THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

# A DISCUSSION WITH WILLIAM DALRYMPLE

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**Introduction and Moderator:**

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*The Last Mughal*

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. TALBOTT: I'm going to make one more stab at seeing if we can make the group a little bit more on team. We have about six chairs. We have four I can see here, one or two there. So any of you who are feeling too far away, please do come on up. You'll be able to see the pictures and, indeed, the author more clearly.

I'm Strobe Talbott. I want to welcome you to Brookings for what promises to be a fun event. It gives me a chance to yet again thank William Dalrymple for, among other things, contributing to the success of a trip that about 45 of us or so from Brookings took to India at the end of February.

I suspect that there are already in the room quite a number of fans of William Dalrymple and his writing, and I predict with total confidence that after an hour and a half or so there will be more fans. I've had the pleasure of knowing him for some years and reading him a little bit longer than that.

Willy's career has been something of an odyssey. It has taken him from travel writing, which I think of as a very high art form, to very serious history but also to history that is immensely readable. Embedded in the word, history, is the word, story, and this gentleman can really tell a story.

He has currently embarked on what I gather is going to be four major books on the Mughal Period which means I guess it doesn't quite qualify as a Raj quartet, right, but at least two of them are sort of a Raj duet. I suspect that a number of you have read both *The White Mughal* and now *The Last Mughal*.

What makes these books so stunning is not only the way in which he has been able to bring individual characters from history alive but also the way he has operated on two axes. One deals with the interaction between the British Empire and Indian civilization, and the other axis between Islam and Hindu culture, religion and society.

Now the first of those has somewhat passed into history though not fully, and the second of those

two interactions, of course, is very much a part of the life of India and the subcontinent today. So you will find, I think, in what he has to say about an episode in the history of the subcontinent that we in our part of the world tend to call the Great Mutiny and they in their part of the world often call the First War of Independence, namely 1857, to have a lot of contemporary resonance.

I might just also add that if time permits and your questions permit and Willy permits, he might touch a little bit on some of what he has been doing as a first-rate journalist. He has done some terrific stuff for the *New Yorker* including on a kind of Homeric bardic tradition. Is it Rajasthan? And then more recently one of the best pieces on what's happening in contemporary Pakistan that I have read anywhere. So questions worded in the present tense or even in the future tense are allowed.

But, first, let's turn the podium and the technology, which I hope works, over to you, Willy, and welcome to Brookings.

(Applause)

MR. DALRYMPLE: Delhi is today a city of, depending on how you measure it, between 5 and 15 million people if you count these great amazing new suburbs like Gurgaon and Noida which have come up like little mini Silicon Valleys in a matter of 3 or 4 years. But if you had visited Delhi exactly 150 years ago in early April, 1858, Delhi would have had a population of almost zero.

Delhi had been, in various forms, the main capital or cultural center of Indo-Islamic North India since the late 12th Century. Since the 17th Century, it had been the capital of the Mughal Empire. But in 1857, Delhi became the epicenter of the largest anticolonial revolt to take place against any European empire anywhere in the world in the entire course of the 19th Century.

One of the great moments of anticolonial struggle was centered in that city and when it was recaptured by the British, they reacted with what they regard as appropriate vengeance. They destroyed the

actual physical structure of about half the city and expelled the entire inhabitants with the exception of one or two small mahallas which are owned by landowners who had collaborated with the British during the uprising. Other than that, the entire city was expelled. Not a soul moved on the Chandni Chowk the main artery, except dogs picking around, looking for scraps of food.

In human affairs, very rarely do dates mark guillotine moments. The nature of humanity is that we spill over and refuse to be bounded by the dates that historians impose on them. But 1857 to 1858 is one of those moments which really clearly marked a very sharp boundary and changing point both in colonial and in Indian history. The two institutions which shaped South Asia over the previous 300 years came to a dead halt in that year.

The first institution to end that year was the East India Company founded in 1599, the year that Shakespeare wrote Hamlet. People talk about the British conquering India. In reality, it was a

multinational trading company. Think Microsoft with an army or Coca-Cola with territorial ambitions, and you're in the right sort of sphere. The company starts as a trading organization, brings spices from Kerala and textiles from Bengal, but very consciously changes gear very markedly in the last years of the 18th Century.

Lord Wellesley is sent out by a new conservative government in England and Wellesley is in many ways a kind of Wolfowitz of the late 18th Century. He has determined that he will get rid of those cheese-eating surrender monkeys, the French, still irritatingly hanging around in Pondicherry, and he has also determined that he will get rid of any Islamic powers which will, in any way, endanger the British project for a new British century, which he succeeds in doing with remarkable speed and aggression.

In 1798, the last French troops in India are disarmed in Hyderabad. In 1799, in alliance with the Hyderabadis, the East India Company pounces on its

enemy, Tipu Sultan. In 1803, Lord Wellesley's younger brother, the Duke of Wellington, in his first command, defeats the Maratha Confederacy who have spread out from the hills above Bombay and now up to that point had occupied great swathes of Central India. But in three great battles, culminating in the Battle of Delhi, 1803, the British arrive in Delhi and take over the guardianship, as they like to put out, of the Mughal Emperor, the grandfather of this man, Shah Alam, the blinded emperor sitting in the palace.

The Mughals were, themselves, the other great force that had shaped India over the previous 300 years. They've left such a mark with their power and their majesty and their economic might, that today when we use the phrase, Hollywood mogul or business mogul, though many people that use that may not be aware of it, they're actually commemorating this dynasty, which by the 16th Century had become a synonym in English with power, riches and might.

In the sense that what's interesting for us today, with so much negative material about Islam

circulating in the media and so much ignorant material about Islam circulating so widely is to see, I think, in the best of the Mughals, notably Akbar, a vision of Islam at its most tolerant, pluralistic and humanistic at the same time in my own country as Jesuits were being hung, drawn and quartered for their Catholic faith.

At the same time as the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions were subjecting anyone who didn't subscribe to the doctrines of the Catholic Church to an early form of waterboarding. Very similar techniques to the ones we use. They used to stuff cotton in the mouth and pour water until people renounced their heresies, particularly the new converts to Christianity from Judaism, the new Christians as they were called.

At the same time as Giordano Bruno was being burned at the stake in Campo dei Fiori and all this was going in Europe, in Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar was calling to his capital Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi Muslims, Hindus of Vaishnavite, Shaivite and agnostic

persuasions, even the Hindu atheists, Jews from Cochin, Jains and Zoroastrians from Gujarat and Jesuits from Goa to bring them all together in one place to found what was essentially the first multireligious discussion group to see where they agreed, where they differed, where they could come together, at the end of which Akbar declares no man can be compelled in matters of religion and any man is free to go over to any faith which he wishes to believe in -- something that's perfectly obvious to us but something that would have been revolutionary anywhere in the world at that time and was indeed revolutionary in India.

There is a wonderful book of travel accounts in the Mughal Empire published by Michael Fisher last year called *Beyond the Three Seas*. In that, there's a wonderful discussion. When some Portuguese Jesuits kill a peacock, a Hindu sacred bird, in Bengal and are arrested for it by the Mughal guards, very far from Fatehpur Sikri, the extremities of the empire in Bengal.

The Jesuits who are, being Jesuits, extremely well educated, argue with the governors. There's nothing in the Quran about killing peacocks, and this fascinating argument goes on.

But he says, no, but our Emperor Akbar says that we must regard the Hindu sacred birds as our own and so on -- interesting confirmation that the kind of spirit which was being actively promoted in the center was actually the laws being upheld in the periphery.

