was sought to be effected as the latter was pursued (in debates over education and spelling reform) while the former was fully rejected as the adversary of *independent* native knowledge and identity.[4] Thus, while there was an attempt to elect English out, reform persisted as ineluctable. Further, its usage suggests its reification into an uncritical, ahistorical, category that assumed the *necessity of improvement* (assumed to be of a universal character).

This dissertation questions whether such a break between reform and English was possible given the complex imbrication of power and discourse in the processes of colonial modernity. It tests the persistence of colonial ideological orientations through an analysis of not only language (English), but terminology (reform), and argues that the imbrication of English and reform in the complex debates over various identity markers (language, region, nation), as well as instruments of standardizing these identities (institutions, formal education systems) during the colonial period, must not be dismissed as an uncritical coincidence, but must be thoroughly investigated to understand the knowledge paradigms that may continue to inflect the disciplinary practice(s) of English Studies in post-independence higher education.

Literature Review

Gauri Viswanathan's *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (1989) is one of the most significant historicisations of English Studies in India, where she analyses "the relationship between the institutionalization of English in India and the exercise of colonial power, between the processes of curricular selection and the impulse to dominate and control" (3). Her work brings the intimate connection between education and imperialism in India to the centre stage, but also demonstrates how historicisation as a research method allowed the reading of truth as text, or document(s) as discourse. She positions her work away from the uncritical approaches of Bruce McCully's *English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism* (1940) and David Kopf's *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance: The Dynamics of Indian Modernization 1773-1835* (1969) (14-15). She rather focuses on what constituted the discourse of English studies than its impact on the native society. In an analysis extending from the Charter Act of 1813 to the educational dispatch of

[4] Contestations over this stand continued, however this approach did emerge as the dominant narrative of the period.

1854 issued by Sir Charles Wood, with a note on the Indian Education Commission of 1882, Viswanathan presents English literature as a mediating space between the interests of the home government, missionaries, and colonial officials; the Conservatives and Radicals; the Evangelicals and the Utilitarians; and religiosity and secularism. She traces how it changed its methods and curricular concerns and developed from a source of "moral education" to "a branch of practical study" (Viswanathan 143).

However, Viswanathan's study remains too strictly in the domain of colonial intentions not accounting for negotiation of native interests in the constitution of the discipline. She does hint at the presence of a "reformist impulse" underlying early British educational policy, and the resolution of the divergent approaches to reform of the missionaries and the government in English literature (Viswanathan 35). However, she does not critically examine reform beyond this early historical moment.

While Viswanathan's reading emerged out of the methodological framework of postcolonialism, Alok K. Mukherjee historicises English studies in India using the Gramscian framework of "alternative hegemony" in his 2009 work *This Gift of English: English Education and the Formation of Alternative Hegemonies in India* (70). He examines the "first fifty years of the curricular formation of English in India" to study the collaboration between native elite and colonial interests, and approaches English in terms of its peculiar position as a "'gift' sought, imposed and perpetuated through an interplay of subjective actors and objective structures" (A. Mukherjee 81). He uses this political bias inherent in the origin and development of English Studies in India to critique the persistence of specific drawbacks in its trajectory in post-independence India.

For both, Viswanathan and Alok K. Mukherjee, the key text that makes a compelling case for education as a means for moral improvement of the natives is Charles Grant's *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, Particularly with Respect to Morals; and on the Means of Improving it* (1792)[5]. Grant believed that it was in establishing the superiority of the British in the religious and moral domains, rather than legal and political actions that could "make British connections with India "permanent and … indissoluble"" (Viswanathan 71-72). However, even Alok K. Mukherjee does not make an abiding theoretical connection between the goal of reform and colonial education.

Santosh Dash orients his history more specifically in contemporary practices of English studies in postcolonial India by examining the rise of courses on Compulsory English

[5] It was written in 1792, but first published on 16 August 1797, and laid before the House of Commons in 1813.

in undergraduate study, and the question of merit inherent in education. He identifies education as "a major site of subject formation in colonial India" and its post-independence repercussions (Dash, *English Education* 11). His analysis overlaps with Alok K. Mukherjee's approach of viewing the British and Indians as "active agents in the introduction of English education in India" (Dash, *English Education* 16). He discusses the English-vernacular divide as a "reductive and formulaic binary" (Dash, *English Education* 12), the formulation of the idea of merit, and calls for keener consideration of the politics of English to create more sensitive textbooks representative of wider sections of the society.

Viswanathan's and Alok K. Mukherjee's accounts are marked by a preponderance on the Universities of Calcutta and Madras, and minimal to no attention to the developments in western India. Dash's account on the other hand significantly represents the region of western India in discussing the impact of English education on Gujarat and Gujarati, as well as taking up textbooks from universities and colleges in Gujarat for consideration in his study. Yet, with a focus on subject formation and practical politics of colonial policies, he does not subject the category of reform to scrutiny.

