



Construction of Bengali Muslim Identity in Colonial Bengal, c. 1870-1920 [

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
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Masters Thesis

Monografía

This thesis explores the various discourses on the formation of Bengali Muslim identity in colonial Bengal until 1920s before it becomes hardened and used in various politically mobilizable forms. For the purpose of this thesis, I engage multiple articulations of the Bengali Muslim identity to show the fluctuating representations of what and who qualifies as Bengali Muslim in the period from 1870 to 1920. I critically engage with new knowledge production that the colonial census undertook, the different forms of non-fictional Bengali literature produced by the vibrant vernacular print industry, and the views of the English-educated Urdu speaking elites of Bengal from which can be read the ensemble of forces acting upon the formation of a Bengali Muslim identity. I argue that while print played an important role in developing an incipient awareness among Bengali Muslims, the developments and processes of identity formulations varied in different sites thereby producing new nuances on Bengali Muslim identity

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