Now by the time my guy, Bahadur Shah Zafar, gets to the throne in 1832 -- this is his coronation portrait -- the Mughal Empire has shrunk desperately. From encompassing the whole of modern India except for the southernmost tip of the peninsula, all of Pakistan, all of Bangladesh, most of Afghanistan and slithers of Persia, it shrunk down not just to bits of northern India or even the City of Delhi but to the walls of the Red Fort itself -- so, economically powerless, a broken empire, no economic or military force worth the name but still, even in this last moment, an extraordinary cultural force.

Most renaissances take place in moments of economic boom and prosperity and moments like in Florence when you have the Medicis with their banking and so on, people who patronize the expensive building, of keeping writers in the style to which they're accustomed -- and thank you very much for bringing me here, Strobe -- and indeed the even more expensive business of building great monuments.

But what's unique about the last Mughal renaissance under Zafar is that it is a major cultural renaissance which takes place in a moment of almost complete bankruptcy. And yet, in a court which has no finance, this is the great moment of Urdu poetry. What the court of Elizabeth is to Shakespeare or what the Age of Elizabeth is to English theater, so the Age of Zafar is to Urdu poetry and to the ghazals.

The greatest ornament of Zafar's court is his poet laureate, Zauq, and his great rival, Ghalib. In many ways, Zauq is the Salieri to Ghalib's Mozart. These two astonishing poets flourish, butting each

other, vying with each other and a whole host of much less talented but equally remarkable poets.

This is a period when, rather like in the 19th Century novels, one of these moments when everything is happening. All the great poets are living at the same time in Delhi or Lucknow, and it's one of the great moments of literary awakening in Indian history.

Ghalib is an extremely complex poet. To appreciate him, you really need to know not only all the Urdu canon but the great Persian canon going back because he's constantly making reference to very obscure Persian texts. But he can be very easily approached to a modern English-speaking reader through his letters, and they're wonderfully translated by Ralph Russell and easily available on Amazon. Nothing gives a better flavor of the court of the period and the life of Mughal Delhi than to read Ghalib's letters.

I'll just read one at random. I love this. This is Ghalib writing to a friend of his whose

mistress has just died, and the guy is mourning. His girlfriend is dead, and life will never be the same again, and Ghalib says cut it out.

"Musahib, I don't like the way you're going on.

"In the days of my lusty youth, a man of perfect wisdom counseled me: Abstinence, I do not approve of. Dissoluteness, I do not forbid. Eat, drink and be merry, but remember that the wise fly settles on the sugar and never on the honey.

"Well, I've always acted on this counsel."

Now this next passage should be read to every potential suicide bomber:

"Give thanks to God. Feel freedom and do not grieve. When I think of paradise and consider how, if my sins are forgiven me and I'm installed in a palace with a orri to live forever in that worthy woman's company, I am filled with fear and dismay. How wearisome to find her always there, a greater burden than a man could bear.

"The same old palace, all of emerald made, the same old fruit tree to cast it shade and, God preserve her from all harm, the same old orri on my arm."

"Come to your senses, brother, and take another. Take a new woman with each returning spring for last year's almanac's a useless thing."

Well, not exactly a triumph of feminist spirit.

What's also important is that the Age of Zafar is not just a period of bucolic poetic composition. It's also a remarkable period in the history of learning. You have the Delhi College, four of the great madrassahs beside it, exchanging ideas to an amazing extent, with the new ideas from Europe and England and France and Germany mixing with the old cosmologies of Islam and Hinduism and people trying to puzzle it out, as indeed the same is happening in Europe at the same time as people try to justify and mix the things that are coming through with the new sciences to their old Biblical landscapes.

A measure of the cultural achievement of Delhi at this period can be judged from the writings of William Sleeman who was an extremely aggressive sort of neoconish figure, who pressed for the annexation of Oudh, who regarded the most Muslim states as backward and ill administered. But here he is on Muslim education. Now compare this to our views on madrassahs today:

"Perhaps there are few communities in the world among whom education is more generally diffuse than among the Mohammadens of India. He who holds an office worth 20 rupees a month commonly gives his son an education equal to that of a prime minister. They learn through the medium of Arabic and Persian languages what young men in our colleges learn through Greek and Latin. That is grammar, rhetoric and logic.

"After seven years of study, the young Mohammaden binds his turban upon a head almost as well filled with the things which appertain to those branches of knowledge as a young man raw from Oxford, and he will talk as fluently about Socrates and

Aristotle, Plato and Hippocrates-- and which is much to his advantage in India, the languages in which he has learnt these names are those in which he will have to use in his professional life."

An interesting and useful reminder of the degree to which the Islamic education system was grafted onto medieval Europe and which the same roots, these same classical figures come through in both. If you read a wonderful book called *The Rise of Colleges in the West*, which makes the point, the degree to which the new universities in Europe spring up closest to the Islamic World and follow the Islamic madrassah model, again something quite contrary to the more ignorant materials that one reads in the media.

So, Delhi at this stage: You've got the great poets. You've got the great artist, Ghulam Ali Khan and this extraordinary last flourishing of the Mughal style represented by this painter and his nephew Mazher Ali Khan. This is a city which is attracting people from across north India.

The poet, Hali flees his arranged marriage in Panipat, sleeping rough on the ground on the trunk road to reach Delhi. He describes in his memoir how everyone wanted me to look for a job, but my passion for learning prevailed. He talks about how Delhi has more booksellers, more printers, more publishers than any other city in India. It has these six famous madrassahs and four smaller ones, innumerable printing presses.

But the biggest draw, he writes, were the poets and the intellectuals, men like Ghalib, Zauq, Sabi and Hazudah. By some good fortune, wrote Hali, there gathered at this time in the capital, Delhi, a band of men so talented that their meetings and assemblies recalled the Great Days of Akbar and Shah Jahan.

Hali’s family eventually tracked him down and dragged him back to his marriage in the provinces, but before they did do so he was able to gain admittance to the very beautiful and spacious madrassah of Hussein Bhakt and began his studies

there. “I saw with my own eyes this last brilliant glow of learning in Delhi,” he wrote in old age, “the thought of which now makes my heart crack with regret.”

So forget any of the images that the Victorians used to like to present of the Mughals declining into degeneracy and impotence and irrelevance. This is one of the great moments of intellectual, artistic and particularly literary flourishing in north Indian history.

At the heart of this is Zafar himself.

We can have the next slide. Cut the lights down maybe a little.

Zafar’s poetic notebooks, even if you can’t read the Urdu, showing the wonderful stream of inspiration pouring from his pen, couplet after couplet, in the gutter, around the margins -- a man of extraordinary poetic inspiration, also a great calligrapher.

Next slide.

This is a calligraphic flourish with his name, his signature, autograph along the bottom, and this is his own work.

Now the biggest surprise in this early period is the degree to which -– next slide -– the British play a surprisingly prominent role in this early part of the renaissance.

Next slide.

The symbol of this is one of my great heroes, David Ochterlony shown here, the ambassador to the Mughal Court. As you can see, he's not wearing a company tricorn hat and breeches and a shirtcoat. Instead, he's in kurta pajamas. He's got a pink turban on his head.

He's smoking a hookah, a water pipe. It's not entirely clear what he's smoking, judging by the slightly glazed look on his face, possibly not tobacco. He's got his spittoon. He's got his fellow with his fly whisk.