Jana Tschurenev's *Empire, Civil Society, and the Beginnings of Colonial Education in India* (2019) traces the colonial system of elementary instruction in India within a transnational framework. She builds on arguments by Alok K. Mukherjee and Dash regarding the participation of various actors and stakeholders—across nationalities, and on both sides of the colonial power relation in "building of a colonial education system". She also builds on previous studies of the politics of education like Krishna Kumar's *Political Agenda of Education* (1991), *The Contested Terrain: Perspectives on Education in India* (1998), edited by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya; and *New Perspectives in the History of Indian Education* (2014), edited by Parimala V. Rao, in not only mapping the imperial motivations for reform but also the failure of many "nationalist counter-narrative[s]…[in] 'reviving' the pre-colonial institutions" (Tschurenev 2). Although it does not deal directly with higher education, Tschurenev's work is important owing to its focus on educational transformations in the nineteenth century, a detailed discussion on the Bombay Presidency, and tracing the "emergence of…colonial-modern structure" (2). It also makes a useful insight, albeit unintentionally, about how changes in education system were mired in the vocabulary of "reform" (Tschurenev 2). However, testing such conceptual categories does not form its objective.

Sanjay Seth in *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India* (2007) traces the rise of modern western education and the process of subject formation in colonial

India. He undercuts the equation of modern western knowledge "as knowledge itself" by demonstrating how such knowledge is not "axiomatic and universal" (3, 8). He tilts the balance of historicisation on the other end of the colonial education by examining "how western knowledge was received and consumed by the colonized" (Seth 3). He diagnoses the stated drawbacks of education, engagement of education with gender and religious minorities, as well as schemes of alternative national education in the colonial period, including institutions in western India. In the gaps between intentions and interpretations, he traces the asymmetry between modern knowledge and modernity, and demands a critical re-examination of the latter. While he discusses the binaries and biases perpetuated by modern knowledge, he does not discuss in great detail the larger epistemes constituting modernity in the context of education.

A theoretically rigorous examination of western India occurs in Veena Naregal's *Language Politics, Elites, and the Public Sphere* (2001). Naregal subjects the domains of colonial education and the public sphere to rigorous scrutiny and theorisation in the context of laicisation of knowledge. In the process, she offers crucial insights into the shifts in native power structures from the precolonial to colonial periods and the role of language and textuality within, the problem of bilingualism and complex hierarchies of English and the vernacular, the role played by the sphere of print, role played by colonial education in the idea of literacy, and the constitution of native hegemony, spanning the period from pre-1857 western India to the 1880s. The most significant analysis by Naregal in the context of this research is the role of reformers and the idea of reform as a "textualist" exercise (225). However, she does not study the impact or trajectory of reform beyond its historical heyday that ended in late nineteenth century, and focuses her discussion exclusively on Maharashtra, specifically the region of Pune. Gujarat and Bombay enter the discussion only as marginal references[6] to establish comparisons or to discuss an overlap of concerns.

A similar geographical delimitation marks Ravinder Kumar's *Western India in the Nineteenth Century: A Study in the Social History of Maharashtra* (1968). In any case, his is more of an ethnographic account than a critical history. The point I wish to highlight is the conflation of western India with Maharashtra in histories of the region.

Kenneth W. Jones' *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India* (1989) offers a detailed discussion on Gujarat and Bombay in his survey of reform movements in western India. He draws a distinction between the "transitional movement" of socio-religious reform

[6] Especially Gujarat. Bombay still receives some consistent attention.

represented by Sahajananda Swami in Gujarat, and the "acculturative socio-religious movements" that emerged towards mid nineteenth century in Bombay and the provinces of Gujarat (3,137). He connects the latter with the expansion of the "colonial milieu" from the Bombay city to "inland" Gujarat, and specifically focuses on the impact of English education and western knowledge in building the impetus for such reform (Jones 137). He, further, states that the difference in the two types of movements lay in "their point of origin" (Jones 4). While he defines the terms 'socio', 'religious' and 'movement', he does not offer any theorisation of the term reform which is taken to be a self-evident category. He also does not problematise what in English education generated specific types of reform. However, importantly, he does underline the need to write histories that account for regional difference owing to "[t]he uneven development of a colonial milieu" (Jones 3).

Conceptual Background

The three histories of Viswanathan, Alok K. Mukherjee, and Dash that approach English Studies using different methodological approaches highlight the persistence of reform as a rationale qualifying the enunciations of English across the colonial period. Viswanathan identifies the Charter Act of 1813 as the defining moment that set the stage for the "appearance" of English education, specifically English literature, in India (23). Alok K. Mukherjee agrees with Viswanathan in that the reformist impulse underlined the earliest interventions by "missionary educators of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century" who found the Indian society to be primarily morally inferior to the British (109). Alok K. Mukherjee observes how Grant's treatise was refashioned as the "Pious Clause" in 1793, "when the charter of East India Company came up for renewal" and "in 1813, Grant's "Pious Clause" found its way in the Charter Act" (115). Grant's treatise, thus, not only becomes the foundational text of English education,[7] but also of reform in India. In *English Education and the Question of Indian Nationalism: A Perspective on the Vernacular* (2009), Dash observes how, over time, the English literary text became a repository of symbolic power, a metonym of the Englishman's morality, and a general signifier of "the best that was known and thought in the world" (35). Thus, what scholars seem to agree on is that the English (literary) text was chosen for the project of imperial consolidation primarily owing to its ability to generate moral reform. However, its status as a hybrid continued to create a slippage between its repetition(s), leading to unpredictability of the responses to the text. Yet, while strategies and

[7] It is pertinent to note that selections from Grant's treatise are reproduced in a government-sanctioned collection of educational records compiled by H. Sharp and published in 1920.

modes of implementation changed, reform continued to be the abiding logic for various shifts in the trajectory of English Studies in India.