Best of all, he's got his dancing girls. This is a man who famously had no less than 13 Indian

wives each of whom had their own elephant, and every night a wonderful procession would leave the British residency with Ochterlony presumably in the lead and do a loop of the Red Fort before returning, one imagines, to an evening like this.

Best of all, I love the kind of outraged Scottish ancestors peering down from the picture rail at the top, wondering what's happened to old Davy after a few years in the Indian sun and, well, they might ask.

Next slide.

There is a serious point behind the slightly more ludicrous aspects of Ochterlony because looking at his tomb is a very solitary reminder of the degree to which he and his fellows were actively bringing together this world. He was highly involved in the court and in the culture of the period.

This is the last of the great Mughal garden tombs which was built for Ochterlony and his chief wife, Mubarak Begum, in Mubarak Park. It was destroyed in 1857, so it's not well known today.

It is a chaar bagh a four-part Mughal garden. It has two octagonal side wings like Humayun's tomb. It has 20 or 30 minarets rising, peppering the roof, but at the top is not a Mughal dome. There is a dome based on Brunelleschi's dome in Florence, and it's topped with a cross. So, here on one building, without anyone consciously making a kind of point about it, there is a culture at the time where people think it's completely ordinary to have a building with 40 minarets topped by a cross.

This, of course, is one of many periods in history when this would have been possible. If you look at Umayyad Spain in the 7th and 8th Centuries or Norman Sicily with its Morcana stalactite roof in the Cappella Palatina or the court of the Emperor Frederick II when Islamic and Christian cultures not only do not clash but actually come together, cross-fertilize, fuse, inspire each other and you have an interplay of the different learnings of the different worlds. But this, again, is another period like that,

that you can add to that list in the late 18th/early 19th Century Delhi and Lucknow.

Now, the thing that the British do most successfully at this period is simply to drop down dead. They die very frequently and a lot in India. Famously, two monsoons is the average lifespan of the British at this period.

If you look in the wills in the India Office library, because of this high mortality rate, there was a law because of the administrative chaos that came about as a result of this high mortality, that every British official in India would have to make a will and have it sent back to the company headquarters on Leadenhall Street.

Now they all survive, and they are documents of quite extraordinary social richness and interest because they reveal a world which has been hidden in other sources. In the volume for 1780 to 1785, if you go through these wills, you find that one in three British men in India at this period is leaving everything to an Indian woman or an Anglo-Indian

child, one in three, implying that one in three British households at this period are ethnically and religiously mixed, and the wills themselves show that these are not sort of plantation relationships like the Caribbean.

You have equals with equals. You have British residents marrying Mughal princesses and so on and extremely fulsome encomiums to these women are recorded in the wills: To my beloved Marineesa, who has been with me since my first year in Calcutta, I leave our opium factory, our slaves, our hackeries and so on. There's all this kind of stuff going on.

What's interesting is the way it goes down, and we'll go into this in a second, but in Delhi at this period you have very much this mixed world.

Ochterlony's assistant was William Fraser -- next slide -- shown here as a slightly snotty Scottish aristocrat of a sort we are familiar with and sneering slightly on his way to rule India as he gets painted by Rayburn in Edinburgh. But watch what happens when he arrives in Delhi.

Next slide.

He's still got his Scottish hat on, but everything else from the nose down is changing fast. Keep watching the facial hair in the next slides.

Next one.

Here he is a couple years later. By 1835, he is well down the road to Mughalization, and he has given up pork and beef by this stage. He is an intellectual sparring partner with Shah Abdul Aziz who is the principal Muslim theologian of the period, very much in the part of the slightly more puritanical Islamic tradition that will eventually result in the Deobandi madrassahs.

He is a major patron of Ghalib's poetry. Ghalib writes that when Fraser died, he felt the loss again of his father. He also is a major patron of art, and the Kevorkian album which is the core of the Mughal collection in the Metropolitan Museum is part of Fraser's own collection.

So, a much more complicated relationship at this period than the simple strictures that much post-

colonial writing would imply. So much talk of colonialism in post-colonial writing implies an entity which is clearly defined. In fact, as this period shows, there are many different ways of performing and transgressing Britishness. The most obnoxious cataclysm is not brought on the British per se but by specific groups such as the Evangelicals and Utilitarians which we'll hear about in a second.

The central question that lies at the heart of this book is: How do you move from this world, where people are building tombs for Muslim wives with minarets topped by a cross, where leading Mughal poets have been patronized by the British residents, where the British residents are in intellectual theological discussion with the Ulema and the madrassahs?

How do you move from that world, with one in three British men intermarried, to the hatreds and the violence and the incredible bloodshed that takes place in this anticolonial struggle in 1857, only a little bit later?

Now the wills tell an interesting story in themselves. From one in three wills being mixed in the 1780s, it's down to one in four by 1800. It's down to one in five by 1810, down to one in seven by 1820, and it's virtually over by 1830. By 1840, there are no Indian women of any sort recorded in these wills.

So you've moved from a world where one in three British households is ethnically and religiously mixed to almost complete apartheid as far as these documents show.

Why is that happening and how does it happen so quickly? It's an extremely worrying precedent in a sense because we kind of assume in the West, in cities like Washington or New York or London, that multiculturalism is something that has only a kind of forward gear, that the more we all live together, the more all the kids go to university together, that they all intermarry, and it will all be a nice rainbow mixture.

The experience of the East India Company is that multiculturalism has got a reverse gear too, that it can go backwards and go backwards very fast and that circumstances can develop which can put the idea of mixing of races into peril.

What I think very simply, and there are 300 pages of this book that talk about this but to summarize it in a two-minute gobbet, I think two things happened which turned this around.

The first is the simple fact and the speed of the rise of British power. Wellesley comes in with a very specific agenda and, in only five years, you move from the British having three coastal settlements as they have done since the early 17th Century -- Calcutta, Madras and Bombay –- to five years later, by 1803, a very conscious and aggressive what's called the forward policy which is really very similar in its essential to the kind of stuff, the preemptive aggression that was being preached in this town only a few years ago.

The forward policy means that by 1803 the British are more or less the hyper-power in the Indian Peninsula, and there is no one else who can say boo to them. It happens only in five years.

Unlimited power brings, as again we've seen, unlimited arrogance. Attitudes change. You move from the world, say, of Sir William Jones studying the Gita, translating the Sanskrit classics, thrilled excitement in Europe with the philosophers at the discovery of this classical civilization, to a world by the 1830s where India is judged a place ripe not just to be ruled but to be redeemed.

This is the second important point, the rise of the Evangelicals, again something that has contemporary resonance today because the change in the attitude of religion has huge consequences in India. You move, in Britain, from a world in the 1780s of Hogarth and Johnson and Boswell and Boswell whoring his way through the brothels of Palomalo and the rest of it to the world by the 1830s of the mid-Victorian chapel where everyone's idea of a good time is to sit

listening to a five-hour long Evangelical sermon in a chapel in Fulham.

Now this is obviously a very different idea of how life should be led, and it's exported to India with the additional idea inherent in it that, as the company director, Charles Grant, puts it: "Could it be that we were given our Indian empire only that we might draw an annual profit from it? No. We were given it by providence so that we might bring the light of truth to the poor benighted heathen."

So, inherent with hyper-power status, comes the idea that there's a divine mission, a divine mission to change the institutions and the landscape of the countries which have been colonized and which are subject, and the simple fact of having power over them adds to this sense of divine mission -- again, all things that have strange resonance with the situation today. It's a different sort of mission today, and it's phrased in different languages, but there is the same sense that we've got it right and we can teach these people and they should be grateful.