Yet, none of the analyses choose reform as the variable through which to interrogate history. Perhaps, this has to do with the popular understanding of the decline of the so-called Age of Reform in India with the ideological shift towards revivalism in late nineteenth century. This belief is also predicated on an instrumental understanding of reform as resulting out of the impact of European ideas in the colony; thereby, as being a phenomenon in/of the colony and not the metropole. However, the central question regarding how the common noun reform takes on a proper status with the capital 'R' takes one back to the metropole.

Reform with a capital R makes a distinct appearance in English public life around the Great Reform Act of 1832.[8] The act forms the nucleus around which the idea of an age of reform in Britain has been generally conceived by historians (Innes and Burns 1). Joanna Innes argues that this use of the term as a noun was "uncommon", the more "standard noun-form of the verb 'reform'" having been "'reformation'" (71). She traces this shift in usage to the Wyvillite campaign of early 1780s (Innes 71), that led to a significant shift in the semantic association of reform—from moral change to institutional change (Innes 82). The passing of the Act, moreover, came through after stiff resistance resulting in multiple revisions of the Reform Bill. Miles Taylor has argued how these revisions were directly impacted by the political tug-of-war over representation of colonial interests and coincided with "major turning-points in the history of the British empire" including, among others, "the renewal of the East India Company's Charter" (296). Innes believes that the age of reform "when the term was so heavily freighted as to be bandied about as a badge of identity, … or acclaimed as a cause fit to live and die for, had largely passed" after the 1830s (97). However, Patrick Brantlinger[9] names his account of reform from 1832-67 as *The Spirit of Reform*, which establishes that the impact of the term and its currency in various discourse(s) did not dwindle with the logical end of an age, and the complex intersections and overlaps

[8] It is understood that the capital R is also in accordance with the stylistic norms of the English language requiring capitalization of the first letter of every content word in a title. The emphasis on the capitalization is to underline that when reform becomes a qualifier describing a parliamentary act or the spirit of an age, it represents the clustering of a distinct and specific set of meanings, which would persist even when the term is used without capitalization. Therefore, there is no intention to overinterpret the capitalization, or narrow the relevance of the discussion only to usage(s) with capitalization.

[9] See Brantlinger, *The Spirit of Reform: British Literature and Politics*, 1832-67

between the moral and institutional ideas of reform continued. Jonathan Sperber has analysed how the signification of reform in Britain was distinct from continental Europe.[10]

In Gujarat however, as is evident from the essay by Narmadashankar Lalshankar that the epigraph cites, *sudharo* in native Gujarati society had come to be associated with a specific set of meanings and actions.[11] It indirectly hints at what the malleability of the term and its limits by accounting for what is the nature of practices that could be subsumed under its domain. Thus, the constitution of a new term in native vocabulary whose meaning(s) are avowedly governed by its historical-cultural origins is a crucial example of the role of language in colonialism. This thesis focuses on not only language but terminology, and how it orients a specific relationality with that which it seeks to enunciate, and marks a field of discursive possibilities.

Historical Background

Although the city of Surat had an English (and Dutch) presence by the seventeenth century, this was a purely mercantilist concern.[12] By the beginning of the eighteenth century, trade in Surat had declined (Gokhale 7), and the headquarters of the East India Company shifted to Bombay. The city of Bombay had grown into an important trade centre by the nineteenth century where Gujaratis dominated trade following large scale migration of various Gujarati communities to the port city. Various other factors like employment and education also attracted people from different parts of Gujarat to Bombay and thus Bombay was part of the economic and sociocultural domains of Gujarat. During early nineteenth century, the British came to dominate other parts of Gujarat through wars and treaties with various Maratha powers. With the defeat of Peshwas at the hands of the British in 1818, the Deccan was annexed in the Bombay Presidency, and Peshwa control diminished in the Gaekwad territories of Gujarat. Thus, Gujarat came under political-administrative domination of the British in the nineteenth century bearing significant ties with the Bombay region.

The emergence of and major developments in the colonial education system in nineteenth-century Western India, in terms of policy shifts as well as institution-building, have Bombay and Poona as their immediate context. Tschurenev argues that government

[10] See Sperber, ""Reforms, Movements for Reform, and Possibilities of Reform: Comparing Britain and Continental Europe."
[11] Widely known by the shortened version Narmad.
[12] See Gokhale, *Surat in the Seventeenth Century: A Study in Urban History of Pre-modern India*.

funding played a crucial role in the success or failure of institutionalizing reform[13] in the Bombay Presidency. However, the shaping of educational policy was based on a collaborational model where power would be shared by the colonial government with the "new urban elites in the port city of Bombay" while simultaneously "conciliating the old landowning and cultural elites in Poona" (Tschurenev 248). As a result, "[a]round the mid-nineteenth century", the twin cities emerging as "twin centres of vivid public debates on social and religious reform" and "[t]he colonial education system…took shape in a highly 'contested terrain' of public discourse, and in interaction with diverse Indian reform activists" (246). I shall limit my focus to the Bombay city with direct institutional, economic, and cultural ties with Gujarat; one that is largely missing between Gujarat and Poona.

The Bombay reformers distinctly came from the urban elite sections of the Parsi and Hindu communities and were inserted within the institutional setup of colonial education in the form of patrons, students and/or teachers. Further, Surat, owing to its geographical and economic proximity with the city, constituted a sort of cultural continuum with Bombay. The implication of Surat reformers in the larger intellectual networks and institutional establishments can be observed in the case of Durgaram Mehta, identified as "the first radical reformer in Gujarat", who was also "a student of the first batch of normal class (1825) in Bombay", was a teacher to other influential reformers like Narmad and Navalram Laxmiram Pandya, and established the Manav Dharma Sabha in close alliance with and under the influence of well-known Bombay reformer Dadoba Pandurang (Raval 98). Further, R. L. Raval ascribes the failure of the Surat-Bombay reform initiative(s) in significantly impacting Gujarati society at large, to its radical stance, as well as its inability to create stable patronage supporting reform (160).

Ahmedabad also constitutes a useful entry-point into mapping regional reform, as it effects a break from the larger Bombay-Surat centre in terms of the nature and intensity of the movement(s). While Ahmedabad belonged to the Baroda state, it came under the British in 1817 following a treaty between the British and the Gaekwads, which, for the native population, brought about political and economic stability. Such a perception of the British as the harbingers of peace and order fed into their approach to British ideology. Neera Desai considers the native "intelligentsia…primarily nourished in English language and English literature in the first half of the 19th century" as influenced by the prevalent ideas of British liberalism (128). Further, she sees the impact of the influence in "[t]hese enlightened

[13] This phrase refers to both setting up of institutions to promote sociocultural reform and attempts to reform/develop existing institutions.

individuals" viewing "the extant society through the new lenses", leading to their identification as "reformers (Sudhārāwālā)" (128-29). Similar to the larger Presidency, reform in Ahmedabad developed within the network of government, missionary schools, and privately funded schools; civil society associations, and a growing print culture, beginning in the 1820s but fully developing in the 1840s. What set the trajectory of reform apart in Ahmedabad was the domination of the Gujarat Vernacular Society (GVS), established in 1848, in shaping not only print and literacy cultures, but also hegemonizing the narrative of reform through its mouthpiece—the periodical *Buddhiprakash* that it took over in 1854, as well as in the figure of its editor—Dalpatram Dahyabhai, who retained this position from 1855 to 1879. Further, Dalpatram's ideas and by extension the ideology of GVS were not shaped by direct exposure to Western education in the institutional setup but through an introduction to Western ideas through his friendship with Alexander Kinloch Forbes. Thus, the origins and trajectory of reform in Ahmedabad in the initial stage were shaped by forces quite different from the Surat-Bombay centre.

While Ahmedabad was at the centre of British Gujarat, several other territories existed outside direct governmental control in the form of British Residencies and Native States. One of the principal native States—both in terms of size, as well as influence in shaping regional forces—was the Gaekwad state of Baroda. The chequered history of the Gaekwads and the British consisting of multiple phases of conciliation and confrontation, political intrigues over accession and territories, illustrates local variations in the perception and reception of British presence in the region, and precludes any straightforward impact of British ideology on the sociocultural terrain of the region.

By the late nineteenth century, the self-conscious *Sudharak Yug* or Age of Reform(ers) waned in Gujarat and gave way to the *Sakshar Yug* or *Pandit Yug* as identified by literary historians. The alternative nomenclature in itself is interesting showing how the idea of a *pandit*, that is, a learned man, is grafted onto formal literacy—*saksharta*, thereby, suggesting that scholarship or learning is derived from modern formal education system. While demands for education in the vernacular grew sharper, alongside criticisms of British policies, Desai argues that the native intelligentsia of Gujarat continued to remain supporters of British rule (344).[14] She also adds how "the issues which emerged at the end of the 19th century as well as during twentieth century were not the ones of going back to the past

[14] The term *pandit* also highlights the elitist bias of education that confined "scholarship" to only the privileged caste/class section of the society that had access to such education, while also revealing larger social hierarchies in the region. This persistence of a caste/class bias also marks the continuity in the *sudharak* and *pandit* phases.

educational systems, but to improve, refine, diversify the new educational system introduced in 19th century" (Desai 332). On the other hand, this was the period of flourishing of reforms in Baroda, as the new ruler—Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad III came of age.

In the twentieth century, Gujarat captured the attention of the nation as the centre of an organised and widespread movement for *swaraj* under the leadership of Gandhi. Gandhi charged English education with the tendency "to dwarf the Indian body, mind and soul" (*Evil Wrought* 10). Gandhi's critique was differently oriented as it was directed not only towards English education but also European culture. Thus, he sought to resist not only English, but also English-influenced ideas. Yet, reform continued to be one of the chief concerns of his nationalist project as he defined reform, or what Tridip Suhrud terms "*sudhar* or civilisation through its moral dimension" (7).

Rationale

In India, as observed earlier, the discourse of reform inscribed itself within the institutionalization of English. However, historical analyses have rarely focused on it as a central point of interrogation. Further, comparatively limited scholarly attention has been devoted to western India, specifically Gujarat, in the historicization of education, English Studies, or reform. Scholarly studies that do engage with Western India either largely focus on the Bombay Presidency with reference to the Bombay city within the larger context of Maharashtra and/or are designed as chronicles rather than critical histories. However, the transactions of the region of Gujarat with British colonialism were distinctive. Echoing Jones, Desai makes a case for the study of "regional communities" on the grounds that, for each community, "the impact of the British rule has been varied and of different intensities" (2). This research aspires to address the research gap by attempting a regional historicization of English Studies.