So you move to a world where, by the 1830s, you've got collectors setting up the 10 Commandments in Hindustani outside their collectors. You've got a world where the generals are preaching to their troops on parade from the Bible. In 1830, Wilbur changes by act of parliament the charter of the company to allow in the missionaries. Now, up to this point, missionaries have been banned from company territory because they upset people so much, because of their inherent lack of politeness about Indian religions.

In 1830, Wilbur changes the law. The missionaries flood in, which is why when you go to India today and you go around those cantonments, all those little churches that you see, those little Puginesque churches are built between 1830 and 1857 in the great rush.

In Delhi, the Reverend John Midgley Jennings actually moves into the Lahore gate of the Red Fort, sets up his printing press and begins to distribute these missionary tracts which are unbelievably vile about Hinduism and Islam. He calls the Mughal Court

the last Bastion of the Prince of Darkness and uses even worse epithets about the Hindu religion, this vile, seductive, luxurious faith and all this kind of stuff, which he then helpfully translates into Hindi and Urdu and distributes through the bazaars with predictable results. People get extremely anxious.

There are enough Evangelicals making noise like this for people to believe that the British are about to project forced conversions. It's never the case. It's never policy, but there's enough noise being made to make people believe that this is possible.

You have a very strong defensive movement led by the Ulema. So, behind a whole range of secular grievances which are growing -- the annexation of states, the importation of textiles, the imposition of British laws and so on -- you have the Ulema and religious authorities taking the lead in the anti-colonial struggle and their rhetoric which represents a whole range of thoroughly secular grievances being expressed in religious language. Behind the religious

language lies a whole range of other grievances in the same way again as one sees, for example, in Iraq today the religious authorities who are taking the lead in this.

The Madrassah-i-Rahimiya, where only a generation before William Fraser and Shah Abdul Aziz were discussing the finer points of Sufi metaphysics, becomes a leading center of resistance, and you find debates, extremely tense and angry debates being held between the Reverend Jennings and the Ulema who, in religious terms, are very well briefed. They've somehow accessed the latest German biblical scholarship, and they start pointing out the different biblical accounts of the resurrection of Christ in the Bible, saying: Look, there are four completely different versions of this. How do you justify this? They can't all have been at the tomb at the same time or did they come at the same time?

But it moves from a theological discussion to a more naked leadership by the Ulema of the anti-colonial resistance. It's the Ulema who are given the

leading position in a court when Zafar -- if we could have the next few slides -- is still busy. This is the Nawabi Judges Court. The political leadership, in a sense, is lost in the world of ghazals and poetry and Mughal gardens and all the rest of it.

Next slide.

Just to give a few pictures of this world, this is the Nawabi judge in his summer dress.

Next, this is the dancing girls of Delhi. The courtesans at this time play an extremely important role, an important cultural role. They're poets. Young men are sent to them to learn. As well as the facts of life, the courtly behavior is taught at the courtesans' kothas.

Next slide.

Some of them could still cut quite a dash in D.C. today, I'm sure. Turn up at Brookings wearing this, they'd be shown the door. Maybe they wouldn't. I don't know.

Next slide.

This is the kind of Keith Richards of his day. This is Zafar's blind sitarist.

Next slide.

This is again an example of the kind of different ways in which colonial British and Indian Mughal arts are fusing. This is a picture of William Fraser's manservant, by the atelier of Ghulam Ali Khan. Now you've still got the incredible Mughal detail. Every one of his chest hairs is painted on with a single squirrel hair, and yet he's on a white background which you'd never seen in Mughal painting.

He's become a specimen. He's like a botanical drawing, one of those wonderful orchids that one sees in those 18th Century prints on a white background. The color has become a type. He's become a Jat. That's what the caption is: A Jat. So you get some sort of specimenization of the different castes and communities going on, but at the same time being done by Mughal artists for colonial patrons.

Next slide.

This is the same artist working for a Mughal painting. This is Ghulam Ali Khan's picture of the young Zafar and then the same artist -- next slide -- painting the same subject a few years later in Zafar's old age.

Next slide.

This is his nephew, Mazher Ali Khan, who is the last of the great Mughal painters, a self-portrait here of him painting with his album on his knees with all his lapis and stuff on the ground.

Next slide.

Now the Red Fort is the center of all this, and the last great commission that Mazher Ali Khan does, which is arguably the great masterpiece of late Mughal painting in my view, is this fantastic panorama of Delhi -- next slide -- which Mazher Ali Khan paints. It's 45 feet long, it's in the India Office Library, and it shows Delhi in 1852 on the verge of this cataclysm.

What's so tragic about this is that only five years later, all this is dynamited by the

British. It is destroyed within five years of being painted.

Next slide.

The same is true of all the interior of the Red Fort, leaving only that little, sad range of pavilions on the Yamuna waterfront when you visit the Red Fort today. This is all dynamited. Every single bazaar, house, khota, garden within the walls of the fort is dynamited five years after this picture is painted.

What brings all this to a head is a cock-up, as often in history. It is a silly bit of administrative incompetence. The company issues a new rifle, the Enfield rifle. It replaces the Brown Bess musket which has a smooth barrel.

The Enfield has curvilinear rifling in the rifle barrel, so therefore harder to load because you have to get the age of muzzleloaders. You have to ram the thing down, and so the company provides the ammunition for this, prelubricated. There is a

cartridge provided and which the ball is in a clod of lubricant.

Now the company could have chosen some delicious sort of Body Shop unguent of ylang-ylang or a nice sort of beeswax and flavored with mango or there could have been a whole range of delicious lubricants they could have used. Instead, they chose to make it lubricated with a mixture of pig fat and cow fat which is not only foul tasting and smelling, and you're meant to bite this thing. It is also, of course, richly abhorrent to both Hindus and Muslims. This thing is the spark that sets the whole thing off.

On the 10th of May, 1857, these cartridges are issued to the troops in Meerut. Half of them refuse to use it. The ones that refuse are sentenced to 30 years hard labor and marched away.

That evening, their fellows, understandably horrified by the harshness and insensitivity of this sentence, rise up, release their colleagues from jail, kill their British officers who they fought alongside in Afghanistan and Burma for years. This is a

surprise. This is not something that is expected. And they ride to Delhi.

The following morning -- next slide -- Zafar is peering out of his apartments –- next slide –- looking out over the bridge when he sees a great pall of dust rising on the far side and the sepoys riding. First of all, the cavalry. Then as the day progresses, wave after wave of infantry because Meerut is the largest cantonment in northern India. These guys pour into the city.

It begins as it continues in an incredibly violent way. There are no prisoners. Women and children are crucified against walls. There are hideous acts of violence, and this is the way that the uprising continues. It’s an unusually bloody and hideous thing.

The Indian Christian community, very important, were targeted as much as the British. The first man to be killed is not a Brit. It’s Surgeon Chiminelow who was a very prominent courtier, who

was converted by the Reverend Midgley Jennings in the very controversial baptism in 1852.

The rhetoric of the uprising in Delhi is almost entirely religious. They're talking about Nasrani, the Christians, rather than the Goras, the Whites or the Firangis, the foreigners, or the Angrez, the English or even the Sarkar, the government. It's the Nasrani that are referred to in the Urdu documentation.