Objective

This dissertation aims to interrogate the transactions between the category of reform and the idea and practice(s) of English Studies in the region of Gujarat from nineteenth century to approximately mid-twentieth century. It does not claim to contribute to epistemic reconstitution per se, but rather proposes to examine a potential episteme—reform—that has inflected the institutional practice(s) of English Studies in the region. It, thus, hopes to create deeper insights into the epistemes that shape knowledge practice(s) to enable revising or dismissing them, or employing them with critical awareness of their ideological import.

In doing so, it attempts to fulfil the following specific objectives:

(1) To investigate how the term 'reform' becomes a proper noun or a qualifier, that is, what distinctive cluster of meanings stabilizes around the term, any major shifts in the dominant understanding of the term, and reification of certain meanings resulting in an epistemic bias arising out of the usage of the term.

(2) To explore a connection between the prevailing reform discourse and the nature of English Studies in the dominant higher education institutions of Gujarat.

(3) To provide a regional history of English Studies to enrich historical understanding of the discipline, acknowledge the diversity of regional responses to colonialism and the uneven terrain of its conceptual articulation, analyse how official policies are negotiated by regional practices, and consider whether future policies or solutions can find meaningful insights in critical readings of the region.

(4) To problematise the role of language in the constitution of coloniality.

(5) To reflect on the implications of the analysis for the future course of the disciplinary practice of English studies in higher education in India.

Definition of Key Variables and Scope

1. English Studies – While colonial education policies were aimed at all levels of education, English remained largely steady as the medium of higher education. It is in this domain that the study of English language and literature shaped into a separate academic discipline, as practised in colleges and universities. Thereby, while the research is contextualized within broader debates over the question of English in education, it retains a specific focus on the study of English in higher education, and key institutions in the region offering such education.
2. Reform – The term refers in the initial stage to a specific rhetoric that emerged in the Gujarati society as it came into contact with Western ideas and culture and negotiated colonial modernity. In the stages after establishing the components of this rhetoric, however, the research moves on to investigate whether the term remains simply a rhetoric or functions as discourse within which ideas or values are legitimized and delegitimized, and whether it is structured as an episteme in the constitution of colonial modernity and education in Gujarat. The term episteme, here, is understood using a broad application of Foucault's definition: "the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable" (*Power/Knowledge* 197).

3. Gujarat - Gujarat as an independent state in India came into being only in 1960. During the period in which this study is located, Gujarat was not yet a separate and unified political entity. Therefore, this study makes reference to Gujarat as a region and/or province as identified in pre-1960 India (Refer to footnote 3).

It draws on Bernard S. Cohn's definition of regionalism to argue that, in spite of its political divisions, Gujarat could be imagined as a region based on "the sense of community shared by a significant proportion of the residents in an area", whose prerequisites include "a symbol pool, which uses the local language to create a set of terms which function to heighten the consciousness of self-identity of the members of the group; a selective transmission of certain elements within the symbol pool…and the establishment of an elite which acts to elaborate, preserve, and indoctrinate aspirants within the culture" (qtd. in Morrison 137). For the same reason, I focus on two urban centres—the British State of Ahmedabad, and Native State of Baroda, that arguably dominated the symbol pool of the region. These shall remain the focal points of the inquiry, located within the larger context of the Bombay Presidency that formed a continuum with the urban centre of Surat.

Methodology

Sperber observes that the "movement for reform in Great Britain and the very concept of reform itself" as it was shaped and conceived in a society that had already moved on from "the *ancien régime* to a civil society of property owners" (330). Thus, for such reform to be structured in a society often identified as pre-modern before the contact with British, modernisation of political-administrative structures was a precondition for reform, and modernisation was the goal for reform.

To negotiate the complex imbrications of reform, education, and modernity in the knowledge project of coloniality, my methodological approach is marked by the broad frame of critiques of (western) modernity emerging from both within and outside the west. These include poststructuralist approaches that critique the fundamental binaries of modernity represented in theorists like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Foucault reimagined modernity from being a historical-temporal era to an intellectual-psychological process in calling it "as an attitude… a mode of relating to contemporary reality; a voluntary choice made by certain people; in the end, a way of thinking and feeling; a way, too, of acting and behaving that at one and the same time marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task" ("What is Enlightenment?" 39). Further, his conceptions of discourse and power offer critical entry-points into the political-ideological function of language and the processes of

institutionalisation. The idea of the episteme is also partly drawn from Foucault as mentioned earlier.

Derrida allows a questioning of the metaphysics of presence as the fundamental bias inherent in modernity and its structures of binaries that represent equality but are marked by hierarchy. His work also foregrounded the significance of the Other, that is those that epistemology banishes to its margins. Further, his seminal concept of *différance* allows the problematisation of any stable and self-evident set of meanings.

Poststructuralism, however, was criticised for its inability to account for empire that impinged significantly on the contours of western modernity. Postcolonial criticism built on poststructuralist insights warped through the lens of imperialism and colonialism, producing critiques of Eurocentric hegemony in the knowledge project. The postcolonial methodology focuses primarily on Homi K. Bhabha's *Location of Culture*, for its critical thrust and conceptual framework, specifically, the problematization of categories of the Other, civility, etc., as well as the concepts of third space and hybridity, built on a complex interrogation of "the English book" (Bhabha 145) whose repetition "represents important moments in the historical transformation and discursive transfiguration of the colonial text and context" (Bhabha 150).

Subaltern Studies constitutes an important historiographical project that delegitimised modern-rational being as the subject of history, wherein critics like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak highlighted the limits of postcolonialism through idea of the silence of the subaltern arising out of an epistemic violence that disallows the subaltern a subject position.

Further approaches diverged into varying critiques of modernity. They are marked on one hand by a combination of previous approaches in theorists like Dipesh Chakrabarty who questioned the universalist aspirations of Enlightenment modernity with reference to the case of South Asia in *Provincialising Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*; Partha Chatterjee who measures Benedict Anderson's idea of the nation against nationalist projects in the colony and argues for a heterogeneity of responses to any totalising project; or Ashish Nandy who traces the psychology of colonial discourse to redefine the idea of the coloniser and the colonised. On the other hand, they question the primacy of Western modernity, exploring non-western modernities represented by the 'alternative modernities' school of thought in scholars like Arjun Appadurai and Avadhesh Kumar Singh.

A distinct theoretical response to colonisation emerged in the twentieth century in the form of decolonial thinking. For decolonial thinking, modernity is always/already colonial modernity. Drawing particularly on Walter D. Mignolo, my conceptualization of the central

research question is afforded by this theoretical strand, that creates grounds to question not the *what* of modernity but the *why* and *how* of modernity. It creates a theoretical opportunity to pose a new question, rather than to look for new answers to the same question. Decolonial thinking offers the crucial insight that in order to change the conversation, "[i]t is not enough to change the content of the conversation…it is of the essence to change the t*erms*…of the conversation" (Mignolo 149). As discussed earlier, the survival of English Studies (as a discipline) draws its many complex justification(s) from the overarching frames of modernity and globalization. These are also the two ideas that decolonial thinking challenges for their tendency to constitute "epistemic totality" (Mignolo 197) wrought by "the "*logic of coloniality*" defined as "the darker side of Western modernity" generating "*the denial and disavowal of non-European local times and spaces and non-European ways of life*" (Mignolo 155).

I deliberately use the term decolonial thinking, rather than the terms decoloniality or decolonization to describe the theoretical approach, for three reasons. The first reason lies in the awareness that decoloniality and decolonization refer to two distinct theoretical positions with different geographical and intellectual origins. The second reason is that the research hopes to enrich the inquiry by harnessing the aligned critical approaches and terminology offered by both. The third reason lies in the awareness of the limitations of both approaches, and an attempt to avert a skewed argument arising out of the biases of either. In the domain of decoloniality, I primarily draw on the work of Mignolo, among others. In the domain of decolonization, I draw on the recent work of Indian scholars.

All the theoretical strands are viewed as a spectrum rather than separate positions, as each of them informs the other, or creates grounds for a subsequent approach to build on. An example is the idea of the episteme that draws on Foucault, Spivak, and Mignolo. While a decolonial approach frames the research question, specific methodological tools and arguments to investigate the question are drawn from the theoretical strands of poststructuralism, postcolonialism and alternative modernities, and approaches to decolonisation. The work of a range of scholars drawn from these different domains is brought to bear on the discussion.

My methodological strategy is to trace key moments where the trajectories of reform and English Studies converge in Gujarat. I, further, focus on two institutions of higher education in Gujarat located within such key moments that functioned against the grain of colonial domination in different ways. This allows me to problematise reform against its contestations, and analyse more critically, the extent of its imbrication with English Studies. I

have approached the archive through openings provided by reading historical studies of the region, and then built the network of other primary material through reading of each text and its context(s). In this way, I have allowed the archive to guide my selection of texts, rather than approaching the archive with a view to find specific pre-determined texts.

Thus, each chapter consists of a study of a few central primary texts located within a polyphonic network of other primary texts to allow a rich understanding of the contexts of the key text(s). The nature of texts accessed from the archive include publications contemporary with the moment under study such as books, newspaper articles, articles from contemporary periodicals, policy documents, university calendars, administrative reports, speeches, documents related to the proceedings of various societies and government documents, among others.

The research deals with the interconnections of reform and western education, where the latter domain is dominant, as the objective of the research is to trace the trajectory of English Studies. Thus, it is not an exhaustive account of reform movements or initiatives in the Gujarat region, but grapples with them only as they intersect with education or represent a shift in the understanding of reform.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One opens the discussion with the moment of 1857 that represents the complex contradictions of colonial mechanisms whereby the first most impactful challenge to the empire—the Indian Revolt of 1857, and the emphatic consolidation of empire— the setting up of the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, can occur simultaneously. This moment helps capture the conflict between the sense of self-assertion and submission generated by the native contact with British liberal ideology. It also helps ground the question of reform, which was supposed to avert such a revolt, in the policy estimates of the British; and the ascendancy of which is believed to have summarily come to an end with the revolt. The context of 1857, then, helps establish that neither was the trajectory of reform movements seamless, nor did it generate an uncritically positive outlook towards English education as the instrument of "enlightenment". In Gujarat, 1857 did not spell the end of the reform movement, as there were negligible reverberations of the revolt in the region. The origin of the rhetoric of reform was not in the colony (resulting out of the "need" perceived by the "enlightened" native) but could be traced back to the political reform taking shape in England. The Reform Act of 1832 was primarily a liberal-utilitarian enterprise, and the same political philosophy "found a *project*" in the reform movement(s) in India (Mehta; qtd. in