This is seen in the Delhi Ode to Akbar as the hand of God. Green riders are seen arriving in Kanpur, slicing up the British like radishes, then disappearing, according to the Delhi Ode to Akbar. And so, there's a kind of millennial apocalyptic feel to this in many eyes.

The extraordinary way that it's taken up is seen within the next month. There are 160,000 troops in the Bengal Army of which 139,000 mutiny within the next 3 weeks. Like a rock thrown in a pool, there are ripples out from Delhi. As the news spreads, cantonment after cantonment goes up, just like that,

and they all march to Delhi. Out of 139,000 troops that rebelled, 100,000 turned straight to Delhi. Many of those who didn't were aiming at Delhi before they were called back such as happened at Kanpur.

This is not how the history is taught in India. Those of you who have learned about 1857 in Indian textbooks will have heard of Mangal Pandey and have heard of the Jhansi-ki-Rani . These figures were important figures, but nonetheless marginal to the principal struggle which was the 100,000 sepoys heading to Delhi and choosing, although they were largely 85 percent upper caste Hindu, to raise the Mughal Emperor at the head of the revolt, something which is very surprising to anyone today who knows certainly the popular view of Hindus to the Mughals was supposed to have been these great depressors of the Hindus, destroyers of temples, which is why the mosque in Ayodhya was destroyed in 1992, a symbol of Mughal destruction of a Hindu temple. This was a kind of revenge act.

But, in 1857, this was clearly not the perception. In 1857, the Hindu sepoys don't go to Benares. They don't go to Satara to raise the Marathas back on. They head to Delhi, and they put the Mughal back on the throne, and the rhetoric is about restoring the Mughal Empire.

Now in this act of congregation, in this act of all these different cantonments from across north India heading to one place lies both the potential and the potential for disaster of this uprising. On one hand, it creates an extraordinary military force. The East India Company Bengal Army is the most advanced army in Asia. It has the most efficient weaponry. These men are highly trained, and it's an extremely formidable force, 100,000 of these trained soldiers collecting in one place.

But this undermined almost immediately by the incompetence of the Mughal administration. These guys are used to throwing poetry parties, musharas. They're not used to feeding huge numbers of troops or organizing for it. An administration which has been

in the hands of the British, it breaks down very quickly.

So the roads are not kept open. So the supplies are not getting through. Hugely increased demand, hugely reduced supplies leads to hyper-inflation. Very rapidly, the price of atta, chana, dal, all these basic foodstuffs is shooting up in the bazaars. No one can afford to buy these things.

At the same time as this is going on -- next slide -- the British are successfully recruiting a new army. In the illustrated *London News*, you have these pictures of some jolly white chaps coming down and all set to liberate Delhi.

The reality is that the liberating force or the attacking force on Delhi was not at all white. It was four-fifths ethnic Indian. It's the Sikhs from the Punjab. It's the Punjabi Muslims from Multan and, most of all, it's your friends, the Pathans from the frontier. The same guys that are giving you all the hassle today that were Pakistani Taliban and over the border, , is the force that the British recruits on an

entirely mercenary basis to come and loot Delhi. They say: Come on, guys. We're going to go and get the Peacock Throne again.

So off they all go. They assemble on the ridge above Delhi. They get the supergun. This enormous sort of thing pulled by 16 elephants arrives from Ferozpur on the 4th of September -- next slide -- and begins to pound the Kashmiri Gate. A breach is made on the 10th and on the 14th -- next slide -- in they go.

They are told that this is going to be a slam-dunk. This is going to be a walkover. Anyway, it was as much a slam-dunk as Iraq. Instead, there's 25 percent casualties in 48 hours. There's been incredible resistance. The guys who remained in the city, many have gone. About 50 percent of the sepoys that arrived in June have gone by September because they're starving because no one is feeding them.

But those that remained put up an extraordinary resistance, and there is a paralysis not least because some clever figure in the

administration, whether by accident or design, placed all the liquor confiscated from British houses just inside the Kashmiri Gate so that those who are still alive on the evening of the 15th of September are legless and all over the ground.

There's this moment of paralysis. Both sides are in a state of high tension. Either side could break. The British are making plans to retreat to Meerut. The sepoys are nervous.

But what really finishes it is an eclipse, an accident of astronomy. On the following day, there is a full eclipse of the sun. The city goes dark at noon.

Even today if you are at Rajasthan during an eclipse, you'll find all the temples are closed. No high caste figure will go out in an eclipse.

This is taken to be the omen the dynasty is ending, and these guys run. On the night of the 20th of September, there is a noise like the buzzing of a thousand hives of bees, and they flee across the

bridge, south to Agra on route to Lucknow where they are about to put up another even stronger final stand.

At midnight, Zafar wakes up to find there's no one guarding him. The Red Fort guards have run, have fled. So, realizing what this means, he gathers his ancestral relics including a hair of the beard of the Prophet. He gets into a boat, and it leaves the Red Fort by the water gate and glides down the Yamuna in the moonlight, landing at the Purana Qila Ghat , crosses over to Nizamuddin, the great Sufi shrine which is still one of the most remarkable sites in modern Delhi where, to this day, you can find Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, all praying together around the shrine of Nizamuddin, more packed than ever today.

Zafar hands over his relics. He says to the Pesadars: "Now, there is a not a shadow of doubt left that of the great House of Timur, I am the last to be seated on the throne of India. The lamp of Mughal dominion is fast extinguishing. It will remain but a few hours more.

"Since I know this, why should I cause more bloodshed? The country belongs to God. He may give it to whosoever he likes."

So, handing over his relics, he crosses over to Humayun's tomb -- next slide -- where he awaits the surrender, to surrender himself to William Hodson who his wife has been in correspondence with.

Next slide.

William Hodson is the intelligence chief. He arrives, takes Zafar, his wife and her father and their youngest son, Jiwan Bakht, all in a palanquin. He promises the life of all four of those but doesn't promise the life of anyone else, and it's an extremely controversial promise on the British side who are anxious to hang all these people.

Anyway, the promise is given. Zafar arrives in the Red Fort -- next slide -- but he is not taken to the Diwan-i-Am house which has now become an officers' mess with planters, chairs and all the rest of it. Instead, he is shoved in the stables like a

bear in a cage in a zoo, according to one British officer.

The next day, Hodson goes back and takes up the surrender of the other sons. He takes the surrender of Mirza Mughal, Mirza Khazr Sultan and Mirza Abubhaka, the three leading rebel princes. They get in the same palanquin. They head back to Delhi.

But just before the walls of Delhi, they are ordered out of the palanquin. Hodson suddenly produces his Colt revolver, and he asks them to strip naked which they do and to hand over their bazubans and jewels. He shoots them dead at point blank range, one after another, then dumps the bodies.

There follows the single most ghastly massacre in the history of the British in India of much, much larger scale than the more famous massacres of Jalianwalabagh. The British had just had news of the murder of the women and children at Kanpur. Seventy-eight women and children were chopped up by butchers and thrown down a well.

The news had just come, and the padres in the force tell the British soldiers that they are God's avenging angels, that it is their divine duty to seek vengeance for these women and children.

So these guys go in. They block the gates of Delhi. The orders went out to shoot every soul.

This is 19-year-old Edward Vibart who, himself, has lost his mother and two sisters in the Kanpur massacre: "It was literally murder. I have seen many bloody and awful sights lately, but one such as I witnessed yesterday I pray I never see again. The women were all spared, but their screams on seeing their husbands and sons butchered were most painful.

"Heaven knows I feel no pity, but when some old gray-bearded man is brought out of his hiding place and shot before your very eyes, hard must be that man's heart, I think, who can look on with indifference."

The British don't seem to realize the scale of the massacre they've effected until the morning of the 21st of September when they ride out to chase the

rebel army onto Lucknow. This is the sight they see when they march out of the Red Fort at dawn that morning:

"The march was simply awful. Our advance guard consisting of cavalry and artillery had burst and squashed the dead bodies which lay swelled to an enormous size in the Chandni Chowk. The stench was fearful. Men and officers were sick all round, and I thought we'd never get through the city.

"It was a ride I don't care ever to take again, and the horse felt it as much as I did for he snorted and shook as he slid, rather than walked, over the abominations with which the street was covered.

"Dead bodies were strewn about in all directions in every attitude that the death struggle had caused them to assume, in every stage of decomposition. In many instances, the positions of the bodies were appallingly lifelike. Some lay with their arms uplifted as if beckoning and, indeed, the whole scene was weird and terrible beyond description."

The city is emptied and this great city of 150,000 people, which had swelled to 400,000 in the course of the uprising with refugees and all the sepoys, is left completely empty. Hindus are not allowed to return for a year. Muslims, who are blamed as being hatching this conspiracy, quite wrongly, are expelled for three years. No one is allowed back in.

Now a very interesting thing happens. The British have to account for this mutiny. What's the cause of it? Is it their insensitivity? No.

This is the Muslim fanaticism. They fall back on this ancient trope in the western imagination. The uprising, which I think is a highly complex anti-colonial uprising led by Hindu sepoys against specifically military grievances initially, is reduced again in a way that's horribly familiar to a simplistic international Muslim conspiracy stretching to Tehran and Mecca, entirely imaginary. But, as we know, the call of causation in the Middle East is one that is with us today.

So Zafar is depicted as the evil genius at the center of the spider's web. He is put on trial and charged with treason. He sleeps through most of the trial. He has lost his sons, he has had his entire city devastated, and he's a broken man.

Now the legal position in reality is that this man is the legal suzerain of the company. Ever since Clive took on the job of the tax collector for the Mughals in Bengal, Orissa and Bihar in 1757, the Mughal Emperor has legally regarded the East India Company as its tax collector and the East India Company seal has Shah Alam on it, the devoted dependent of Shah Alam.

Now everyone knows that this is a fiction, but it is nonetheless the legal position. Yet, Zafar is put on trial as a rebel. The real rebel in legal terms is actually the company which is risen up against its legal suzerain.

He is sentenced to exile in Burma. Three hundred and thirty-two years after Babur arrived in the Mughal capital, Zafar leaves it on a peasant's

billet card, bound for exile in Burma. He goes with his wife, Zinat Mahal.

The night before he goes, he is visited by the *Times* war correspondent, William Howard Russell, who is one of the few correspondents the mutiny was not, so to speak, embedded. He was a lone independent voice who actually records a reality rather than propaganda.

He's been led to believe that Zafar is this evil genius, that he's been in communication with Mecca and with Tehran, good ole Tehran again, and he's expecting to meet some sort of figure from a James Bond movie. Instead, he walks in on the night of the last Mughal Emperor's last night in Delhi and this is what he sees:

"This broken man, a dim, wandering eyed, dreamy, old man with a feeble hanging nether lip and toothless gums. Not a word came from those lips. In silence, he sat day and night with his eyes cast on the ground as though utterly oblivious of the

conditions in which he was placed. His eyes had the dull, filmy look of very old age."

He says: "Was this really the man that planned this uprising?

"Some heard him rambling on about his dreams, quoting verses of his own composition, writing poetry on a wall with a burnt stick."

So the last of the Mughals in Delhi, they are still at their poetry, but now it's with this burnt stick in the stable prison.

Now no one knows whether those verses scribbled on the wall of the stable are the same as the famous verses that everyone in India still knows, , supposedly written by Zafar in exile, but I'll just conclude by reading you those last verses. The poem is dedicated to Zinat Mahal, his wife.

"When, in silks, you came and dazzled me with the beauty of your spring, you brought a flower to bloom, love within my being. You lived with me, breath of my breath, being in my being, nor left my side.

“But now the wheel of time has turned, and you are gone. No joys abide.

“You pressed your lips upon my lips, your heart upon my beating heart, and I have no wish to fall in love again for they who sold love’s remedy have shut shop, and I seek in vain.

“My life now gives no ray of light. I bring no solace to heart or eye. Out of dust to dust again, of no use to anyone, am I.

“Delhi was once a paradise where love held sway and reigned, but its charms lie ravished now and only ruins remain.

“No tears were shed when, shroudless, they were laid in common graves. No prayers were read for the noble dead. Unmarked remain their graves.

“The heart distressed. The wounded flesh. The mind ablaze. The rising sigh. The drop of blood. The broken heart. Tears on the lashes of the eyes.

“But things cannot remain, oh, Zafar, thus. For who can tell? Through God’s great mercy and the Prophet, all may yet be well.”

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. TALBOTT: Do you want to stay up there and take some questions?

MR. DALRYMPLE: I'll take anything, yes. Sure.

Is there hope of a cup of coffee? Is there?

QUESTIONER: Could you speak for a moment about there must have been a moment when they came to Zafar and said, we are electing you to be our leader, and he had a decision to make? Could you do that scene for us?

MR. DALRYMPLE: It's a terrible moment. The sepoys who congregated in Delhi and, at 4:00 in the afternoon, having arrived, the first cavalry rode in about 6:00 in the morning. By noon, most of the infantry troops are kind of plodding in. At 4:00, they demand to see Zafar.

Zafar has gone and hidden himself in his apartments, appalled at the massacre of his body guard. However much the British were, as a power,

oppressing him, he had actually made friends with the various troops, officers who were guarding the fort. They will be massacred, women, children, the padres' daughters being speared to the wall and all this kind of stuff.

Zafar eventually is sort of compelled to come out, and there's this wavering hour when he says: Why have you done this? I didn't ask you to come. You've murdered my friends.

They say, we've risked everything to come to raise you up.

You can see him wobbling because he also realizes that this is his last opportunity. He knows that the British resident has made plans to, on his death, move his sons to the summer palace in the south of the city in Zafar Mahal and that the Red Fort is going to be taken over by the British. This is the last opportunity.

There's the additional thing, the company recruits from upper caste Hindus in Bihar and UP. So the Mughals are sitting in Delhi with their refined

Hindustani, and these guys are Biharis. This is like Yorkshiremen coming down. This is like New Jersey arriving in Washington. I don't know what the equivalent would be.

If Lalu Prasad, the cowherd, former chief minister of Bihar were to arrive in modern Delhi and park himself on the grounds of Rashtrapati Bhavan with 100,000 Biharis fresh from the provinces, it's a similar sort of thing.

And so, he's also sort of slightly revolted by their manners. They're kowtowing and prostrating. They're coming up and saying, hey, Bhuddha, old man, what should we do now?

It's comic and sort of slightly horrific, and eventually he accedes. But then at the same time as he is doing that, his wife is sending a camel courier to Agra, asking for the British to rescue him. So he tries to play it both ways.

Particularly Zinat Mahal is extremely suspicious of these peasants as she sees them and is inclined to see a way in which she can get her younger

son, who is pulled immediately out of the limelight. And so, her plan is to let the elder sons sort of take the rap for this thing and by pulling her younger son apart, that somehow she can get him onto the throne. So there are all sorts of different things going on. It's a complicated and exciting scenario.