Aspengren 51), in bringing "a rationalised liberal-administrative state" to India (Chakravarty 3), as well as initiating change in the frame of reform, to avert a popular threat of change through revolt. Thus, one can expect a continuity of the liberal political component in the manifestation of reform in sociocultural terms in Gujarat. The breakdown of reform with the revolt in larger India, suggests a problem of translation of the "needs" of the colony to the colonizer. Gujarat, on the other hand, possibly indicates a case of successful translation. I have taken this conceptual basis to closely read a contemporary successful translation process in Ahmedabad—the translation in English by Alexander Kinloch Forbes of the *Bhut Nibandh* (1849) by Dalpatram. I consider this translation as emblematic of the trajectory of reform in Ahmedabad. Dalpatram translated the idea of Gujarat to Forbes who wished to study the history and culture of the region. On the other hand, Dalpatram writing the *Bhut Nibandh* (for the essay competition announced by GVS) with the objective of contributing to the "reform" initiative suggests how Dalpatram successfully translated the liberal ideas of the West that he had acquired from Forbes. The success of the translation process is evidenced in the jubilant reception by Forbes and GVS, not only leading to large scale printing and dissemination of the essay, but its further translation into English which is specifically directed to the English audience (the coloniser). Clearly, Forbes wished to make an example of the essay, for the colonised and the coloniser. Thus, I use a close reading of the Gujarati text and the English translation to read the constitution of reform out of the transactions between the coloniser and the colonised. I not only study the symbolic process of translation, but also the material practices of translation and editing that constituted the parameter of "appropriateness" as colonial morality was imposed on the native public sphere. I contextualise the discussion within other prose writings of Dalpatram, and other reformers, as well as the larger context of the reform movement, including the rise of modern prose, print culture, reform associations, language cultures, etc., to tease out the dimensions of development of reform within the institutions of the public domain. With the setting up of universities in 1857, there was a criticism of the policy on English medium education by reformers including Dalpatram which is often read as an anti-colonial stance. However, I consider this as an indication of reform being converted from a loosely defined narrative governing sociocultural initiatives to an uncontested rationale enabling the insertion of Gujarati society into Western modernity, with the demand that vernacular be the medium of instruction so as to not interrupt the process of its modernization. I further study the anxieties over colonial self-image in the controversy

over Baroda intrigues and Bombay *khutput* leading to the dismissal of Lt. Colonel James Outram as the Resident of Baroda.[15] I study various documents written around the corruption scandal to analyse the challenge it presented to the colonial idea that corruption belonged either to traditional societies or to the civilizational and moral Other of the colonizer, that is, the Oriental despot (Kroeze 3). In this way, the chapter traces the institutionalization of specific moral narratives and the moralization of institutional practices, to trace the anatomy of reform in Gujarat that contextualized the institutionalization of English Studies in higher education in the region via the Presidency.

Chapter Two opens the discussion in 1882 when the new ruler of Baroda—Sayajirao Gaekwad III—dispensed one of his initial formal duties as a king which was the inauguration of the Baroda College—an institution that was to become one of the most influential hubs of higher education in the region, and the Indian Education Commission was convened in the Bombay Presidency to take stock of the impact of the Despatch of 1854 that had led to the establishment of universities and major changes in the education policy. The Indian Education Commission of 1882 is credited with building the idea of a "national" policy of education while also encouraging Indian private enterprise in education. This resulted in wider independent discussions regarding development of a "national" education at local and regional levels, as instantiated by T.K. Gajjar's *Note on the Development of a National System of Education for the Baroda State* (1888). Just as Dalpatram's encounter with Western ideas was not in the formal institutional framework as it was for other reformers, Gaekwad's encounter was also slightly different. Gaekwad's education was aimed at creating a statesman rather than a state employee. Reform assumes a distinctly political and institutional form in the work of Sayajirao Gaekwad. This radical king comes of age within the larger context of the rising tide of 'nationalist' thought in the closing decades of the century. This chapter analyses how the domain of English Studies is shaped by the transition of the dominant narrative of reform from moral to institutional, from the Indian Education Commission of 1882 to roughly the University Reforms of 1904 culminating in the Indian Universities Act of 1904. It further analyses whether and how the 'nationalist' question had implications for the pedagogic practice(s) of English Studies. The primary texts I study include the lecture notes on Tennyson's Victorian revival of a national Romance legend, developed into *Essays on Lord Tennyson's Idylls of the King* (1893) by Harold Littledale, Vice Principal and Professor

[15] This refers to a scandal rounding the inheritance of a wealthy bank in Baroda manipulated by its existing manager, through alleged bribery of Bombay government officials, particularly, Mr. Reid, that Colonel Outram reported to the colonial government with a view to bring to their notice the popular native impression that the Bombay government was corrupt.

of English Literature at Baroda College; as well as writings compiled during his tenure at Baroda College by Aurobindo Ghose, one of the key nationalist thinkers of India, who also succeeded Littledale as Acting Professor of English in 1900, and Vice Principal in 1904, besides fulfilling several important roles for the state. Besides, I also look at memoirs of students at the Baroda College, administrative and official reports of the Baroda state as well as official commissions, other official documents related to Bombay University, as well as key political, literary, writings published independently or as articles in contemporary periodicals. These are contextualized using secondary literature that includes critical histories and analyses of various aspects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Gujarat and India. While Littledale deployed the imperial discourse on reform to structure his interpretation and bolster the ideological function of the English text, Aurobindo marks an attempt to step outside the discourse and represents resistance in the domain of English. The chapter compares the approaches of the two that shapes an understanding of the discursive possibilities of reform and avenues for resistance in English Studies.