The book, I believe, is available in Washington bookshops now in a paperback edition. You can read the full glory.

QUESTIONER: Thank you for a most brilliant book. I couldn't put it down.

MR. DALRYMPLE: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: There's one area which I found curiously untouched in the book, and I had a question relating. That is that there was an extraordinary richness of business culture and great competence in Delhi at the time.

MR. DALRYMPLE: Correct.

QUESTIONER: There were great merchant princes. There were great bankers who had connections all the way to Europe, to the East, Southeast Asia.

The book says nothing about this, and I was very curious. Did you not find anything or did you choose to ignore it?

MR. DALRYMPLE: Well, you're quite right, and I think I plead guilty. My natural romantic tendencies put poet princes over money-lending sets, but certainly they're there in the second half of the book.

QUESTIONER: (Inaudible)

MR. DALRYMPLE: No, but your point is perfectly correct.

QUESTIONER: (Inaudible)

MR. DALRYMPLE: No. You're absolutely right, and I plead guilty. It is an omission.

What I think there is, though, in the book is the degree to which the Mughals and the administration try to milk these guys in the course of the siege. Tulsidas and all these other great money lenders who are pulled into the fort and muskets are let off behind their ears and all sorts, and they're

not allowed any water for 24 hours and this sort of thing, and they try to find a way to compel them.

One of the features of the revolt from the very beginning has been that the money lenders have been as much and the businessmen have been as much a target. In Mathura, for example, the first thing that happens is the rebels don't go to the British collectors first. They go to the money lenders. Mathura is another of the major centers of business at this point.

It is what happened to the money lenders at Mathura, many of whom have connections in Delhi, that puts the money lenders and the businessmen immediately, by default, on the side of the British and they're in communication with the British. The Delhi archives still has intelligence letters provided to the British forces by the businessmen who were actively working against this.

When the British take Delhi, there are two mahallas which are allowed to remain intact in the city, and one is one of the areas where the money

lenders live and the other is where the Nawab of Patiala as he's been a major provisioner for the British troops on the ridge. So Ghalib, by pure good fortune, is living in the Patiala mahalla which is why his record of this siege survives and he's not killed.

But your point is quite correct, and it is an omission. I apologize.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

Among which populations in India, perhaps Pakistan, does this episode still resonate? Any? The so-called Deobandi, the Neo-Taliban, et cetera? Is this something they're even familiar with?

MR. DALRYMPLE: Yes.

QUESTIONER: Or is this something just with the elites?

MR. DALRYMPLE: It's a complicated one, though. It is familiar, and different groups look on it, as you can imagine, in different ways.

The nationalist account of it privileges Mangal Pandey and Barakpur and the Rani of Jhansi and these are again seen as kind of proto-nationalist

figures rising up against the colonial uprising, which is not an unreasonable thing. There is a very clear conception that these are outsiders, the British, and that it's time to throw them out. It isn't expressed in nationalist language, and there's a lot more religious language being used than would be the case in the 20th Century during the freedom struggle proper. But there's a clear sense that this is an illegitimate dynasty which is trying to foist itself on India.

Now the Deobandi, as you mention, come very directly out of this. At the same time as Abd-al-Wahhab. They are studying in Medina at the same time. He brings to India a first cousin of Wahhabism.

Historians usually refer to it as Wahhabism but with inverted commas because it isn't actually anything to do with Wahhab itself. It's the same puritanical return to literalist Islamic roots. It's a Protestant movement within Islam going back to texts.

Just as Luther would react against festivals and images of saints and so on, so the Wahhabis are reacting to what he sees as a superstition of the Sufi shrines, as the wave of Hindu customs which are brought with that whole world, and he's trying to go back to textual Quranic Islam.

The Madrassah-i-Rahimiya of Shah Abdul Aziz, his grandson, is the major source of this sort of Islam and debates around it in pre-mutiny Delhi. Figures from the Madrassah-i-Rahimiya found an Islamic state in the Doab during 1857, a proto-Islamic state which I think Ayesha Jalal is about to publish a book called Partisans of Allah which deals with this. It's coming out in the next couple of months.

It is the people after the conquest of that Islamic state at Shamli and so on. In the retributions of 1858, they go on to found the Deobandi madrassah. Now the Deobandis then go on. The Taliban are the children of the later Pakistani Deobandi madrassah.

I mean there are long time gaps and many changes within this simplistic picture I've been presenting, but the line is there. There's a direct line: Madrasah Rahimiya, the Islamic state of Shamli in the Doab, Deobandi, Taliban. I think many scholars would say that there were so many long gaps between those various points, that you could argue that it's a meaningless lineage, but the lineage is there.

You have coming out Pakistani Deobandi thought, again this way of using political Islam as a way of anti-colonial resistance to a perceived colonial movement.

QUESTIONER: Staying for a moment with the subject of madrassahs and Deobandis, you describe the provenance of 1857 very much in terms of a mistake, the cock-up of British policy.

I just wondered. I think you're very right in your many defenses of a madrassah system, and you've set out today again kind of the flavor of just how broad the madrassah system has been in the past.

But, of course, one of the big questions particularly in Pakistan at the moment is what response should there be to the madrassahs that are somewhat narrow in focus, primarily particular Deobandi madrassahs with very narrow curricula. I just wondered, perhaps picking up again on that kind of the unintended consequences of policy interventions, if you'd like to comment on what the Pakistani State ought to do with some of those particular problem madrassahs.

MR. DALRYMPLE: This is a complicated and interesting matter, and I've written a new book that speaks at some length on this. There are things that madrassahs can be accused of doing and there are things that madrassahs are not doing.

What they're not doing is producing the sort of middle class, engineering sort of technical university, international Salafi jihadis who are responsible for 9/11 and the major actions of Al Qaeda. Bin Laden, none of the 9/11 hijackers went to madrassah. Bin Laden, as many of the leading Al Qaeda

figures, comes from the westernized technical education, scientific education in the west or western style colleges. There is no link that you can really draw between madrassahs and that sort of thing.

What you can very clearly link with madrassahs is the sort of simpler foot soldiers at a poorer, less exalted level. The Taliban directly came out of madrassah educations. Many of the figures who are creating sectarian massacres, anti-Shi'a activity in Karachi and so on come out of madrassahs. There are some tenuous links between the bomb blast in Bali and madrassahs, and there are one or two figures.

The other thing you can show is that madrassahs have acted as a kind of staging post to English Pakistanis who are looking to sort of join Al Qaeda or make contact with Al Qaeda. They have studied in particularly the madrassah near Attock, and they have been directed. Whether by the madrassah people or people connected with the madrassah, they have found their way to training camps proper.

I don't think there's a single case proven of a madrassah actually being a training camp. In the aftermath of 9/11, there were many alarmist articles giving a picture of madrassahs sort of giving training and education and actually weapon training and this sort of thing. There has been a lot of this stuff. I have never seen it substantiated. It's not impossible in the tribal territories and FATA and so on, but I've never seen this established.

But what you are getting with madrassahs is you are getting huge numbers of people, who are not catered for by the government education systems, receiving a narrow and inadequate and literalist education. One of the three or four big problems, say that's in Pakistan, is this collapse of government education. The government education system does not function. There are many good private schools, but for the very poor the madrassahs are the almost only option.

Clearly, a concerted effort by a Pakistani government with American assistance to revitalize the

secular education system would go a long way to solving this problem. People often prefer private education if it's available to them.

There is an extraordinary charity. Anyone that wants to take this forward, go and Google the Citizens Foundation which is a remarkable and extremely efficient Pakistani educational charity which is building really good secular schools in the slums. It's getting a lot of funding from the Pakistani diaspora in the States and in Europe.

This is a really concrete way which you can take a really hideous slum in Karachi and produce a whole series of kids that will go on and get jobs as bankers and emigrate to Washington. That way, they'll become Brookings scholars in the future. These are things that can be done very easily.

I think there are people who will head naturally for a madrassah, but many people who end up in a madrassah would prefer a nice secular education if it was available. And so, this is something that's very easily doable.

I mean there are problems in Pakistan that are pretty intractable. This is a very easily solved problem. If a fraction of the money that was being used to send drones to attack Taliban targets in Waziristan was used to build schools in Karachi and the Frontier, this is a very clear and easy, helpful action.

QUESTIONER: Based on your historic insights between the attraction between the British civilization and South Asia, what lessons are there for the modern West to deal with Islam majority countries today, especially the Middle East?

MR. DALRYMPLE: Well, I think the big lesson is that civilizations don't have to clash. They certainly can clash. There are many points in history one can point to where very clear clashes are going on, but they needn't. It's a choice that can be made by both sides.

By taking an interest in the Islamic World, by going there, by acting with maybe a little more humility than some of the recent interventions, and by

understanding the culture rather than just coming and preaching the modern equivalent Evangelical Christianity in its neoconish form, I think bridges can be built. Understanding can be created.

But by going in, by being seen to dictate, by being seen to be hypocritical, by calling for democracy when it suits you, then ignoring the democratic results when they don't suit you, by continuing to deal with dictators rather than elected governments, by suppressing democratically elected governments when they don't happen to suit you –- all these things are things which understandably create resentment and flood the swamp rather than drain the swamp.

MR. TALBOTT: Don't go anywhere.

QUESTIONER: One more question perhaps?

MR. TALBOTT: I want to ask a final question.

MR. DALRYMPLE: (Inaudible)

MR. TALBOTT: Okay, I'll hold my final question. Go ahead.

QUESTIONER: Thank you, Strobe.

Since we're in Washington, you talked of the missionaries, but you didn't mention the American missionary impact in India. There were 2,400 in 1930s, and they own 50 percent of all American assets in the Indian subcontinent. So would you comment something about the role of the American missionaries in India?

MR. DALRYMPLE: I haven't come across American missionaries in the pre-1857 period which is why they haven't come in this. I'm afraid I'm entirely ignorant about missionary activities in the 1930s. I take your word for it, but I don't know anything about it.

What I have studied incidentally, though, is some of the Baptist efforts in modern Gujarat, and you have a similar kind of thing going on. In 1998, there was a huge wave of church burnings in the Gujarat, in the tribal areas above Surat. About 100 small wooden churches were burned, and this was widely reported. I went up there to report it.

What had happened, it turned out, was that there had been this, again, very insensitive missionary drive by Baptist churches, preaching very violently against Hinduism, and a very simple Google search would produce these sort of desperate attacks on the devilish, Lucifer, satanic religion of Hinduism and this kind of stuff.

These guys, these tribals who were simple animists, who weren't Hindus proper were being converted, often with promises of medical help and so on. Then the VHP would come in and reconvert these guys. They'd bus them off to this temple where there was this sort of baptism ritual created to reconvert them to Hinduism in the eyes of the VHP. So, again, there was a very clear thing between violence and sensitive missionary activity.

I've absolutely no personal objection to sensitive missionary activity, but when you have outright and very open preaching against people's most cherished beliefs, you can expect a reaction. If you use intemperate language, you can expect an

intemperate reaction, and that is what was happening, I think, in the years just before the millennium in Gujarat and also in Orissa. But your guys in the 1930s, I'm afraid I don't know.

MR. TALBOTT: Going back to the previous question about lessons learned, one question formed in my mind as I was listening to your talk, and it has to do with a lesson learned about how to pull off an occupation or impose a Raj on a foreign culture. Leave it to me to make some question between 1857 and the last five years of America's efforts in Iraq.

So my question is about pig fat. You had some fun with the cock-up, as you called it. I don't quite understand, given that so many of the officers and the people making the decisions including how to deal, how to introduce new military technology to the sepoys. Okay, maybe they weren't living with Indian women and leaving their inheritances to Indian families, but they certainly must have known enough about both Hindu and Muslim culture not to provoke, with this abomination, what happened.

So have you looked into how that decision got made?

MR. DALRYMPLE: I think it's exactly as you say. I think there was a growing distance between the men and their troops. The officers no longer were married to the sisters of the guys, and they didn't have the sensitivity and cultural awareness. Plus, they had this sort of arrogant attitude towards their troops, these blacks. Feed them these cartridges and, if they don't, lock them up.

MR. TALBOTT: It will do them good.

MR. DALRYMPLE: It will do them good. That was the attitude, and this was something.

There's a famous account of 1857 by an infantrymen called *Sitaram* which is in translation, which says exactly this. In the old days, they used to mix with us and play chess with us and wrestle with us, and our sisters were married to them, and we used to be able to have access to them. Now they are completely separate from us, and we never see them

except on the parade ground. This is exactly the complaint that's made.

About how to run an occupation, I mean an interesting thing, just to take this to conclude it with kind of forward looking, what happens after 1857 is that unembarrassedly Mughal culture is crushed and British culture is put on it, put on top. So British schools are founded. All attempts to fund, anglicize madrassahs or to teach in Sanskrit or anything of these things are stopped, immediately dead. Instead, you have the Rashtrapati Gardens which are renamed the Victoria Gardens. Everything Mughal is removed from the map, is removed from the geography, and you have a straightforward imposition of English and a British education.

What happened is that this is used against the colonial forces. So you have the people who succeed in throwing the British are not the Mughals. They're not the Nawabs. They're not even particularly the Brahmins from UP.

They are British-trained lawyers. They're Nehru. They're Gandhi. They're Jinnah who form political parties and do strikes and protest marches. And so, in a sense, you're using the western lexicon of resistance rather than sort of brute force. Certainly, with Satyagraha it gets a spin. It's indigenized, but the framework of resistance is that of a western political form.

You can argue that the British Empire contained within it the inherent seeds of its own demise. In this imposition and teaching people to aim for liberalism, to aim for freedom, to hold up Britain as the mother of freedom, you inherently encourage that. The British, I think, were taken a bit by surprise by this when their own words were quoted back at them and their own Middle Temple lawyers suddenly turned on them.

As Churchill said, with some irritation, Gandhi was a seditious Middle Temple lawyer dressed a fakir.

MR. TALBOTT: I guess the bottom line of that is if there had still been White Mughals in charge in 1857, Zafar wouldn't have been the last Mughal.

Well, we're all very grateful to you. If we, at Brookings, have been fortunate enough and smart enough to publish your book, it would be on sale at the Brookings Press Bookstore right outside, but Olsson's is not very far away and Kramerbooks and Politics and Prose, and we've even got a Borders down the street. I suspect quite a number of people will want to read this book and wait for your next one.

You've really enriched the intellectual life of what goes on here by bringing a little bit of history into an enterprise and a neighborhood which tends to be very preoccupied with the headlines.

So, please all join me in thanking Willy.

(Applause)

MR. TALBOTT: By the way, even though Willy has had about four cups of coffee, I suspect there is

still some in the back. Please feel free to mix with him if his time permits.

We appreciate all of your coming in this morning.

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