Chapter Three is located in the 1920s beginning with the non-cooperation movement and the resultant education reforms couched in the demand for an anti-British national education, the establishment of a 'national *vidyapith*'—Gujarat Mahavidyalaya in 1920, and the culmination of Gujarati spelling reform with the publication of the *Jodanikosh* in 1929. National education was perceived at the centre of the nationalist movement, and questions of language and institutionalisation remained at its heart. The call for reforming education consisted of two aims—to free educational institutions from government control, and to change the medium of education to a combination of the 'mother-tongue' and 'national language' of Hindustani. Such nationalization was aimed at remedying the intellectual and moral "weakness" that was generated by education in a foreign tongue constituted of foreign values. The Gujarat Mahavidyalaya—the higher education institution established under the Gujarat Vidyapith, was national not only in terms of the nature of education it offered, but also its scope. It was the institution established by the leader of the nationalist movement—Gandhi, it was part of the pan-Indian range of nationalist institutions like the Jamia Milia Islamia, Kashi Vidyapith, and Bihar Vidyapith. It remained a centre of inspiration for other national education initiatives. These contexts portend resounding success for the institution and its potential to dethrone the English/Western hegemony in institutional practices. However, the practical operation of the institution demonstrated that the nationalist sentiment that swept popular activism was unable to successfully percolate higher education in the region. Education reform remained one of the most opposed points of Gandhi's non-

cooperation programme (Prasad 3). The Vidyapith struggled with raising of funds, availability of teachers in vernacular languages, as well as enlisting students in greater numbers. Interestingly, while Gandhi strongly contended English as a medium of instruction, he did not elucidate his position on English as a subject of study, except in stating that study of literatures in all languages was useful. Neither did he desire immediate changes in the curricula of higher education. Further, he called for translations in the vernacular language (here, Gujarati) in order to enrich the same. In this context, I study whether and how the position of English Studies is modulated within this changing definition of reform. I consider whether the challenges faced by the institution point to the function of reform as an episteme that resists vernacularization of higher education. I also contextualize these within the deployment of reform terminology in the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1918 (which formed the basis of the Government of India Act 1919) and the demand for a separate government-funded regional university initiated by Gaekwad in Baroda. I read this through a constellation of primary texts surrounding the nationalization-vernacularization debate as well as Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, including official documents related to the Mahavidyalaya and Vidyapith; reports, speeches, etc. pertaining to the institution in particular and national education in general; writings in newspapers, contemporary periodicals like *Navjivan*, *The Educational Review*, etc., as well as independent publications, official reports related to various institutions, etc. I specifically look at the 1924 curricula for the subjects of English and Gujarati at the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya and analyse whether and how far the purported rejection to reform was achieved, and whether this moment marked the origins of decolonisation of English Studies.

Chapter Four proceeds from the 1949 moment when independent universities were formed in the region in the form of Gujarat University and The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. It analyses the documents concerning constitution of these universities for the parallels with or revisions on the idea of reform imbricated in higher education as observed in the previous chapters. In this way, it first, constructs the origins of independent university education in the state and the role of education societies like the Ahmedabad Education Society. It, then, proceeds to survey the post-independence revisions in policy, especially focusing on the disciplinary/institutional practice(s) of English Studies. It reflects on the relative achievements and limitations of experiments and innovations in disciplinary practices of English Studies. It also takes into account region-specific responses to the crisis in English Studies, that has hitherto not been accounted for in these debates. It reflects whether persistence of specific epistemes, among other factors, account for the inability of

the discipline to fundamentally reinvent itself. It takes into account the interconnected histories of reform and English to argue that higher emphasis be placed on close historical reading to understand the parallel development of English and the vernacular where the two inform and inflect each other. The collaboration also holds in the developments of intellectual currents, literature(s), print culture(s), etc. which directly impinge on literary/cultural studies. Thereby, revisions of the discipline that adopt an either/or or a centre/margin approach would be simplistic and superficial. In the context of the Gujarat Vidyapith, Gandhi once remarked that even if the same book is taught at an institution built within the non-cooperation movement and a government-run institution, *how* it will be taught will be fundamentally different in the former ("Gujarat Vidyapith" 197). I expand the idea of this *how* to not only mean pedagogic practices but to mean *how* the *what* (curricular content) of the curriculum is built—in other words, how the structure of the curriculum can be reimagined. I propose a methodology of using co-texts in the curriculum, and introducing non-Western epistemes for critical analysis of texts, as two methods to generate more radical readings of English literature.

The Conclusion surveys the trajectory of reform and English in the course of all chapters and discusses the implications of the same for an understanding of the rhetoric of reform, the region, as well as institutionalization of English. It argues that the reappearance of the vocabulary of reform in significant moments of transition in the debate(s) over English cannot be dismissed as a historical contingency and must be critically examined to understand how reform inflected the articulations of English, and vice versa. In sum, it avers that critiquing the epistemes which structure our understanding of the subject can at once challenge both the theoretical hegemony of the West, as well as address the crisis of studying the canon without necessarily having to do away with the canon.